



Environmental Working Group's
**SHOPPER'S GUIDE TO
 SAFE
 COSMETICS**

PLAY IT SAFE

With no required safety testing, cosmetics companies can use almost any chemical they want, regardless of risks. Always read product labels before you buy.

TOP 6 INGREDIENTS TO AVOID

1. Fragrance
2. Alpha & Beta Hydroxy Acids (AHAs, BHAs, lactic acid, glycolic acid)
3. Parabens (methylparaben, propylparaben)
4. Triethanolamine
5. Iodopropynyl butylcarbamate
6. Triclosan (antimicrobial liquid soap)

5 WAYS TO SHOP SAFE

- 1 Use plain soap. Avoid bath or beauty bars with fragrance, dyes, and preservatives.
- 2 Don't trust the claims. Manufacturers don't have to back up terms like dermatologist-tested, natural, and organic. Read the ingredients.
- 3 Buy fragrance-free products. Products with "fragrance" on the ingredient list may contain chemicals linked to allergies and reproductive problems.
- 4 Avoid products with proprietary or trademarked ingredients like "preservatives" or "colors" that can contain chemicals of concern.
- 5 Simpler is generally safer. Fewer ingredients usually means lower risks.

NAIL POLISH

Phthalates, common ingredients in nail polish, have been linked to reproductive deformities in boys whose mothers have been exposed.

AVOID TOP 6 INGREDIENTS, PLUS

Dibutyl phthalate
 Formaldehyde
 Toluene

SAFER WAYS TO USE NAIL POLISH

Use in well-ventilated areas
 Don't use when pregnant

SUNSCREEN

Apply frequently, especially after swimming, sweating, or towel drying. Sufficient iodine in your diet will protect against possible thyroid risks from some sunscreen ingredients.

AVOID TOP 6 INGREDIENTS, PLUS

Padimate-O
 PABA

LOW-RISK INGREDIENTS

Titanium Dioxide
 Zinc Oxide

HAIR DYE

Hairdressers and women who regularly use dark, permanent hair dye may be at risk for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and bladder cancer.

PRODUCTS TO AVOID

Dark, permanent hair dyes

LOW-RISK PRODUCTS

Light-colored hair dyes used infrequently

SKIN LIGHTENERS

Skin lighteners contain ingredients that cause allergic reactions and pose cancer concerns.

AVOID TOP 6 INGREDIENTS, PLUS

Hydroquinone
Sodium nitrate

SAFER WAYS TO USE SKIN LIGHTENERS

Avoid these products or use infrequently

ANTI-AGING

Anti-aging products often contain acids that destroy skin structure, accelerating skin aging over time, and possibly increasing skin cancer risk.

AVOID TOP 6 INGREDIENTS, PLUS

Lactic Acid and Glycolic Acid
AHA (Alpha hydroxy acid)
BHA (Beta hydroxy acid)

SAFER WAYS TO USE ANTI-AGING PRODUCTS

Avoid these products or use infrequently

SUNLESSTANNING

Sunless tanning doesn't protect the skin from harmful UV rays and may contain ingredients that pose cancer risks.

AVOID TOP 6 INGREDIENTS, PLUS

Dihydroxy acetone
Coumarin

SAFER WAYS TO USE SUNLESSTANNERS

Use infrequently, if at all
Use a sunscreen even though you look tan

LEARN MORE

Don't see your product among the high-risk categories highlighted here? Avoid the top six ingredients, and for more tips on lower risk products, go to www.ewg.org/skindeep/.

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