QUICK TIPS FOR CHOOSING SAFER PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS
A guide to navigating personal care product labels
www.ewg.org/skindeep

PROBLEM PRODUCTS + THEIR CONCERNS
Some categories of products have major safety concerns. Avoid them, especially for kids.

- **HAIR STRAIGHTENERS**
  - Cancer, allergy, skin and scalp irritation, hair damage and hair loss

- **PERFUMES/FRAGRANCES**
  - Allergy

- **DARK PERMANENT HAIR DYES**
  - Allergy and cancer

- **SKIN LIGHTENERS**
  - Skin irritation and damage

- **LOOSE POWDERS**
  - Inhalation risk

COMMON INGREDIENTS WITH SAFETY CONCERNS
These ingredients can have harmful contaminants:

**AVOID**
- DMDM hydantoin
- Diazolidinyl urea
- Imidazolidinyl urea
- Ceteareth
- PEG and polyethylene

Products with “fragrance” on the label can contain hundreds of chemicals and may trigger allergic reactions.

For more tips on buying safer personal care products check out:
www.ewg.org/skindeep/top-tips-for-safer-products/

NOT ALL PRODUCTS ARE SAFE
Cosmetics are poorly regulated and commonly made from untested chemicals-makers can use almost any ingredient they choose.

More Useful Tips From EWG
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LOOK FOR THE EWG VERIFIED™ MARK

USE EWG’S SKIN DEEP® DATABASE AND HEALTHY LIVING APP TO FIND BETTER OPTIONS

READ INGREDIENT LISTS AND CHOOSE WISELY

CLAIMS LIKE “GENTLE” AND “NATURAL” COULD BE AD HYPE

WHEN SHOPPING, CHECK THE INGREDIENT LIST AND AVOID THE FOLLOWING:

YOUR BODY
Triclocarban (bar soap)
Triclosan (liquid soap)

MOISTURIZING
Retinyl palmitate or retinol in daytime skin products

YOUR TEETH
Triclosan in toothpaste

YOUR LIPS
Retinyl palmitate or retinol

YOUR HAIR
“Fragrance”
PEG, ceteareth and polyethylene
Parabens: propyl, isopropyl, butyl, isobutyl
DMDM hydantoin

YOUR NAILS
Formaldehyde or formalin in polish, hardeners or other nail products
Toluene
Dibutyl phthalate (DBP)
Pregnant? Skip polish

YOUR SKIN + THE SUN

Very few sunscreens provide adequate sun protection and are free of harmful ingredients.

AVOID
SPF above 50
Retinyl palmitate
Aerosol sprays
Oxybenzone
Insect repellent

YES
Hats and shade in mid-day sun
Zinc is the best active ingredient, otherwise 3% Avobenzone
SPF 30 for intense sun
Broad spectrum protection
Use a lot and reapply frequently

YOUR KIDS

Kids are sensitive. Use few products and pick them carefully.

DIAPER CREAM
AVOID
Boric acid

BABY WIPES
AVOID
2-bromo-2-nitropropane-1,3-diol (bronopol)

TOOTHPASTE
LIMIT
Fluoride toothpaste for kids who might swallow it (none for kids under 2)