

LS SUGGESTS

Beauty products through a microscope

TV commercials do a good job of influencing us to purchase certain products, and when they specifically point out the special ingredients put into making the product, we are sold. But, what we do miss is the fact that even with some great high quality ingredients, some not so good ingredients also go in manufacturing some of these products.

We usually have a tendency of not checking the ingredients lists on our personal care and beauty products before purchasing, mostly because there are numerous chemicals and ingredients listed which we are not familiar with. Hence, we are unaware of what ingredients to avoid and what not to, and although most personal care and beauty products are packed with numerous chemicals, not all of them are harmful. Some chemicals in particular stand out in almost all products, and yet you should steer clear of these as much as possible.

PARABENS

Parabens are a class of preservative agents that prevent bacteria from growing in our personal care products, when used numerous times every day, these get absorbed into the skin over and over again. In the long run these can be carcinogenic—causing cancer. Nowadays, most products come with seals stating "Parabens free" as more people are becoming aware. A less harmful version of parabens are their bi-products known as butylparaben, isobutylparaben, methylparaben, propylparaben and many more, which are less damaging than parabens. Look out for these chemicals in ingredients lists when purchasing makeup, body wash, deodorants and other personal care products.

FRAGRANCES OR SCENTS

Oh how we all love fragrances! Some of us even consider it a bonus finding "added fragrance" or "perfume" in our ingredients lists, which it is in some cases. Despite that, not all fragrances are composed of good chemicals.

When purchasing products with added fragrance make sure to do a good background check on the brand or company of the product to ensure it is a good brand and that the fragrances added are not harmful. When buying low-cost everyday products, it is best to avoid fragrances as bad chemicals maybe present such as phthalates or other carcinogens which can cause respiratory distress, dermatitis and allergies.

Overall, if confusion occurs about brands and safety, it is best to avoid scents all together and purchase non-scented products to be on the safe side.

PHTHALATES

Phthalates are used as plasticisers, which are used to moisturise and soften the skin, something we always look for in skincare products. From skincare to cosmetics to hair care and even perfumes, phthalates are used in most of these products. This is a common chemical used in products such as plastics to increase their flexibility and softness. That tells us it is definitely not something to put on our skin or hair on a daily basis. Also phthalates are known to damage the kidneys, liver, lungs and reproductive system. They will often come across as di-butyl-phthalate or di-ethylhexyl-phthalate in ingredients' lists. It is definitely not possible to completely avoid these ingredients which are found in almost every product, so the key is to lessen the use as far as possible.

Sodium lauryl sulfate (SLS) / Sodium laureth sulfate (SLES) Sodium compounds are found in more than 90 percent of all skincare products as surfactants. They are mostly used to create the foam we get from soaps and shampoos. The problem with surfactants is that they quickly combine with other chemicals to form carcinogens and are known to cause irritations in the lung, eyes and skin. This is another chemical that is hard to eliminate from beauty routines as they are present in almost every product, so it is again best to use as less as possible. A lot of organic products do not produce as much foam because of their lack of surfactants,

which in this sense makes them a better choice.

SUNSCREEN CHEMICALS

Sunscreen is one of those products without which most people cannot live. Sadly, there are a few chemicals also found in sunscreens which help absorb UV rays but affect our bodies in other ways. These chemicals such as PABA and avobenzene are known to cause cellular damage in the body and maybe even cancer in the long run. The answer is not to avoid sunscreen, because that will end up in excess UV rays harming our skin leading to skin cancer instead, but to choose ones without these chemicals present. Sunscreens are different from regular creams in the sense that a lot of chemicals go into those for sun protection, hence it is crucial to choose well-known brands when purchasing as low cost sunscreens contain lots of harmful chemicals. Lots of sunscreens nowadays come with a PABA free tag, so make sure to check before buying your next sunscreen.

TRICLOSAN

Triclosan is a chemical mainly used in deodorants, cleansers, hand sanitizers and toothpastes as a preservative and an anti-bacterial agent because of its bacteria and fungus resisting properties. The downside with triclosan is that it can cause irritation and is also a long term hazard to the environment. It is best to avoid upon allergic reactions or irritations, and use as minimum as possible all together.

METALS

Metals such as Lead, Mercury, Cadmium, Arsenic, Nickel and many more are immensely harmful for a person's health. The problem with metals is that they keep accumulating inside the body over time, eventually causing numerous health problems including cancer, muscle disorders, lung damage, vomiting and nausea and many more. Many lipsticks contain these metals, specifically lead.

SKIN WHITENING PRODUCTS

Lastly, one of the most harmful products lined up in stores are skin whitening products, a very popular product not only in Bangladesh but in South Asia. Most of them, especially ones on the lower end cost contain bleach and other harmful ingredients which give a temporary brightening effect but can prove to be extremely harmful in the long run. People are beautiful in their own natural skin tones, and when that is altered using chemicals it can result in skin cancer.

Herbal products are widely available in stores as an alternative, but the use of such products should be lessened to avoid harm as much as possible. Same goes for off-the-counter products, the lesser the better in terms of your skin's health.

Numerous potentially toxic chemicals are being used in our personal care and beauty products which can be damaging to our health. It is not possible to avoid every single chemical there is, but its extent of use can be reduced by being a bit cautious.

For this reason, make sure to check the ingredients lists before purchasing products both in stores and online, and watch out for the mentioned ingredients above.

By Anisha Hassan

Special thanks to Dr Firdous Qader Minu MBBS, DLO ENT, Head-Neck & Cosmetic Surgeon for her expert opinion.



WHY DO WE NEED TO TRIM OUR TUMMY FAT ?

Everybody desires a flat seductive tummy but with age, stress, sedentary life style, child bearing or lack of exercise can keep you far away from it. Sadly, tummy fat is not just about fitting into your clothes but also a big issue for long-term health.

Here are 4 reasons to work on shedding it:

1. The visceral fat of the tummy is "biologically active," & produces hormones (ladiponectin & leptin) that affects appetite & metabolism & blood sugar-regulating insulin. **Fatty liver change** is one of its consequences.
2. Fatty acids released by belly fat are also linked to higher LDL (bad cholesterol) & lower HDL (good cholesterol) & pumps out cytokines promoting constant low-level inflammation & insulin resistance.
3. As large waists are estrogen receptor negative, it is more likely to develop breast cancer.
4. Tummy fat & reduces fertility and potency.



Shape up without surgery and pain



Its better late than never...

- **Ultracontour HIFU** (High Intensity Focused Ultrasound) can be an excellent answer to achieve a flatter tummy.
- This revolutionary French technique sculpts your body by eliminating the unwanted pockets of 'exercise & diet-resistant fat'
- Effective on fat of **tummy, hips, love handles, thighs, back & arms.**
- The multisequential ultrasonic waves burst the fat cells & drain the fluids & the waste immediately by Ultrasound Multi-Lymphatic Drainage (UMD).
- The procedure is permanent & shows circumference loss of 1-3 inches after the procedure.
- This fascinating procedure can be a non-invasive answer to those who are afraid of surgical intervention & more concern about shaping up themselves.



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