



Body Care – Be AWARE!

“There are over 7,000 ingredients available to manufacturers for use in cosmetics and toiletries (including 1,000 aromatic and perfume chemicals), of which more than a thousand are known to have harmful effects, and many of these are subject to some level of legal restriction. Another 900 ingredients may have been manufactured in such a way as to be potentially contaminated with cancer-causing chemicals”.

Taken from *Cosmetics Unmasked*, by Dr. Stephen and Gina Antczak

Everyday we use skin, hair and bath products without understanding what’s in them. There are so many chemicals in our environment that we can’t see and can’t know about. When is the combination of soap, body cream, shampoo, conditioner, perfume, furniture wax, ant repellent, flea spray, lipstick, and cleaning products considered unsafe, dangerous, life threatening? What constitutes a toxic overload? No one is answering questions like these, but people suffer, nevertheless.

The following limited glossary provides a list of ingredients commonly used in health and beauty aids. It is not an exhaustive list, but it does suggest how body products cosmetics may be contributing to a notable increase in a variety of human illnesses—allergic reactions can be very inconspicuous and come in the form of sudden or gradual, subtle mood changes. The depression that some people experience may be the result of a combination of allergies. Many clinicians think that psychotic mental illness, ADD / ADHD and other mental disorders are often the result of allergies affecting the brain.

Alcohol, Isopropyl: a very drying and irritating solvent and dehydrator that strips away your skin’s moisture and natural immune barrier, making you more vulnerable to bacteria, molds and viruses. It is found in many skin and hair products, fragrances, antibacterial hand washes, as well as shellac and antifreeze. A Consumer’s Dictionary of Cosmetic Ingredients says it may cause headaches, flushing, dizziness, mental depression, nausea, vomiting, narcosis, anesthesia, and coma. A fatal ingested dose is one ounce or less.

Di-ethyl phthalate/Di-n-butyl phthalate: found in toothbrushes, car parts, tools, toys, food packaging, insecticides, mosquito repellents, aspirin and volatile components of cosmetics; i.e.: perfumes, nail polishes, and hair sprays. These substances have been linked to testicular cancer and cell mutation.

Fluoride: an acute toxin with a poison rating higher than lead. Fluoride is found in most mainstream toothpaste—added for its dental benefits. Fluoride used in water fluoridation is a toxic waste product from the fertilizer industry. It is the most bone-seeking element known to man. It has been linked to health problems such as brittle bones, osteoporosis and (incredibly) porous dental enamel. Fluoride also causes eczema, gastric distress, headaches and weakness and has been linked to genetic damage, including cancer, as well as hyperactivity and attention deficit disorder in children.

Lauramide DEA, Diethylolamine, Triethylolamine: partly natural, partly synthetic chemicals used to build lather and thicken various cosmetic products. These substances are also used in dishwashing detergents for their grease-cutting ability. They can be drying to the hair and cause skin and scalp itching as well as other allergic reactions. Each are declared carcinogens.

Methyl and Propyl and Butyl and Ethyl Parben: used as inhibitors of microbial growth and to extend shelf life of products. These are widely used even though they are known to be toxic. These substances are known to cause many allergic reactions and skin rashes. Methyl paraben combines benzoic acid with the methyl group of chemicals. Highly toxic.

Mineral Oil: petroleum by-product that coats the skin like plastic, clogging the pores—mineral oil interferes with the skin’s ability to eliminate toxins, promoting acne and other disorders. It slows down skin function and cell development, resulting in premature aging. It is used in many products (baby oil is 100% mineral oil!)

Petrolatum: found in lip products, which is amusing because they are usually advertised as protecting the lips from sunburn, chapping and so forth. Petrolatum is mineral oil jelly, and mineral oil causes photosensitivity

problems when used on the skin (i.e., promotes sun damage), and it tends to interfere with the body's own natural moisturizing mechanism, leading to dry skin and chapping. Manufacturers use petrolatum because it is very cheap.

Polyethylene Glycol (PEG): a potentially carcinogenic petroleum ingredient that can alter and reduce the skin's natural moisture factor. This could increase the appearance of aging and leave you more vulnerable to bacteria. Used in cleansers to dissolve oil and grease, it adjusts the melting point and thickens products. It is also used in caustic spray-on oven cleaners.

Propylene Glycol (PG) and Butylene Glycol: gaseous hydrocarbons, which in a liquid state act as surfactants (wetting agents and solvents). They easily penetrate the skin and can weaken protein and cellular structure. Commonly used to make extracts from herbs, PG is strong enough to remove barnacles from boats! Because PG penetrates the skin so quickly, the EPA warns against skin contact to prevent consequences such as brain, liver, and kidney abnormalities. But there isn't even a warning label on products such as deodorant sticks, where the concentration is greater than in most industrial applications.

PVP/VA Copolymer: a petroleum-derived chemical used in hairsprays, setting lotions and other cosmetics. It can be considered toxic, since particles may build up a residue in the lungs. It is cancer suspect.

Sodium Lauryl Sulfate (SLS) & Sodium Laureth Sulfate (SLES): detergents and surfactants that pose serious health threats. They are used in car washes, garage floor cleaners, and engine degreasers – and in 90% of personal-care products that foam. Young eyes may not develop properly if exposed to SLS because proteins are dissolved. SLS may also damage the skin's immune system by causing layers to separate and inflame. When combined with other chemicals, SLS can be transformed into nitrosamines, a potent class of carcinogens. Your body may retain the SLS for up to five days, during which time it may enter and maintain residual levels in the heart, liver, the lungs, and the brain. It is frequently disguised in pseudo-natural cosmetics with the parenthetical explanation 'comes from coconut'.

Stearalkonium Chloride: a chemical used in hair conditioners and creams that is notorious for causing allergic skin reactions. Stearalkonium chloride was developed by the fabric industry as a fabric softener, and is a lot cheaper and easier to use in hair conditioning formulas than proteins or herbals. Toxic.

Talc: found in baby powders, face powders, body powders. Talc is a known carcinogen and is a major cause of ovarian cancer. It can be harmful if inhaled, as it can lodge in the lungs, causing respiratory disorders.

Triclosan: a synthetic 'antibacterial' ingredient with a chemical structure similar to Agent Orange! The EPA registers it as a pesticide, giving it high scores as a risk to both human health and the environment. It is classified as a chlorophenol, a class of chemicals suspected of causing cancer in humans. Its manufacturing process may produce dioxin, a powerful hormone-disrupting chemical with toxic effects measured in parts per trillion. Internally, it can lead to cold sweats, circulatory collapse, and convulsions. Stored in body fat, it can accumulate to toxic levels, damaging the liver, kidneys and lungs, and it can cause paralysis, suppression of immune function, brain hemorrhages, and heart problems. It has a wide-spread use in popular antibacterial cleansers, tooth pastes and household products.

Triethanolamine: often used in cosmetics to adjust the pH. Triethanolamine is combined with many fatty acids to convert acid to salt (stearate), which then becomes the base for a cleanser. TEA causes allergic reactions, including eye problems, dryness of hair and skin, and could be toxic if absorbed into the body over a long period of time.

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