

The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics

Men are impacted by Toxic Chemicals in Personal Care Products, too

The average American man uses six personal care products a day containing more than 80 unique chemicals. Many of these chemicals are absorbed into the skin, inhaled or ingested, and the vast majority of cosmetic chemicals have not been assessed for safety.

Some of the chemicals used in men's body-care products – from aftershaves and shaving creams, to deodorants and shampoos -- are linked to cancer, birth defects, learning disabilities and other chronic health problems. A common chemical found in most fragranced products may be particularly harmful to male reproductive health.

Problematic chemicals in men's personal care products include:

Diethyl phthalate (DEP): *found in fragrance-containing products such as cologne, aftershave, shaving cream, shampoos and deodorants*

- Recent human studies link DEP to sperm damage in adult men, abnormal reproductive development in infants, and Attention Deficit Disorder in children.ⁱ
- A study by Harvard University researchers suggests that a single use of cologne can markedly increase the level of DEP in a person's body.ⁱⁱ
- Recent product tests found DEP in popular men's colognes **Quicksilver, Calvin Klein Eternity for Men, Old Spice After Hours Body Spray** and **Abercrombie & Fitch Fierce**.ⁱⁱⁱ

Lead Acetate: *found in men's hair and beard colorants*

- Banned from cosmetics in European Union because it is a known human reproductive toxicant
- Brands include **Men's Grecian Hair Formula** and **Youthair Hair Color for Men**.

Coal Tar: *found in dandruff shampoos such as **Neutrogena T-Gel Shampoo***

- Known human carcinogen that is banned from cosmetics in European Union.

Triclosan: *found in anti bacterial soaps and deodorants such as **Old Spice Wide Stick Deodorant, Speed Stick deodorants, Dial anti-bacterial soaps** and **Edge Advanced Shaving Gel, Ultra Sensitive**.*

- Linked to hormone disruption, and the emergence of antibiotic-resistant bacteria.^{iv}
- The Canadian Medical Association asked the Canadian government to ban triclosan in household products due to concerns about bacterial resistance and carcinogenic byproducts.^v
- There is no evidence that triclosan soaps are any more effective than regular soap and water.^{vi}

Formaldehyde and 1,4-dioxane: *found in many leading shampoos and body washes*

- Known animal carcinogens and probable human carcinogens, according to US EPA.^{vii}
- Formaldehyde is a leading allergen that can trigger skin rashes and other allergic reactions.
- 1,4-dioxane is a leading groundwater contaminant and suspected as a kidney toxicant, neurotoxicant and respiratory toxicant, according to California EPA.

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Safer Alternatives are Available

Some companies are already making safer men's products that don't contain harmful chemicals such as phthalates and formaldehyde. Here are some companies who have signed the Compact for Safe Cosmetics and are making safer personal care products for men:

Maine Shave
Pangea
Weleda
MuLondon
Neal's Yard Remedies
Tom's of Maine
Key's Soap
Healing-Scents
Alba Botanica
Avalon Natural Products
Burt's Bees

Men can also search for safer products on the Environmental Working Group's Skin Deep database at www.cosmeticdatabase.org. Look for products in the 0-2 range with the green circle.

However, it's not possible to just shop our way out of this problem. Without new laws, hazardous chemicals will remain in the majority of personal care products – and the problem will remain hidden from consumers. Many of the toxic chemicals described here are not even listed on product labels due to loopholes that allow companies to keep secret the chemicals in fragrances (such as DEP) and the hazardous impurities (such as formaldehyde and 1,4-dioxane) that are commonly found in products.

[The Safe Cosmetics Act of 2010](#) will fix these problems by requiring companies to list all product ingredients on labels, and by setting up a system to ensure that all personal care products are assessed for safety and free of the most harmful chemicals.

This legislation will protect the health of everyone who uses personal care products, and will also ensure the long-term health of the cosmetics industry by shifting the industry away from toxic chemicals and spurring the innovation of safer products that consumers around the world are demanding.

About the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics

The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics is a national coalition of nonprofit women's health, public health and environmental health organizations. Our goal is to protect the health of consumers and workers by requiring the cosmetics industry to phase out the use of chemicals linked to cancer, birth defects and other serious health concerns, and replace them with safer alternatives. We're working with responsible businesses and thousands of citizen-activists to shift the cosmetics market toward safer products and to advocate for effective laws that protect our health from toxic chemicals. Visit us at www.safecosmetics.org.

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ⁱ Swan SH, Main KM, Liu F, Stewart SL, Kruse RL, Calafat AM, et al. 2005. Decrease in anogenital distance among male infants with prenatal phthalate exposure. *Environ Health Perspect* 113(8):1056-61; Swan SH. 2008. Environmental phthalate exposure in relation to reproductive outcomes and other health endpoints in humans. *Environmental Research* 108(2): 177-84; Duty SM, Singh NP, Silva MJ, Barr DB, Brock JW, Ryan L, et al. 2003. The Relationship between Environmental Exposures to Phthalates and DNA Damage in Human Sperm Using the Neutral Comet Assay. *Environ Health Perspect* 111(9): 1164-9; Engel SM, Miodovnik A, Canfield RL, Zhu C, Silva MJ, Calafat AM, Wolff MS. 2010 Prenatal phthalate exposure is associated with childhood behavior and executive functioning. *Environmental Health Perspectives* in press.

ⁱⁱ Duty SM, Ackerman RM, Calafat AM Hauser R. 2005. Personal care product use predicts urinary concentrations of some phthalate monoesters. *Environ Health Perspectives* 113(11): 1530-5.

ⁱⁱⁱ Campaign for Safe Cosmetics report, "Not So Sexy: The Health Risks of Secret Chemicals in Fragrance." March 2010 http://safecosmetics.org/downloads/NotSoSexy_report_May2010.pdf

^{iv} Environmental Working Group, "Pesticide in Soap, Toothpaste and Breast Milk - Is It Kid-Safe?" July 2008 <http://www.ewg.org/triclosanguide>

^v Yang, Jeniffer (2009-08-21). "Experts concerned about dangers of antibacterial products". *Globe and Mail*. <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/health/experts-concerned-about-dangers-of-antibacterial-products/article1259471/>.

^{vi} WebMD, "FDA Panel: No Advantage to Antibacterial Soap: Advisory Panel Says Regular Soap and Water Just as Effective in Preventing Illness" October 2005 <http://www.webmd.com/news/20051020/fda-panel-no-advantage-to-antibacterial-soap>

^{vii} For more information about formaldehyde and 1,4 dioxane in products see Campaign for Safe Cosmetics report, "No More Toxic Tub: Getting Contaminants out of Children's Bath and Personal Care Products." March 2009. <http://www.safecosmetics.org/toxictub>. The report focuses on children's products such as shampoo and bubble baths, but many adult products are also contaminated with formaldehyde and 1,4-dioxane.