**Toxic Chemicals in Your Skin Care? Watch out for these chemicals that can make you sick!**

Chances are you are exposing yourself to an average of 126 chemicals per day by using 10 personal care products. Unfortunately, many of these very chemicals are known to cause cancer, birth defects, hormone disruptions, reproductive problems, learning disabilities and a host of other illnesses.[[1]](#footnote-1) Although many of the toxic chemicals are in small amounts, it is the day after day, year after year buildup of these chemicals in your body and fat tissues that creates problems. Not only do these chemicals create problems for you, but they create environmental problems as they go down the drain or toilet.

Susan Jeske, a former Ms. America, started having some serious health problems including chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia, chronic sinusitis, arthritis, hemorrhoids, anemia, 60 pounds weight gain, poor digestion, skin disorders and severe gall bladder attacks. A holistic doctor who looked at her personal care products and told her “What you are using on your skin contains synthetic and toxic chemicals and is making you sick. Stop using them immediately and use certified organic products”. Amazingly, within 2 weeks all her health issues went away.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Your skin is your largest organ and is key for detoxifying your body. However, your skin also quickly absorbs chemicals and toxins it comes in contact with through your cosmetics, personal care products and cleaning products.

Researching the personal care industry is an eye opening experience. We trust that what is on the shelf contains what it says it does and is safe for us. Unfortunately, the natural and botanical expensive skin care line I was using had 2 to 6 ingredients from the Toxic Twelve Chemicals List (see below) in each product. Even our Kid’s Shampoo contained 6 toxic ingredients. Regulations and even labeling requirements are very weak in the U.S. The European Union has banned more than 1100 toxic chemicals from personal care products, but the U.S. has only banned 10 chemicals in the last 67 years. [[3]](#footnote-3)

The Toxic Free Foundation compiled the Toxic Alarm Guide which contains a Toxic Twelve List. Reading labels can be confusing and make you feel like you need a doctorate in chemistry.

Also, be careful when buying “natural” or “organic” as the industry standard and true meaning of these terms is often not what you think it means. Look for products that are ECO-Cert certified. ECO-Cert requires strict definition of organic for the entire process from seed to packaging and is a true third party verification.

**Toxic 12 List**

1. Dioxin
2. Triclosan
3. Phthalates
4. Benzoyl Peroxide
5. PEG (Polyethylene)
6. DEA, MEA and TEA
7. FD&C Color and Pigments
8. Parabens (Meth, Butyl, Ethyl, Propyl)
9. Propylene Glycol (PG) and Butylene Glycol
10. DMDM Hydantoin and Urea (Imidazolidinyl)
11. Sodium Laurel Sulfate (SLS) and Sodium Laureth Sulfate (SLES)
12. Sunscreen Chemicals: avobenzone, benzphenone, ethoxycinnamate, PABA, oxybenzone, Padimate O, plus avoid sprays and powders and bug repellant/sunscreen combos.[[4]](#footnote-4)

**There are a few other things to avoid as well according the Environmental Working Group:[[5]](#footnote-5)**

1. Placenta – found in some skin and hair care products
2. Mercury or thimerosal – found in some mascaras
3. Lead – found in some black hair dyes
4. Fragrance – try to buy fragrance free products.
5. Animal Parts – Mink and Emu oil are used as conditioning agents in a variety of personal care products.
6. Hydroquinone Skin Lightener
7. Nanoparticles – found in some sunscreens and skin creams
8. Phthalates – found in some nail polish
9. Petroleum By products – found in some skin creams and shampoos.

Whew! That is a lot to know. Definitely print out the list, look through your cabinets and take it to the store. If you can minimize the toxic chemicals coming into your body, you can allow your body to focus on its healing and repair work. Once you find the products that meet the standards then you can continue to buy them. However, periodically check the labels as new company owners or improved product formulations can alter the ingredients list.

Susan Trost is our Healthier Living expert. Visit her website for more information on improving your health, aging and well being by reducing toxins and utilizing high tech as well as natural products including non-toxic skin care and cleaning products at [www.livinghealthiernow.com](http://www.livinghealthiernow.com).

1. Environmental Working Group, Skin Deep Website www.cosmeticsdatabase.com [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Susan Jeske presentation “The Ugly Side of Beauty. Are your Cosmetics & Personal Care Items Safe?” [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Susan Jeske presentation “The Ugly Side of Beauty. Are your Cosmetics & Personal Care Items Safe?” [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The ToxicAlarm™ Guide - courtesy of The ToxicFree® Foundation [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Environmental Working Group, “What not to buy”, http://www.cosmeticsdatabase.com/special/whatnottobuy/ [↑](#footnote-ref-5)