The Dangers of Toxins
Why Should You Worry About Toxic Chemicals?

The EPA has reported that toxic chemicals found in the home are, on the average, three times more likely to cause cancer than outdoor airborne pollutants.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission connects 150 chemicals commonly found in our homes to allergies, birth defects, cancer and psychological disorders.

The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health analyzed 2,983 chemicals used in personal care products and 884 were found to be toxic - some even caused mutagenic changes. Environmental Protection Agency studies have shown that indoor air pollutants are 3 to 70 times higher than outdoors.

- 50% of all illness is due to poor indoor air quality  [Source: 1989 State of Massachusetts Study]
- Since 1950, at least 70,000 new chemical compounds have been invented and dispersed into our environment. Only a fraction of these have been tested for human toxicity. We are, by default, conducting a massive clinical toxicology trial, and our children and their children are the experimental animals.  [Source: Herbert L. Needleman, M.D., Philip J. Landrigan, M.D., Raising Children Toxin Free]
- The United States of America Federal Code of Regulations exempts manufacturers from full labeling of products if used for personal, family or household care.  [Source USA FCR: Section 1910.1200C, Title 29, Section 1500.82 2Q1A]
- Out of 2,435 pesticide poisonings in a one-year period, over 40% were due to exposure to disinfectants and similar cleaning products in the home.  [Source: State of California Study]
- Most laundry detergent contains a form of NTA. NTA is a substance we may reasonably anticipate to be a carcinogen.  [Source: The Merck Index]
- Household bleaches which claim to disinfect are classified as pesticides under the Federal Hazardous Substances Act. Inadvertently mixing bleach with other cleaners that contain ammonia produces a toxic chloramines gas. These toxic gases can cause coughing, loss of voice, a feeling of burning or suffocation, and even death.  [Source: Guide to Hazardous Products Around the Home, Household Hazardous Waste Project, 1989]
- Women who work in the home have a 54% higher death rate from cancer than women who work outside of the home.  [Source: 17-year EPA study]
- Diseases that used to occur later in life are now appearing at younger ages. Diseases that used to be rare are more frequent
- Some products release contaminants into the air right away, others do so gradually over a period of time. Some stay in the air up to a year. These contaminants, found in many household and personal care products can cause dizziness, nausea, allergic reactions, eye/skin/respiratory tract irritations and some cause cancer.  [American Lung Association]
- Warning labels on containers refer only to toxic hazards from ingestion. However, only 10% of health problems from chemicals are caused by ingestion; 90% are caused by the inhalation of vapors and absorption of particles.
• In one decade, there has been a 42% increase in asthma (29% for men, 82% for women). The higher rate for women is believed to be due to women's longer exposure times to household chemicals. [Source: Center for Disease Control]

• Childhood asthma has increased by more than 40% since 1980. [Source: Environmental Health Perspectives, June 1997; 105 (6)]

**Fabric Softeners** are some of the most toxic products made for daily household use. They contain chemicals (like chloroform, benzyl acetate and pentane) that are known to cause cancer and/or damage to lungs, brain, and nerves. These chemicals are even more dangerous when heated in clothes dryers. The toxic fumes then go into your home and neighbourhood air impacting everyone around that breathes them in. Fabric softener chemicals are made to stay in clothes fibers and slowly release for a very long time which will extend the chemical exposure of those wearing the clothes and of people around them.

**Formaldehyde** is a highly toxic substance. It is a known cancer-causing agent. It damages the neurological connectors in the body; it is an irritant to the eyes, nose, throat and lungs - one in five people are sensitive to formaldehyde. Formaldehyde is commonly found in the following products:

- Personal care products
  - (mouthwash, toothpaste, hair setting lotions, shampoo, hairspray, cosmetics, antiperspirants, perfumes, fingernail polish)

- Cleaning products
  - (waxes, air fresheners, fungicides, floor polishes, dry cleaning solvents, laundry spray starch)

**Phenol** is an extremely caustic chemical that burns the skin, absorption of phenol is through the lungs. Phenol is a very common chemical and is regularly found in the following products:

- Personal care products
  - (Aftershave, deodorants, feminine powders & sprays, hair spray, mouthwash, hair setting lotions, anti-itching lotions, cosmetics, hand lotions, lip balms, sunscreen lotions, and acne medications)

- Health care products
  - (Bronchial mists chloroseptic throat spray, decongestants, aspirin, antiseptics, calamine lotions, cold capsules, and cough syrups)

- Cleaning products
  - (Air fresheners, solvents, detergents, furniture polish, polishes, all-purpose cleaners, aerosol disinfectants, disinfectant cleaners, and insecticides)

The following products are just a few that are so toxic that they should be disposed of in a toxic waste dump [Source: Water Pollution Control Federation]: floor products, furniture polish, window cleaners, bug spray, nail polish remover

Learn what the EPA says about chemicals around your house by visiting [http://www.epa.gov/opptintr/kids/hometour/tour.htm](http://www.epa.gov/opptintr/kids/hometour/tour.htm)

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