

Personal Care Products

Why we care

Many of us look outside the home for the source of hazardous chemicals in our lives, but most of our exposure occurs indoors from products we use every day. Shampoo, deodorant, lotion, hand soap, and cosmetics are virtually unregulated by the government and can contain chemicals that build up in our bodies and the environment.

Simple, positive steps

Look it up. Target attention on permanent hair dyes and bleaches, nail polish and remover, makeup, anti-bacterial soaps, and sunscreens. Check specific brands on [EWG's Skin Deep](#) database or download the app.

Read labels. Some ingredients can cause health effects, or build up over time in our bodies or the environment. [Click here](#) for more information. The following should raise red flags:

- Fragrances
- Thimerosal (in mascaras)
- Parabens
- Petroleum distillates often listed as "petroleum" or "paraffin" (in mascara and foundations)
- Phthalates/BHT
- Oxybenzone (in sunscreens)
- Formaldehyde (in liquid soap and hair gel)
- DEAs/diethanolamin/cocamide DEA (in sunscreen, shampoo, and skin cleansers).

Shop smart. Buy from companies that have signed the [Compact for Safe Cosmetics](#). These companies have pledged that their products meet standards set by the European Union Cosmetics Directive to be free of chemicals that are known or strongly suspected of causing cancer, mutation, or birth defects.

Shop small. Local companies and natural foods stores are less likely to carry products with preservatives.

Make your own:

- [Shampoo](#)
- [Hair dye](#)
- [Body scrubs](#)
- [Sunscreen](#)
- [Lotion](#)
- [Soap](#)

Questions or feedback? Contact Jeanne Roy at jeanne@earthleaders.org.