

# The Skinny on Skin Care

## AND OTHER HEALTH AND BEAUTY PRODUCTS

Did you know the government does not require that cosmetics and other personal care products be tested for safety? Or that the industry's own safety review panel has assessed *only 11 percent* of the 10,500 ingredients contained in health and beauty products available in stores today?

Given this lack of critical information, Environmental Working Group has developed Skin Deep, an online safety guide with in-depth information on nearly 15,000 products—makeup, lotion, lip balm, deodorant, sunscreen, toothpaste, hair dye and many other popular items.



The Skin Deep product assessments are available in a searchable database

[www.ewg.org/skindeep/](http://www.ewg.org/skindeep/)

enabling you to create a handy shopping list of products that are safest for you and your family.

### { 10 Things You Can Do } TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY

- 1 FOCUS on the ingredients.** Current law says manufacturers don't have to back up their claims, so don't trust marketing terms such as organic, natural and hypoallergenic. Read the fine print and check the ingredients.
- 2 TAME your soap.** Strong soaps can strip away your body's own natural skin oils. Choosing a milder soap can reduce skin dryness and your need for artificial moisturizers.
- 3 TURN UP your nose to added fragrances.** Fragrances can cause allergic reactions, and products that claim to be "fragrance free" often contain masking fragrances that give off a neutral odor. Check the label to be sure.
- 4 LIGHTEN UP on dark hair dyes.** Many contain coal tar ingredients that have been linked to cancer.
- 5 PUT DOWN the baby powder.** A number of ingredients in common powder have been linked to cancer, and the FDA warns that they can cause lung damage if inhaled regularly.
- 6 BRUSH OFF the fluoridated toothpaste.** Little kids eat toothpaste, and fluoride consumption has been linked to bone cancer in boys. There's a reason for the poison control warning on fluoridated toothpaste, so wait until they're at least six before giving it to them.
- 7 ABOLISH the nail polish, especially if you're pregnant.** It's a product that routinely contains ingredients linked to birth defects and other problems. If you do use it, always paint nails in a well-ventilated area.
- 8 GO EASY on the perfume or cologne.** They often contain phthalates and parabens, ingredients that have been linked to birth defects and breast cancer.
- 9 SIMPLIFY your life by using fewer personal care products.** Doing so will reduce potential health risks associated with those products.
- 10 SEARCH for products at the Skin Deep website [www.ewg.org/skindeep/](http://www.ewg.org/skindeep/).** Use the Custom Shopping List to find the personal care products that have the fewest health impacts.

# There is one other thing you can do ...

## SUPPORT THE ENVIRONMENTAL WORKING GROUP

The Food and Drug Administration has long held that manufacturers of cosmetics and personal care products are not required to test their products for safety. So how is anyone to know what's safe and what's not? And who is going to pressure manufacturers to fill store shelves with safe products?

We're the Environmental Working Group. Founded in 1993, our team of scientists, policy experts, lawyers and computer programmers pores over government data, legal documents, scientific studies and our own laboratory tests to expose threats to your health and the environment, and to push for solutions.

Our research brings to light unsettling facts that you have a right to know. It shames polluters and their lobbyists. It rattles politicians and shapes policy. It persuades bureaucracies to rethink science and strengthen regulation. And it provides practical information that you can use to protect your family—like the wealth of product research we make available on our Skin Deep website.

"The group's influence in and out of Washington is greatly out of proportion to its size."

— Chronicle of Philanthropy, 11 Jan. 2001



EWG needs your financial support to continue our important research and to push for solutions. We fill the information gap that prevents you from knowing about health risks associated with a variety of consumer products.

Please support EWG by making a tax-deductible donation today.

Use the enclosed reply envelope, or make a donation on EWG's secure website at:

[www.ewg.org/donate/](http://www.ewg.org/donate/)

Sign up for EWG's informative monthly newsletter.

You can keep abreast of the latest safety developments for personal care products and on a wide range of other consumer issues. Check the box on the enclosed donation envelope, or visit EWG's website at:

[www.ewg.org/newsletter/subscribe/](http://www.ewg.org/newsletter/subscribe/)

