

## 11. COSMETICS COMPANIES MAKE PRODUCTS AT BOTH ENDS OF THE SAFETY SCALE.

Of the more than 200 mascaras on the Skin Deep website, Maybelline Illegal Lengths Washable Mascara is ranked as the highest-concern mascara. Maybelline is owned by the French company L'Oreal, which also makes L'Oreal Waterproof Voluminous Volume Building Mascara, ranked as one of the safer mascara products. Another industry giant, Estee Lauder, makes the bubble baths of highest concern, Sea Plunge Calming Soak and White Linen Bath and Shower Gel, but also makes the low-concern Aveda Energizing Composition bubble bath.

One large company often makes many brands, sometimes producing different brands in the same factory. Estee Lauder-branded products have an overall Skin Deep ranking of 4.1. But other Estee Lauder-owned brands in the Skin Deep database have different levels of concern:

1 is lowest concern, 5 is highest concern

Estee Lauder Brand	Skin Deep Score
Aveda	2.5
Bumble and Bumble	3.2
MAC	3.2
Clinique	3.6
Prescriptives	3.6
Origins	4
Estee Lauder	4.1

## 12. SMALL EXPOSURES CAN ADD UP TO HARM.

The cosmetics industry says it's safe to put chemicals that can cause cancer, infertility or other health problems into personal care products because the amount in each product is too small to matter. But count the products you use in a single day—toothpaste, soap, shampoo, hair conditioner, hair gel, deodorant, body lotion, sunscreen, shaving products and makeup—and think about how many products you use in a year, and over a lifetime. Chemicals linked to cancer and birth defects do not belong in personal care products, period.



### THE TRUTH CAN ALSO BE BEAUTIFUL.

Some companies are making safer products today and striving to make even safer products in the future. More than 300 companies have signed the Compact for Safe Cosmetics, a pledge to remove hazardous chemicals and replace them with safe alternatives within three years.

Some of the largest companies in the natural products industry have signed the Compact. But none of the cosmetic industry giants have signed...yet.

The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics needs your help to convince Avon, Estee Lauder, L'Oreal, Procter & Gamble, Revlon, OPI and other cosmetics companies to sign the Compact.

For a full list of Compact signers, please visit [www.safecosmetics.org](http://www.safecosmetics.org)

**Please join us in our efforts to give the cosmetics industry a makeover!**

### The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics

[www.SafeCosmetics.org](http://www.SafeCosmetics.org)

c/o 1388 Sutter St., Suite 400  
San Francisco, CA 94109

The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics is a national coalition of health and environmental groups. The Campaign's goal is to protect the health of consumers and workers by requiring the health and beauty industry to phase out the use of chemicals linked to cancer, birth defects and other serious health concerns—and replace them with safe alternatives. Members of the Campaign include:

Alliance for a Healthy Tomorrow, Breast Cancer Fund, Commonweal, Free the Planet!, Friends of the Earth, Women's Voices for the Earth, Environmental Working Group, Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition, National Black Environmental Justice Network and the National Environmental Trust.

### HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO.

#### 1. LEARN MORE, TAKE ACTION: Visit [www.SafeCosmetics.org](http://www.SafeCosmetics.org)

- **Choose Safer Products Now.** Visit our partner Environmental Working Group's Skin Deep database, the world's largest searchable database of ingredients in cosmetics. Find out if your favorite products contain hazardous chemicals and find safer alternatives.
- **Give the Cosmetics Companies a Makeover.** Sign our petition to the cosmetics industry, it's an easy way to let the big companies know you want safe products.
- **Stay Informed and Take Action Locally!** Get the latest news about the campaign, find out if your favorite company has pledged to make safer products, join the Safe Cosmetics Action Network, download an action kit and learn how you can hold a Healthy Cosmetics Spa Party and connect with other activists in your area.

#### 2. TELL YOUR COSMETICS COMPANIES YOU WANT SAFE PRODUCTS.

- **Contact the companies** that have not signed the Compact for Safe Cosmetics, a pledge to phase out toxic chemicals. Call them, write them, email them to let them know you want safe products now! Look on product packaging for a customer service hotline or website.

#### Toll free customer support lines:

OPI: 1-800-341-9999

L'Oreal: 1-800-322-2036

Estee Lauder: 1-877-311-3883

Procter & Gamble: 1-800-725-3296

Revlon: 1-800-473-8566

Avon: 1-800-445-AVON

#### 3. SPREAD THE WORD.

- Tell your friends, coworkers, and family about toxic chemicals in cosmetics and tell them how they can learn more and take action. Make photocopies of this fact sheet or download more materials from our website:

[www.SafeCosmetics.org](http://www.SafeCosmetics.org)

*\*Skin Deep, a report by the Environmental Working Group, is a review of ingredients found in 14,100 name-brand personal care products in 2005. Sources for information in this brochure can be found at [www.ewg.org/skindEEP/](http://www.ewg.org/skindEEP/)*



Because  
"USE DAILY"  
shouldn't be  
dangerous  
advice

# UNMASKED

## 12 Ugly Truths Behind the Myth of Cosmetic Safety

The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics

[www.SafeCosmetics.org](http://www.SafeCosmetics.org)

# 12 Ugly Truths Behind the Myth of Cosmetics Safety

## 1. TOXIC CHEMICALS ARE WIDESPREAD IN BEAUTY PRODUCTS—AND IN OUR BODIES.

Every day we use multiple personal care products—from shampoo, to deodorant, toothpaste, lotion and makeup—that contain chemical ingredients that are absorbed through the skin, inhaled or ingested. So, it's not surprising that synthetic chemicals have gotten into our bodies, our breast milk and our children. Some of these chemicals are linked to cancer, birth defects, learning disabilities and other health problems that are epidemic in our society. Astonishingly, 1 in 2 men, and 1 in 3 women in the U.S. are expected to develop cancer during their lifetimes, according to the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences.

## 2. THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE PROTECTING US, BUT IT'S NOT.

Major loopholes in federal law prevent the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or any other government agency from approving the safety of cosmetics and body care products before they can be sold. The European Union now bans more than 1,100 chemicals from personal care products because they may cause cancer, birth defects, or reproductive problems. In stark contrast, just nine chemicals are banned from cosmetics in the United States.

### CHEMICALS BANNED FROM COSMETICS

United States: 9  
European Union: 1,100+

## 3. YOU CAN'T BELIEVE INDUSTRY SAFETY CLAIMS.

Manufacturers always say their products are safe. But what do those claims really mean? It may mean that the company has tested the ingredients it uses—but sometimes only to determine if the chemicals cause rashes, swelling or other acute reactions. Companies are not required to test whether the ingre-

One third of personal care products contain at least one chemical linked to cancer, according to the Skin Deep report by the Environmental Working Group, a partner of the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics.\*

dients in their products can cause long-term health effects, like cancer or the inability to have a healthy child. Since there is no government standard of safety, companies can say whatever they want about the safety of their products.

## 4. THE \$35-BILLION COSMETICS INDUSTRY ROUTINELY OPPOSES LAWS THAT WOULD PROTECT CONSUMERS AND THE ENVIRONMENT.

The Cosmetics, Toiletry and Fragrance Association (CTFA) has lobbied against laws that would control pollution at cosmetics manufacturing plants, require recycled content in packaging, or add more consumer safety information on labels. The industry says it doesn't need laws because it can voluntarily regulate itself. An industry-funded panel called the Cosmetics Ingredients Review panel—not the FDA or any other government agency—is currently in charge of reviewing the safety of cosmetics.

Ingredients in personal care products: **10,500**

Percentage of chemical ingredients in cosmetics that have been assessed for health and safety by the industry's self-policing safety panel: **11%**

## 5. WE HAVE TO PROTECT OURSELVES UNTIL WE CONVINCED THE GOVERNMENT TO PROTECT US.

According to Skin Deep, campaign partner Environmental Working Group's interactive product safety database, the highest-concern product categories are:

- Hair color and bleach
- Hair relaxer
- Nail polish
- Skin lightener
- Nail treatment

But even in these highest-concern categories, there are safer product choices an individual can make.

## 6. TWO OF THE HIGHEST-CONCERN COSMETICS CATEGORIES ARE MARKETED ESPECIALLY TO AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMEN.

Products promising lighter skin and straighter hair are problematic because of their message about what is considered beautiful. But the Skin Deep report shows that some hair relaxers and skin lighteners share a second problem: they contain ingredients that are linked to cancer, sensitization of the skin, and other health concerns.

## 7. MOST PRODUCT INGREDIENTS HAVE NEVER BEEN ASSESSED FOR LINKS TO LONG-TERM HEALTH PROBLEMS. HOWEVER, EVEN INGREDIENTS THAT ARE KNOWN TO CAUSE HARM CAN BE PUT INTO PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS. EIGHT OF THE MOST PROBLEMATIC ARE:

### MERCURY

Possible human carcinogen. Possible human reproductive or developmental toxin. Found in some eye drops and ointment, and deodorants.

### LEAD ACETATE

Known human reproductive and developmental toxin. Prohibited for use in cosmetics in the European Union. Found in some hair dyes and cleanser.

### FORMALDEHYDE

Known human carcinogen. Found in some nail treatments.

### TOLUENE

Possible human reproductive or developmental toxin. May contain harmful impurities or breakdown products. Found in some nail polish.

### PETROLEUM DISTILLATES

Possible human carcinogen. May contain harmful impurities or breakdown products. Prohibited for use in cosmetics in the European Union. Found in some mascara, perfume, foundation, lipstick and lip balm.

### ETHYLACRYLATE

Unsafe according to International Fragrance Association. Possible human carcinogen. Skin sensitizer. Found in some mascara.

### COAL TAR

Known human carcinogen. Prohibited for use in cosmetics in the European Union. May contain harmful impurities or breakdown products. Found in dandruff shampoos, anti-itch creams, and hair dyes.

### DIBUTYL PHTHALATE

Prohibited for use in cosmetics in the European Union. Possible human reproductive or developmental toxin. Endocrine disruptor. Found in some nail polish, perfume, and hair spray.

## 8. PAYING MORE DOESN'T BUY YOU SAFER PRODUCTS.

A review of the 14,100 products now in the Skin Deep database found that the more expensive products were no safer than the less expensive brands in each category. Sometimes, paying more means buying more potential harm. The five facial moisturizers of highest concern—made by Avon, Elizabeth Arden, Ultima, Clarins and Estee Lauder—cost \$12.48 more per ounce than the five facial moisturizing products made of ingredients that pose the lowest concern. The five facial

moisturizers with lowest-concern ingredients are made by Terressentials, Desert Essence, Aubrey Organics, Lily of Colorado and Reviva Labs.

## 9. MEN HAVE PROBLEMS TOO.

Two products marketed to men to color gray hair (EBL GreyBan and Grecian Formula 16) contain lead acetate—which can harm fertility and impact the development of a child before birth. Just For Men Shampoo-in Hair Color ranks as the highest concern shampoo. Some after-shave lotions, anti-dandruff shampoos, teeth whiteners, sunless tanning products and colognes are also in the highest-concern category. Skin Deep lists many safer alternatives in each category.

## 10. THE WORD "NATURAL" ON A PRODUCT LABEL DOESN'T MEAN IT'S SAFE—OR NATURAL.

OPI Natural Nail Strengthener has the highest hazard rating of all 14,100 products in the Skin Deep database. What's so "natural" about a product with 13 different ingredients that raise health concerns? OPI nail polish and nail treatments contain toluene, formaldehyde and dibutyl phthalate—three of the top ingredients of concern (see #7) because of scientific evidence linking them to birth defects and cancer.

**Double Standard:** OPI Products, the world's largest nail polish manufacturer, has removed dibutyl phthalate from its European product lines, but OPI refuses to remove the toxic phthalate from nail products it sells in the U.S.

