

“Dirty Dozen”

Ingredients to Avoid in Personal Care Products



CATEGORY OR INGREDIENT	FUNCTION	FOUND IN	PRIMARY CONCERN
Parabens (ethyl-, methyl-, isobutyl-, propyl-, and butyl)	Preservative	Lotions, creams, foundations, and more.	Endocrine disruption
Propylene Glycol	Humectant or solvent.	Extracts, body wash, moisturizers, and more.	Enhances penetration, promotes skin irritation.
Sodium Laureth Sulfate (SLS)	Widely used surfactant.	Bubble bath, soap, shampoo, and more.	Enhances penetration, may also be contaminated with 1,4-dioxane*.
Phthalates (DBP, DMP, DEP)	Plasticizing agent, fragrance ingredient.	Nail polish, bath salts, lotions, and more.	Endocrine disruption, developmental and reproductive toxicity.
Nanoparticles	UV blocker, penetration of active ingredients.	Sunscreen, foundation, and more.	Untested for safety. Increase in absorption and free radicals.
DEA/TEA/MEA (di-, tri-, and monoethanolamine)	pH adjuster, surfactant.	Lotions, soaps, body washes, and more.	Trigger dermatitis, nitrosamines.
Coal Tar Derivatives (D&C dyes and toluene)	Dyes, toluene is a solvent	Dyes in lotions, body washes, soaps. Toluene in hair dyes, nail polish.	Potentially cancer causing. Coal tar ingredients are also frequently tested on animals due to their carcinogenic and toxic nature.
Formaldehyde/Formaldehyde Donors (diazolidinyl urea, DMDM hydantoin, Quaternium-15, and Bronopol)	Preservative	Moisturizers, cleansers, scrubs, and more.	Contact dermatitis, formaldehyde is classified as a probable human carcinogen by the EPA.
Hydroquinone	Skin lightening chemical.	Skin lightening products.	Research links it to cancer.
BHA (butylated hydroxyl anisole)	Fragrance ingredient, antioxidant.	Moisturizers, make-up, skin lightening products, and more.	Linked to cancer, toxicity, and bioaccumulation.
Octoxynols	Surfactant	Scrubs, cleansers, creams, and more.	Linked to cancer, developmental toxicity, endocrine disruption, and possible 1, 4-dioxane* contamination.
Ethyl Acetate	Fragrance ingredient, solvent.	Cleansers, tooth whitening products, scrubs, and more.	Skin, eyes, and lung irritation, developmental/reproductive toxicity.

Sources: Campaign for Safe Cosmetics, Environmental Working Group's *Skin Deep*, National Geographic *Green Guide*™

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*1,4-Dioxane is a carcinogen created when ingredients are processed with ethylene oxide, a petrochemical intermediate. According to Environmental Working Group, there are approximately 56 chemicals that may contain this contaminant. It is found in "PEGs" (polyethylene glycols), "PEs" (polyethylenes), "Xynols" (octoxynol), and "-Eths" (sodium laureth sulfate, etc.).