

# LESSEN YOUR TOXIC LOAD

Toxins are lurking in most conventional household products. What you put on your skin and inhale from inside your home can enter your body. This must be detoxed by your gut and its bacteria. When your gut health is compromised, your ability to detox can also be compromised. Even low-level toxins can have a great effect on your health.

The following is a list of toxic chemicals that are commonly found in personal care and cleaning products. Practice being a savvy consumer by reading product labels and looking for healthier alternatives whenever possible!

- **Parabens:**

Parabens are common preservatives found in cosmetics, shampoos, hair dyes, tanning sprays, sunscreens, and deodorants. They have been correlated with allergies and food sensitivities.

- **Phthalates:**

Phthalates are found in cosmetics, perfumes, soaps, hair sprays, nail polishes, shampoos, conditioners, detergents, and even in household items, like plastic shower curtains. Phthalates have estrogenic properties. And, chemicals with estrogenic properties are thought to affect glucose metabolism and adipose tissue.

- **Synthetic fragrances:**

The majority of synthetic fragrances are derived from petroleum. Common fragrance ingredients, like toluene and benzene derivatives, may be carcinogenic in high doses.

- **Dyes:**

A number of FDA-approved artificial dyes, referred to by the prefix “FD&C,” are used in foods, beverages, cosmetics, and other personal care products, such as shampoos and soaps. Avoid any dyes that are labeled “FD&C” or “D&C.” These dyes are derived from petroleum.

- **Sodium lauryl sulfates (SLS) and dextran sulfate sodium (DSS):**

Sodium lauryl sulfates and dextran sulfate sodium are emulsifiers and foaming agents found in shampoos, toothpastes, body washes, and cleansing products.

- **Triclosan:**

Until very recently, triclosan has been used in most antibacterial soaps. The FDA issued a ban on its use in soaps as a precaution against antibiotic resistance. However, these products may still be lurking on shelves while being phased out. Triclosan is also found in some products, like toothpaste.

For more information on the safety of everyday products, you can visit the Environmental Working Group (EWG) at [ewg.org](http://ewg.org). The EWG is a non-profit organization that offers education and consumer awareness around home and personal care products, food, and much more.

You can also check out apps, like [thinkdirtyapp.com](http://thinkdirtyapp.com), which lets you scan the barcode on products to receive their health ratings.