

linked to cancer, suspected hormone disruptor
Cinnamal: allergen, skin irritant, neurotoxic, hormone disruptor, mutagenic, linked to cancer
Eugenol: skin irritant, neurotoxic, hormone disruptor, linked to cancer
Isoeugenol: allergen, skin irritant, neurotoxic, hormone disruptor, reproductive toxin, mutagenic, linked to cancer
Limonenone: may cause allergic reactions, skin irritant
Linalool: eye and skin irritant, neurotoxic, mutagenic

TIPS TO AVOID TOXIC CHEMICALS IN FRAGRANCES

- Always read the ingredients before buying a personal care product. Look for the most natural and safest products. To find out more about ingredients see "Further information"
- Don't buy anything that lists "fragrance", "perfume" or "parfum" as an ingredient.
- Look for products labelled "fragrance-free".
- Some products contain a very low level of fragrance that is not legally required to be listed on the label but can still cause dermatitis or other symptoms. Some of these products even have "unscented" on the label. If in doubt, choose another brand.
- If you want a product that "smells nice" consider a product scented with essential oils, but be aware that they also cause health problems in some people. Also, check the ingredients as many products with essential oils also contain artificial fragrance.

SAFE PRODUCTS

Products that are safe to be used by or around most (but not all) people who are sensitive to fragrance and other chemicals:

- **Herbon** fragrance-free soaps, shampoos, conditioner, moisturiser. Also range of fragrance-free laundry and cleaning products (Some Herbon cleaning products are also available

scented with essential oils) www.herbon.com.au
 Phone: (03) 9775 0224

- **Akin** unscented hair and skin care range: (Akin also have products scented with essential oils). www.purist.com Free call 1800 631 283

- **Simple** fragrance-free personal care products www.simpleskincare.com.au

- **Deonat** crystal deodorant (unscented)

- **Freedom** fragrance-free soap, shampoo and deodorant www.freedomfoods.com.au Phone: (03) 9553 5155

- **Mi-essence** Aroma Free Roll-on Deodorant (also a range of personal care and beauty products with essential oils) www.mionegroup.com

- **Arvensis** Fragrance-Free Baby Lotion – all natural lotion for sensitive skin (also products with essential oils) www.arvensis.com.au or phone 1300 791 711

As well as fragrance-free personal care products, choose laundry and cleaning products without fragrance. Look in health food shops, health food sections of supermarkets and pharmacies. Longer lists and a booklet of fragrance-free and natural products and where to get them are available from **AESSRA Inc., PO Box 298, Ringwood, Vic 3134** www.vicnet.net.au/~aessra

FURTHER INFORMATION

Skin Deep is a safety guide to personal care products and cosmetics, developed by the Environmental Working Group. You can look up individual ingredients as well as many brands. www.cosmeticsdatabase.com

Perfumes - Eau de toxines: A Greenpeace investigation of chemicals in perfumes <http://www.greenpeace.org/eu-unit/press-centre/reports/perfumes2>

The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics www.safecosmetics.org

Breast Cancer Fund www.breastcancerfund.org

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What's in your perfume, fragrances and scented products?



AESSRA

Allergy and Environmental Sensitivity Support and Research Association Inc.

ABOUT AESSRA

The Allergy and Environmental Sensitivity Support and Research Association Inc. is a self-help group for people with allergies and sensitivities, particularly chemical sensitivities.

Donations are tax-deductible.

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FRAGRANCE = CHEMICALS

Perfumes (fragrances) are now added to most cleaning, laundry and personal care products.

Until the 20th century perfume ingredients were taken entirely from plants and animals. Over the years perfumes have become more and more synthetic.

A fragrance is a mixture of many chemicals (sometimes hundreds) and consumers aren't told what they are buying. Under trade secret laws companies can just put 'fragrance' on the label instead of listing the chemicals in the fragrance.

The National Academy of Sciences reports that 95% of the chemicals that are used to produce perfumes and fragrances today are derived from petroleum, including known toxins capable of causing cancer, birth defects, central nervous system disorders and allergic reactions. Over 5,000 different chemicals are used in the making of fragrances, but only approximately 1,500 have been tested for safety.

Advertisers lead us to believe that we need fragrance products to be clean, beautiful and desirable, but the reality is we are rubbing petroleum derivatives into our skin and inhaling industrial solvents and other toxic chemicals.

HEALTH EFFECTS

Symptoms and conditions that can be caused or made worse by wearing fragrance or inhaling other people's fragrance include:

- asthma, difficulty breathing
- headaches (inc. migraine)
- sinus problems
- itchy, stinging, burning or runny nose
- eczema, contact dermatitis, skin rashes
- itchy, sore, stinging, dry, swollen or watery eyes
- fatigue, aching body or joints
- nausea
- anaphylaxis
- Multiple Chemical Sensitivity
- Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

There may also be long-term health effects.

PHTHALATES

Phthalates (pronounced Thal-ates) are common in scented products, mostly as solvents to carry the fragrance and other ingredients. Phthalates are hormone disruptors. They include Dibutyl Phthalates (DBP) and Diethyl Phthalates (DEP). These Recent studies show that di (2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (DEHP) and DBP may adversely affect the reproductive health of women. Recent research has linked phthalate exposure to DNA damage in human sperm. Both DEHP and DBP are classified in the European Union as toxic to reproduction. In 2003 the European parliament banned the use of DEHP and DBP in cosmetics. In Australia this is yet to happen.

SYNTHETIC MUSKS

Synthetic musks are another group of toxic fragrance ingredients. They are aromatic compounds commonly substituted for more expensive natural musks. They are added to perfumes, air fresheners, laundry detergents, hand creams and soaps. Synthetic musks are stored in body fat and have been found in human blood and breast milk. They are suspected hormone disruptors linked to reproductive and fertility problems in women and have been linked to cancer, particularly breast cancer. Synthetic musks contaminate wastewater when washed down the sink and have been found in fish and shellfish.

OTHER HAZARDOUS INGREDIENTS IN FRAGRANCE

Here are some common ingredients found in perfumes and fragrances and their health effects:

Benzaldehyde: skin irritant, neurotoxic, causes respiratory depression and somnolence, mutagenic, linked to cancer

Benzyl alcohol: toxic to the nervous system and skin, a hormone disruptor, linked to cancer

Butylphenol: eye irritant, skin irritant, mutagenic,