

## What about Cosmetics?

### Use Fewer Products with Simpler Ingredients

Some beauty products contain carcinogens and endocrine-disrupting chemicals that increase breast cancer risk. Ask yourself which products you can do without; the best way to avoid chemicals is to use fewer products. Each product you cut from your beauty ritual decreases the number and quantity of chemicals to which you're exposed.

### Beware of Empty Organic and Natural Claims

Read labels for specific information on a product's ingredients, rather than relying on claims like "organic" or "natural." A USDA-certified organic seal means 95% or more organic ingredients. But a claim of "made with organic ingredients" or "made with natural ingredients" still leaves plenty of room for harmful synthetics.

### Read the Label to Avoid Synthetic Ingredients

Good: words that you've heard before, like aloe or lavender. Bad: words you can't even pronounce. Chemicals sound like chemicals. Avoid products with DMDM hydantoin and imidazolidinyl urea; parabens or any word ending in "-paraben"; "PEG" compounds and words ending in "-eth"; triclosan and triclocarban; triethanolamine (TEA); hydroquinone and oxybenzone. You also want to avoid synthetic fragrance, which can contain hundreds of chemicals, including toxic phthalates.

### Don't Sweat Over Your Antiperspirant

A possible source of aluminum in breast tissue may be the use of underarm antiperspirants, so try to find an aluminum-free formula.

### Avoid "Fragrance"

Although it's just one little word on the ingredient label, "fragrance" can contain dozens, even hundreds, of chemicals—including hormone-disrupting phthalates, synthetic musks, and ethylene oxide. Fragrance manufacturers claim the

formulas are confidential business information. So, until we change the law so consumers have the right to know what's in our products, it's best to avoid synthetic fragrance and opt for products that are fragrance-free or that contain natural fragrances like essential oils.

### Avoid These Top Offenders

Individual brands aside, some products are just bad news.

#### **Things to avoid:**

- Anti-aging creams with lactic, glycolic, AHA and BHA acids
- Hair dyes, especially dark permanent dyes
- Liquid hand soaps with triclosan/triclocarban
- Nail polish and removers with formaldehyde, DBP, or toluene, which can be contaminated with benzene
- Skin lighteners with hydroquinone
- Heavily scented products
- Moisturizers, ointments and skin creams with petrolatum, which can be contaminated with PAHs
- Fungicides, shaving creams, hair gels and hair coloring containing nonylphenol
- Hair spray, gel, mousse or shaving cream that contains isobutane, a propellant that can be contaminated with 1,3-butadiene
- Sunscreens with UV filters that mimic estrogen