



Detox Your Home

Home is where the heart is. It is our haven, the place where we rest our head, and, ideally, the place where we regenerate. In a world where toxins are abundant, we can make positive changes for our health by striving to reduce the toxins in our home without sacrificing comfort, cleanliness, or our beauty routines.

Between cosmetics, cleaning products, furniture, and clothing we may be exposed to thousands of toxins every day. The average woman is wearing 515 chemicals every day!

Luckily, many companies have popped up, devoted to bringing healthier products to the masses. Detoxing your house means exploring these healthy options and integrating natural products into your household whenever you can, without judgement or breaking the bank!

Detoxing your home means choosing:

1. Clean Food

Pesticides are toxic by design. Intended simply to ward off pesky invaders that threaten plant crops, they have now been linked to many health concerns in humans, including hormone imbalances, digestive issues, autoimmune disease, and cancer. Additionally, many pesticides deplete our levels of vitamins and minerals.

Tips:

- Whenever possible, choose organic produce
- If you cannot buy organic, use a natural fruit and veggie wash to soak and clean produce
- If you can only buy certain produce organic, try to buy 'The Dirty Dozen' (see Resources) organic; these foods are highest in pesticides whereas the 'Clean Fifteen' (Resources) are lowest in pesticide residues

2. Clean Water

You may think that living in a metropolitan city, water quality is not a concern. However, did you know that chlorine is added to the tap water in Metro Vancouver? In order to kill off harmful bacteria, it unfortunately cannot differentiate between bad bacteria in the water and good bacteria in your digestive tract. Additionally, chlorine produces many chlorination by-products that have been linked to an increased risk of cancer.

Tips:

- If you can, investing in a home filtration system ensures that your drinking water, as well as cooking and shower water, is filtered
- Cheaper options include showerhead units, attachable tap units, and countertop filtration systems such as one of our favourites, the Berkey - all can be found at 'Your Water Matters' in Vancouver, BC or online.*

3. Clean Air

Outdoor air pollution is not the only concern when it comes to air quality; studies have shown that the air inside your house may be even more polluted!

Products we bring in to our home are the primary culprits including dry-cleaning, new furniture and clothes, as well as scent altering products such as air fresheners and candles. This is due to their high concentration of phthalates and flame retardants, as well as many other chemicals. Additionally, the components of your house itself can be a concern such as toxic paints, carpets sprayed with formaldehyde, or mold.

Tips:

- Reduce toxic products you bring into your home*
- Remove potential contaminants (such a dust, dirt, and mold; remove your shoes when you enter your home)
- Add tools to improve the quality of air*
- Ask your local nursery for guidance to pick indoor plants that improve air quality

4. Clean Beauty

Many cosmetics have been shown to include heavy metals such as mercury and lead, as well as chemicals that disrupt our hormones and may cause cancer.

And just because you are using cosmetics on your skin, don't think that it won't affect you systemically - our skin absorbs the products we use topically, carrying these substances into our bloodstream.

Tips:

- Check out The Environmental Working Group's Skin-Deep Cosmetics Database* that assesses the safety of a huge variety of cosmetics.
- Bring a list of the Dirty 30* with you when shopping for cosmetics; this list will guide you away from the most dangerous thirty chemicals commonly found in cosmetics.
- Check out our list of our favorite eco and health conscious beauty and self-care items*

5. Clean...Cleaning!

The easiest way to avoid toxins is to clean less (yippee!) which may actually be more beneficial for your immune system.

The "hygiene hypothesis" suggests that obsessive cleanliness decreases immune system development and can lead to more allergies. We're looking at you, antibacterial soap!



5. Clean...Cleaning! (Cont'd)

Tips:

- Focus on cleaning up obvious dirt using natural cleaning products
- Check out our list of our favorite products*
- DIY – many homecare products can be made easily and cheaply

6. Clean Décor

When trying to avoid household toxins, generally “new” doesn’t equal better. Newer furniture (including mattresses) and carpets contain many chemicals that they “off gas” (leach) into the air for long periods of time.

Tips:

- Choose vintage furniture
- Consider sustainably harvested hardwood, VOC (volatile organic compound) free paints, and natural carpeting
- Shop new for the bedroom and bathroom – look for organic bedding, towels, and shower curtains. These will not off gas and are easy to wash in hot water prior to using to ensure any unwanted residues are removed

Resources

1. Clean Food

- Dirty Dozen: Strawberries, apples, nectarines, peaches, celery, grapes, cherries, spinach, tomatoes, sweet bell peppers, cherry tomatoes, cucumbers, hot peppers, kale/collard greens
- Clean Fifteen: Avocados, sweet corn, pineapples, cabbage, sweet peas frozen, onions, asparagus, mangos, papayas, kiwi, eggplant, honeydew melon, grapefruit, cantaloupe, cauliflower

Source: ewg.org/foodnews

2. Clean Water

- Your Water Matters: yourwatermatters.com

3. Clean Air

- Dirty Thirty: *see attached*
- Aclare Air Purifier: healthyperceptions.com
- Amazon Canada: Salt lamps, beeswax candles, and HEPA filters | amazon.ca

4. Clean Beauty

- Dirty Thirty: *see attached*
- Environmental Working Group ‘Skin Deep’: ewg.org/skindeep

4. Clean Beauty (Cont'd)

Canadian-Based Online Shopping

- Clementine Fields
clementinefields.ca/collections/graydon
- Eco Diva Beauty - ecodivabeauty.ca
- The Green Kiss - thegreenkiss.com

Vancouver Retailers

- Basic Refill
- Finlandia
- Whole Foods Markets
- Be Fresh Markets

Natural Make-Up

- Sappho: organicsbysappho.com
- 100% Pure: 100percentpure.ca
- Sweet Leilani: sweetleilani.com
- Haut Cosmetics: hautcosmetics.ca
- Da Lish: dalishcosmetics.com
- W3ll People: w3llpeople.com
- ILIA: iliabeauty.com

Natural Skincare

- Osmia Organics: osmiaorganics.com
- Live Crude: livecrude.com
- Viva Organics: vivahealthskincare.com
- Harlow: harlowskinco.com
- Love North: lovenorth.ca
- Nourish Organic: nourishorganic.com

Natural Haircare

- 100% Pure: 100percentpure.com
- Yarok Hair: yarokhair.com
- Rahua: rahua.com
- One Love Organics: oneloveorganics.com

Natural Deodorant

- Nourish Organic: nourishorganic.com
- Jason: jason-personalcare.com
- Lafa's: lafes.com

Natural Facial Hair Care

- Urban Beard: urbanbeard.ca
- Mammoth Beard Co.: mammothbeard.ca

Natural Toothpaste

- Earthpaste: earthpaste.com
- Green Beaver: greenbeaver.com



The Dirty Thirty

The Dirty Thirty is a list of 30 chemical ingredients that may be linked to cancer. Many have been banned by the European Union on suspicion of their toxicity. What you may not know is that many of the biggest manufacturers of these products reformulate without these chemicals for the European market, but continue to manufacture with these potentially dangerous chemicals for the US market. Our hope is that you will use this list to help navigate your new purchases, and use your buying power to protect your right to health and a healthy world.

This list was compiled by Teens for Safe Cosmetics based on a survey of over 500 teens who named the products and brands they were using daily. In collaboration with a chemist, the ubiquitous chemicals were investigated for their potential harm to our health.

1. Aluminum Zirconium and Other Aluminum Compounds

Function: Used to control sweat and odor in the underarms by slowing down the production of sweat.

Present in: Antiperspirants. Banned by EU.

Health concerns: Linked to the development of Alzheimer's Disease; may be linked to breast cancer; probable neurotoxin; possible nervous system, respiratory, and developmental toxin.

2. Benzyl Acetate

Function: Solvent; hidden within "fragrance."

Present in: Many cosmetics and personal care products, read labels.

Health concerns: Linked to pancreatic cancer; easily absorbs into skin causing quick systemic effects; animal studies show hyperemia of the lungs; possible gastrointestinal, liver, and respiratory toxicant; possible neurotoxin.

3. Benzalkonium Chloride and Benzethonium Chloride

Function: Antimicrobial agent, deodorant, preservative, biocide.

Present in: Moisturizer, sunscreen, facial cleanser, acne treatment, pain relief. Restricted in Japan and Canada.

Health concerns: Immune system toxicant; may trigger asthma; possible organ system toxicant; animal studies show endocrine disruption and brain, nervous system, respiratory and blood effects; possible carcinogen.

4. Bronopol

Function: Preservative.

Present in: Moisturizer, body wash, facial cleanser, makeup remover, anti-aging products. Restricted in Canada.

Health concerns: Immune system toxicant; lung and skin toxicant; animal studies show endocrine disruption and gastrointestinal, brain and nervous system effects; irritant.

5. Butyl Acetate

Function: Solvent in polishes and treatments, prevents chipping.

Present in: Nail polish and nail treatments.

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

6. Butylated Hydroxytoluene (Bht)/ Butylated Hydroxyanisole (Bha)

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

Present in: Many cosmetics and personal care products, read labels. Banned by EU.

Health Concerns: Immune system toxicant; endocrine disruptor; probable human carcinogen; animal studies show brain, liver, neurotoxin, reproductive and respiratory toxicant.

7. Ethoxylated Ingredients: Cetareth/Peg Compounds

Function: Surfactant, emulsifying or cleansing agent, penetration enhancer.

Present in: Many cosmetics and personal care products, read labels.

Health concerns: Animal studies show brain, nervous system and sense organ effects; irritant; reproductive and skin toxin, alters skin structure, allowing other chemicals to penetrate deep into the skin and increasing the amounts of other chemicals that reach the bloodstream; may contain harmful impurities.

8. Coal Tar

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



8. Coal Tar (Cont'd)

Present in: Shampoo and Hair Dye. Banned by Canada and EU.

Health concerns: Known human carcinogen; skin and respiratory toxicant.

9. Cocamide Dea/ Lauramide Dea

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

Present in: Many cosmetics and personal care products, read labels.

Health concerns: Human immune system toxicant; forms carcinogenic nitrosamine compounds if mixed with nitrosating agents; animal studies show sense organ effects and skin irritation; may contain harmful impurities.

10. Diethanolamine

Function: pH adjuster

Present in: Sunscreen, moisturizer, foundation, hair color.

Health concerns: Skin and immune system toxicant; possible carcinogen; irritant; animal studies show endocrine disruption and neuro developmental, brain and nervous system effects; may trigger asthma.

11. Ethyl Acetate

Function: Solvent

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

Health concerns: Probable neurotoxin; possible nervous system toxin; possible carcinogen; irritant; highly flammable.

12. Formaldehyde

Function: Disinfectant, germicide, fungicide, preservative.

Present in: Deodorant, nail polish, soap, shampoo, shaving cream. Restricted in Canada. Banned by EU.

Health concerns: Immune system, respiratory, hematological, and skin toxicant; probable carcinogen and cardiovascular toxicant; can damage DNA; may trigger asthma; animal studies show sense organ, brain, and nervous system effects; possible human development toxicant.

13. Formaldehyde-Releasing Preservatives (Quaternium-15, Dmdm Hydantoin, Diazolidinyl Urea And Imidazolidinyl Urea, Dea, Mea, Tea)

Function: Anti-microbial preservative.

Present in: Many cosmetics and personal care products, read labels.

Health concerns: Forms nitrosamines when in the presence of amines such as MEA, DEA and TEA; probable immune system, blood, cardiovascular and skin toxicant; possible carcinogen; animal studies show endocrine disruption, nervous system and organ system effects; may contain harmful impurities.

14. Fragrance (Parfum)

Function: Deodorant, masking, perfuming

Present in: Many cosmetics and personal care products, read labels.

Health concerns: Immune system toxicant; possible neurotoxin; can contain between 10 and 300 different chemicals, many of which have never been tested for safety; see phthalates. Labeling can be confusing. If uncertain, check with manufacture.

15. Hydroquinone

Function: Antioxidant, fragrance ingredient, skin bleaching agent, hair colorant.

Present in: Skin fading/lightener, facial moisturizer, anti-aging, sunscreen, hair color, facial cleanser and moisturizer. Restricted in Canada.

Health concerns: Immune system and respiratory toxicant; probable neurotoxin; possible carcinogen; irritant; animal studies show endocrine disruption.

16. Iodopropynyl Butylcarbamate

Function: Preservative.

Present in: Many cosmetics and personal care products, read labels. Restricted in Japan.

Health concerns: Human toxicant; possible liver immune system toxin; allergenic.

17. LEAD And LEAD COMPOUNDS

Function: Colorant.

Present in: Hair dye, hair products. Traces found in some red lipstick. Restricted in Canada.



17. Lead and Lead Compounds (Cont')

Health concerns: Probable carcinogen; developmental, respiratory, gastrointestinal and reproductive toxicant; reduced fertility; animal studies show metabolic, brain and nervous system effects; suspected nano-scale ingredients with potential to absorb into the skin

18. Methylisothiazolinone (Mi/Mci) and Methylchloroisothiazolinone

Function: Preservative.

Present in: Many cosmetics and personal care products, read labels. Restricted in Canada and Japan.

Health concerns: Immune system toxicant; animal studies show restricted growth of the axons and dendrites of immature nerves, neurotoxicity and positive mutation results; can lead to a malfunction in the way neurons communicate with each other; especially detrimental to a developing nervous system.

19. Oxybenzone (Benzpenone-3)

Function: Sunscreen Agent; Ultraviolet Light Absorber, UV Absorber; UV Filter.

Present in: Sunscreens and makeup

Health concerns: Associated with photoallergic reactions and immunotoxicity. Probable carcinogen and endocrine disrupter; Enhanced skin absorption and bioaccumulates to dangerous levels; biochemical cellular changes. Developmental and reproductive toxicity.

20. Parabens (Methyl, Ethyl, Propyl and Butyl)

Function: Preservative and anti-bacterial agent.

Present in: Many cosmetics and personal care products, read labels.

Health concerns: May alter hormone levels, possibly increasing risk for certain types of cancer, impaired fertility, or alteration of the development of a fetus or young child; studies have found parabens in breast tumors; probable skin toxicant; animal studies show brain and nervous system effects.

21. Petrolatum (Petroleum)

Function: Forms barrier on skin; makes lipsticks shine and creams smoother; inexpensive skin softener.

Present in: Many cosmetics and personal care products, read labels. Banned by EU.

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

22. Phthalates (Dibutyl Phthalates)

Function: Fragrance ingredient, plasticizer, solvent.

Present in: Many cosmetics and personal care products, read labels. Banned in EU.

Health concerns: Immune system toxicant; developmental and reproductive toxin; respiratory toxicant; probable neurotoxin; possible carcinogen and endocrine disrupter; bio-accumulative in wildlife.

23. P-Phenylenediamine (Ppd)

Function: Hair colorant.

Present in: Hair dye, shampoo, hair spray. Restricted in Canada.

Health concerns: Immune system and respiratory toxicant; probable neurotoxin; eczema; possible nervous system, skin, kidney and liver toxicant; irritant; may trigger asthma and gastritis; shown to cause cancer in animal studies.

24. Propylene Glycol

Function: Solvent, penetration enhancer, conditions skin, controls viscosity and keeps products from melting in high or freezing when it is cold.

Present in: Many cosmetics and personal care products, read labels.

Health concerns: Alters skin structure, allowing other chemicals to penetrate deep into the skin and increasing the amounts of other chemicals that reach the bloodstream; animal studies show reproductive effects, positive mutation results, brain and nervous system effects and endocrine disruption.

25. Sodium Laureth Sulfate

Function: Surfactant, penetration enhancer.

Present in: Many cosmetics and personal care products, read labels.

Health concerns: Alters skin structure, allowing other chemicals to penetrate deep into the skin, increasing the amounts of other chemicals that reach the bloodstream; Irritant; animal studies show sense organ effects.

26. TALC

Function: Absorbs moisture, anti-caking agent, bulking agent.

Present in: Blush, powder, eye shadow, baby powder, deodorant.

Health concerns: Carcinogen; link between talcum powder and ovarian cancer; talc particles are similar to asbestos particles and data suggests that it can cause tumors in the lungs; probable respiratory toxin;

