



EXPOSURE FROM PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS

The Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition is a founding member of the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics. We have always been concerned about the safety of chemicals in consumer products and will continue to advocate for increased legislation to get chemicals linked to breast cancer and other diseases out of cosmetics. Here are some things you can do at home to reduce your exposure...

Read Labels – Personal care products such as shampoo, deodorant, make-up, and lotions contain chemicals that are linked to serious health problems. Cosmetics companies are able to put unlimited amounts of chemicals in their products without testing them for their effects on human health. Some of the dangerous products and chemicals are listed below but researchers are learning about new ones every day. Even products made for children such as baby shampoo can contain dangerous chemicals.

Check the Skin Deep Database – www.ewg.org/skindeep can help you figure out what's in your products and how to find safer ones.

- 1) *Fragrances* – Buy unscented or products that do not list “fragrance” in the ingredients (essential oils are okay). Chemicals used in fragrances such as phthalates, ethylene oxide, xylene and ketone have been linked to breast cancer. Fragrances contain many chemicals so it is important to read all labels and know your risk.
- 2) *Hair Products* - Many hair products contain placenta and can greatly increase breast cancer risk. The placenta is an organ that develops in females during pregnancy and creates hormones. In hair products with placenta, these hormones may be absorbed into your body and increase your risk of breast and other cancers.
- 3) *Skin Lighteners and Sunscreens* - Skin lighteners that contain the chemical hydroquinone may increase the risk for breast and other cancers. Hydroquinone lightens skin by preventing the creation of the substance that creates the skin's color. Many sunscreens contain chemicals called phthalates and parabens such as oxybenzone and benzophenone that are also linked to breast cancer.
- 4) *Nail Polish* – Nail polish may contain the “toxic trio” DBP, formaldehyde, and toluene. In 2006 OPI, Orly, and Sally Hansen announced that they would be phasing out these chemicals from their nail polish products.
- 5) *Lipstick* – according to a study by the FDA many popular lipstick brands contain lead - L'Oreal is one of the worst offenders.

YOUR VOICE AND ACTION IS NEEDED IN MBCC CAMPAIGNS TO PREVENT BREAST CANCER BEFORE IT STARTS!
Visit www.mbcc.org for volunteer opportunities and information about upcoming events. Stay in the loop: to receive updates, subscribe to our e-newsletter and “Like” us on Facebook.

Information provided by the Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition