

Below is a list of the common chemicals found in many cosmetics and skin care items. For more information as well as a list of what products these are found in, please visit:

<http://www.safecosmetics.org/article.php?list=type&type=46>

Triclosan Triclosan is a common antimicrobial agent that accumulates in our bodies and has been linked to hormone disruption and the emergence of bacteria resistant to antibiotics and antibacterial products. Along with its negative health effects, triclosan also impacts the environment, ending up in lakes, rivers and other water sources, where it is toxic to aquatic life.

Synthetic Musks Synthetic musks are a large, poorly-studied class of chemicals added as scents to cosmetics, including perfumes, lotions and many other personal care products. Several studies suggest some of these compounds may disrupt hormone systems or trigger skin sensitization when exposed to UV light (i). Synthetic musks identified in fragrances have been found in the cord blood of newborn babies (ii), as well as in blood, breast milk and body fat.

Formaldehyde and Formaldehyde-Releasing Preservatives Formaldehyde and formaldehyde-releasing preservatives are used in many personal care products (i), particularly in shampoos and liquid body soaps. These chemicals help prevent bacteria from growing in water-based products, but can be absorbed through the skin and have been linked to both skin sensitivity and cancer.

Nitrosamines The UK Department of Trade and Industry (now the Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform) characterizes nitrosamines as more toxic in more animal species than any other category of chemical carcinogen (i). Nitrosamines are common in cosmetics, but because they are impurities, they are not listed on product labels.

Lead and Other Heavy Metals A number of metals, including lead, arsenic, mercury, aluminum, zinc, chromium and iron are found in cosmetics ranging from lipstick to whitening toothpaste, eyeliner, nail color and more.

Parabens Parabens are used to prevent the growth of microbes in cosmetic products and can be absorbed through the skin, blood and digestive system (i). They have been found in biopsies from breast tumors (ii) at concentrations similar to those found in consumer products (iii). Parabens are found in nearly all urine samples from U.S. adults of a variety of ethnic, socioeconomic and geographic backgrounds (iv).

Phthalates One billion tons of phthalates are produced worldwide each year. Phthalates are used in a variety of common consumer products: they soften vinyl plastics that are common in toys, are responsible for the smell of new vinyl shower curtains and are a frequent component of fragrances used in air fresheners, detergents, cleaning products and more. They show up in cosmetics to hold color and scents, and have also been found in nail polish and treatments.

Hydroquinone Usually associated with use in skin lighteners, hydroquinone may also be a contaminant in other cosmetics ingredients. It's one of the worst ingredients used in personal care products and may disproportionately affect women of color, who are more likely to be exposed to hydroquinone if they use skin lightening products.

[1,4-dioxane](#) Very few, if any, cosmetics or personal care products list 1,4-dioxane as an ingredient (i), even though an analysis by Campaign for Safe Cosmetics co-founder the Environmental Working Group suggests that it may be found in 22 percent of the more than 25,000 products in the [Skin Deep](#) database of cosmetics products (ii). That's because 1,4-dioxane is a frequent contaminant of common cosmetics ingredients (iii), but as a contaminant it is not listed among intentionally added ingredients.

To check individual products or ingredients, visit the Environmental Working Group's Page:
<http://www.ewg.org/skindeep/>

Favorite locally available skin care products:

California Baby

Earth Mama Angel Baby

Make your own skin care recipes:

<http://www.crunchybetty.com/>

<http://safecosmetics.live2.radicaldesigns.org/article.php?id=233>

Coffee Body Scrub from Campaign for Safe Cosmetics page

Ingredients:

2 cups coarsely ground coffee

1/2 cup raw sugar or sea salt

2-3 tablespoons massage oil

Instructions:

Mix all ingredients together. Take a hot shower to moisten your skin and open your pores. Using wide, circular motions, rub the coffee exfoliant onto your skin with strong, even pressure. Shower off, pat skin dry and apply a thin layer of your favorite body lotion.

Toothpaste from Emily Gossard

Mix equal parts coconut oil & baking soda together.

Add spearmint or peppermint oil to taste.

Simple deodorant from Diane Turner

Mix equal parts baking soda & cornstarch together.

Rub a very small amount (1/2 pea-sized) of coconut oil under each arm.

Dust each armpit with a tablespoon or so of the powder mix.

Simple shampoo base

Grate a bar of pure castile soap into 1 quart water. Bring to a boil & stir until combined. Add essential oils or herbs as desired.

Buy ingredients for homemade skin care:

<http://www.elementsbathandbody.com/>

<http://www.mountainroseherbs.com/>