

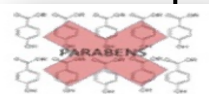
Onto the Skin and Into the Body

By Julie S. Holly, Esthetician

Do you ever stop to consider the ingredients that are in your personal care products and how they effect your long term health? In any given day, the average woman uses 12 different personal care products exposing herself to 160 different chemicals and men are exposed to about 80 chemicals. This exposure takes place before we even leave our homes and become exposed to air pollution, UVA/UVB rays and other assailants.

So, the following is a list of the worst ingredient offenders lurking in our bathrooms:

Parabens: Parabens are a synthetic preservative and antimicrobial agent. They are in most personal care products from shampoo to moisturizer. Recent studies have proven that parabens mimic estrogen and can disrupt normal hormone function. They have also turned up in biopsies performed on breast cancer patients. ***A safer alternative to parabens is a product that uses certain essential oils to preserve the product.***



PHTHALATES

Phthalates/Synthetic Fragrance: Phthalates are plasticizers that stabilize scent.

They are found in most personal care products that contain the word "fragrance." Studies have linked the use of phthalates to the depression of normal thyroid function and birth defects effecting the development of genitals of young boys and the sperm counts of adult men. Synthetic fragrance can contain any combination of chemicals sometimes exceeding 200 different ingredients!

Fragrance is also the most likely allergen in personal care products. It is also important to note that fragrance is often used to mask the pungent smell of other chemicals being used in a product.

Fragrance may be avoided by using products scented with pure essential oils and floral waters.

Sodium Lauryl/Laureth Sulfate (SLS): SLS is a synthetic detergent and foaming agent connected to skin and eye irritation. SLS has also been linked to the byproduct 1-4 dioxane, a suspected carcinogenic contaminant produced during the ethoxylatin process. It is best to avoid this ingredient and look for "eth" at the end of other ingredient names to detect the ethoxylation process. ***If you are looking for a natural cleanser with foaming action, look for coconut derived ingredients that have the prefix "coca".***



Diethanolamine (DEA) & Triethanolamine (TEA): DEA & TEA are emulsifiers and foaming agents that can produce skin dryness and allergic reactions. Also when mixed with other chemicals commonly found in personal care products, they can become carcinogenic and have been linked to stomach, esophagus, liver and bladder cancers.

Diazolidinyl, Imidazolidinyl Urea & Quaternium-15: These ingredients are often used as preservatives and have been found to release formaldehyde. They have been linked to contact dermatitis.



"When shopping for your personal care products, look for short ingredient lists and essential oils (EOs). The EOs are often used not only as fragrance, but as preservatives thus bypassing most of these worst offenders. Please also note that absolutely none of the ingredients listed above are found in the products used during facial services in Level Fitness' Wellness Room."