

Cheat Sheet

RED ALERT - (Listed in order of importance)

- FRAGRANCE OR PARFUM (May contain hundreds of chemicals that are neurotoxins).
- PARABENS (Disrupts normal hormone function).
- TRIETHANOLAMINE (Adversely affects the immune system).
- IODOPROPYNYL BUTYLCARBAMATE (Can cause confusion, fatigue, irritability and is toxic to the liver and gastrointestinal tract).
- TRICLOSAN (Probable human carcinogen).
- 1,4-DIOXANE (Known carcinogen).
- FORMALDEHYDE (Long list of adverse health effects).
- P-PHENYLENEDIAMINE Commonly found in hair dyes and is also known as 1,4-Benzenediamine; p-Phenyldiamine and 4-Phenylenediamine (Damages the nervous system and can cause severe allergies).
- DIETHANOLAMINE (DEA) (Hormone disruptor).
- HYDROQUINONE (Neurotoxin and possible carcinogen).
- NAIL POLISH CHEMICALS TO AVOID ARE: Toluene, DBP and Formaldehyde

ORANGE ALERT:

Nitrosamines: Cocamide DEH • Lauramide DEA • Cocamide MEA • Triethanolamine (TEA) • Diethanolamine (DEA)

Mineral Oils: Liquid paraffin • Paraffin oil • Paraffin wax • Petrolatum

They coat the skin like plastic so it cannot breathe. They can slow down the skin's natural functions and cell development resulting in premature ageing. Mineral oils can also be contaminated with PAH (Polycyclic, Aromatic, Hydrocarbons), which can be carcinogenic.

Petroleum Jelly, which by the way, I touted as a cure-all as a younger girl, is now thought to be a probable carcinogen because of the way it is manufactured. Ugh – to think of all those years of slathering it all over my face and lips.

Parabens (methyl-,ethyl-,propyl,butyl,isobutyl-)

These were in our 'worst six' list and for good reason: they are chemical preservatives that have been identified as estrogenic and disruptive of normal hormone function. Estrogenic chemicals mimic the function of the naturally occurring hormone estrogen, and exposure to external estrogens has been shown to increase the risk of breast cancer. Enough said - I don't touch them with a barge pole.

Phthalates (thal-eights)

These horrid little synthetic chemicals are known to cause a broad range of birth defects and lifelong reproductive impairment in lab animals that are exposed during pregnancy and after birth. They are also hormone- mimicking chemicals, many of which disrupt normal hormone processes, raising concerns about implications for increased breast cancer risk.

Sodium Laureth Sulfate (SLS) and Sodium Lauryl Ether Sulfate (SLES)

This ingredient is typically used to de-grease car engines in the shop! In personal care products, it can damage the immune system. It is particularly dangerous when it is combined with other chemicals, as it can become a nitrosamine, which is a carcinogen. According to the American College of Toxicity. "SLS stays in the body for up to five days. It is easily absorbed through the skin.

FC&C/D&C Color

Animal tests have found these dyes to be carcinogenic. They are coal-based. FD&C Blue 1 is used in some toothpastes and FD&C Green 3, is used in mouthwash.

PEG

This is an abbreviation for POLYETHYLENE GLYCOL, which is a potential carcinogen that is typically used as a grease- dissolving cleaner and a thickener for skin care products. Also look out for PROYLENE GLYCOL, ISOPROPYL ALCOHOL, BUTYLENE GLYCOL.

Formaldehyde Producing Preservatives

Some preservatives can become formaldehyde-donors, in that they release small amounts of formaldehyde into the skin. Many preservatives are cellular toxins. Formaldehyde can cause many health issues including joint discomfort. Examples: DMD, HYDANTOIN, IMIDAZOLIDINYL UREA, AND PHENOXYETYHANOL.)

Talc

Contains a chemical that is similar to asbestos and can increase the risk of a certain ovarian cancers.

Acrylates, Methlacrylates

These are carcinogenic. The really great news is that with so much media awareness, many of the really cool products will tell you on their labels that they do not contain the following 3 additives so you won't have to do too much squinting at the small print. Parabens, Sodium Lauryl Sulfate and Mineral Oil.

WEEDING OUT

Now is decision time. Choose which products stay and which go. I suggest getting rid of the ones from the "Red Alert " list and then put the rest in your "Use-up-but-don't buy again" list. With your newfound knowledge, you can make better choices when you next run out.

CONFUSED?

If you are in doubt or confused by a particular product you own, or have thrown out the box, you can go to a fabulous website from a company called Safe Cosmetics and actually type in the product to get the safety scoop on it. They rate the product from 0 thru 10 (0 being the safest and 10 having the most dodgy chemicals). I avoid products with a rating of 5 or higher. www.safecosmetics.org Safe Cosmetics is an offshoot of EWG (Environmental Working Group). I often refer to this non-profit research organization that is based in Washington D.C. If your product isn't listed and you are concerned about a particular chemical in one of your products, go to www.scorecard.org and click on "chemical profiles". This is an amazing pollution informational website where you can check your air, water, home and general environment for toxic concerns. It is quite addictive as you can type in your zip code and see exactly where all the most offensive polluters are located. You can also see how your area stacks up, toxicity-wise, against every other area in the U.S. Plan to put aside some time for this one.