

dirty dozen +

chemicals in our daily use products that should be avoided

Chemical: Butyl Acetate

Function: Solvent in polishes and treatments, prevents chipping.

Present in: Nail polish and nail treatments like strengtheners, hardeners, top/base coats.

Health Concerns: Repeated exposure causes skin dryness and cracking; vapors may induce drowsiness or dizziness.

Chemical: Butylated Hydroxytoluene

Function: Anti-oxidant; slows down the rate at which product ingredients change in color.

Present in: Lip Makeup, Moisturizer, Eye Makeup, Anti-Aging Treatment, Foundation, Fragrance, Bar Soap, Shaving Products, Antiperspirant/Deodorant, Concealer, Sunscreen, Facial Cleanser, Body Wash, Blush, Shampoo, Conditioner, Acne Treatment, Body Lotion/Oil, Powder, Makeup Remover, Depilatory Cream, Toothpaste, Styling Product, Exfoliator, Nail Treatments.

Health Concerns: Eye and skin irritant.

Chemical: Coal Tar

Function: Controls itching and eczema, softens and promotes the dissolution of hard, scaly, rough skin, also used in hair dyes.

Present in: Shampoos and hair dyes.

Health Concerns: International agency government research on cancer says there is sufficient evidence that coal tars are carcinogenic in humans. EU banned coal tar from cosmetics in 2004.

Chemical: Cocamide DEA/Lauramide DEA

Function: Used as foaming agents in shampoos and bath products, and as emulsifying agents in cosmetics; foaming and cleansing agent for "mouth feel".

Present in: Shampoo, Body Wash/Cleansers, Bath Oils, Facial Cleanser, Liquid Hand Soap, Bar Soap, Acne Treatment, Baby Wash, Shaving Products, Body Scrubs, Foot Odor/Cream/Treatment, Deodorant, Moisturizer, Hair Dye/Spray.

Health Concerns: May be contaminated with impurities linked to cancer or other significant health problems. May form carcinogenic compounds called nitrosamines on the skin or in the body after absorption. Insufficient toxicity data to determine safety in products that will be inhaled, where chemicals become airborne and can be inhaled.

Chemical: Diazolidinyl Urea

Function: Formaldehyde-releasing, anti-microbial preservative.

Present in: Moisturizer, Styling Products, Shampoo/Conditioner, Hair Spray/Dyes, Anti-Aging Treatment, Facial Cleanser, Sunscreen, Facial Moisturizer, Foundation, Eye Makeup, Acne Treatment, Mascara, Body Wash/Cleansers, Deodorant, Concealer, Exfoliator, Powder, Body Scrubs, Bath Oils/Salts, Eye/Contact Care, Lip Makeup, Shaving Products, After Sun Product, Douche/Personal Cleanser, Makeup Remover, Depilatory Cream/Hair Remover, Liquid Hand Soap, Nail Treatments, Pain Relief Rub/Ointment, Fragrance.

Health Concerns: May be contaminated with impurities linked to cancer or other significant health problems.

Chemical: Ethyl Acetate

Function: Solvent.

Present in: Nail polish products, mascara, tooth whitening, perfume.

Health Concerns: Eye and skin irritant.

Chemical: Formaldehyde

Function: Disinfectant, germicide, fungicide, preservative.

Present in: Deodorants, nail polish, soap, shampoo, shaving cream.

Health Concerns: Suspected human carcinogen, may trigger asthma, irritant to the eyes, upper respiratory tract, can damage DNA, banned by the EU.

Chemical: Parabens (methyl, ethyl, propyl and butyl)

Function: Parabens are a group of chemicals widely used as preservatives in cosmetics to inhibit bacteria, yeast and mold growth and are antibacterial agents in antibacterial toothpaste.

Present in: Moisturizers, shampoos, conditioners, hair styling gels, nail creams, foundations, facial masks, skin creams, and deodorants, baby lotions, and other personal care products for children.

Health Concerns: May alter hormone levels, possibly increasing risks for certain types of cancer, impaired fertility, or alteration of the development of a fetus or young child. May cause skin irritation, rash or allergic skin reactions; studies have found parabens in breast tumors.

Chemical: Petrolatum

Function: Petrochemical that forms a barrier on skin; makes lipsticks shine and creams smoother; helps to soften skin in the same way as other products but less expensive.

Present in: One of every personal care products; creams, lotions, wax depilatories, eyebrow pencils, eye shadows, liquid powders, lipsticks.

Health Concerns: May be contaminated with impurities, linked to cancer or other significant health problems; causes allergic reactions. Banned by the EU.

Chemical: Phthalates

Function: Industrial chemicals that are used as solvents and plasticizers in cosmetics.

Present in: Nail polish, deodorant, fragrance, hair spray, hair gel/mousse, lotions.

Health Concerns: Phthalates can damage the liver, kidneys, lungs and in particular the developing male reproductive tract; permanent birth defects in the male reproductive system.

Chemical: Propylene Glycol

Function: Penetration enhancer; keeps products from melting in high heat or freezing when it is cold.

Present in: Shampoo/conditioner, bar soap, body wash, face cleanser, liquid hand soap, acne treatment, hair dye, shaving products, moisturizer, makeup remover, toothpaste, sunscreen, perfume, cologne, deodorant, toner/astringent, foundation, bronzer powder, nail polish, lip products, eye shadow/pencil, mascara.

Health Concerns: Alters skin structure, allowing other chemicals to penetrate deep into the skin increasing the amount of other chemicals that reach the bloodstream; skin irritant, causes allergic reactions.

Chemical: Sodium Laureth/Sodium Laurel Sulfate

Function: Penetration enhancer.

Present in: Shampoo/conditioner, bar soap, body wash, face cleanser, liquid hand soap, acne treatment, hair dye, mascara, shaving products, moisturizer, toothpaste, sunscreen, makeup remover, perfume, cologne.

Health Concerns: Alters skin structure, allowing other chemicals to penetrate deep into the skin increasing the amount of other chemicals that reach the bloodstream.

Chemical: Talc

Function: Absorbs moisture.

Present in: Primary ingredient in blush and powder eye shadow, perfumed powder, baby powder, deodorant, soap.

Health Concerns: Cosmetic-grade talc is a proven carcinogen, link between use of talcum powder and ovarian cancer, talc particles are similar to asbestos particles and data suggests that it can cause tumors in the lungs, found to cause tumors in lab animals.

Chemical: Toluene

Function: Solvent to improve adhesion and gloss.

Present in: Mainly nail polish and hair dye.

Health Concerns: Potentially cancer causing, pregnancy concern, liver damage, irritating to the skin and respiratory tract; harmful by inhalation.

Chemical: Triethanolamine

Function: A coating ingredient for fresh fruits and widely used as a dispersing ingredient in hand and body lotions, shaving cream, soaps, shampoos and bath powders.

Present in: Hand and body lotions, shaving creams, soaps, shampoos and bath powders.

Health Concerns: May form carcinogenic compounds called nitrosamines (compounds formed when chemicals containing nitrites react with amine, natural chemicals found in food and the body) on the skin or in the body—among the most potent cancer-causing agents found. Thought to possibly cause cancer in humans, based on limited data.