



CHEMICALS IN HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS AND BREAST CANCER

Chemicals and Breast Cancer

Throughout a lifetime, the average person is exposed to thousands of chemicals. However, over 85% of the chemicals in everyday products have never been tested by the government for their effects on human health. Research shows that there may be a link between many of the chemicals used in personal care products and breast cancer. A few places that these chemicals might be found are in shampoos, hair treatments, lipstick, nail polish, lotions and fragrances.

What can you do to protect yourself and your family?

Over the past 40 years there has been a great increase in the number of breast cancer cases. During that same time, the number of untested dangerous chemicals in our air, food, water, household and personal care products has also greatly increased. So what can you do to protect yourself, your family, and your community? Below are a few simple tips.

Take the time to read labels.

Before buying, make sure to take the time to read the labels of your personal care products. Even products made for children such as baby shampoo can contain dangerous chemicals.

Where can dangerous chemicals be found in your home?

Chemicals that may increase breast cancer risk can be found in many places in your home. Make sure that you know the risk of certain chemicals and where they can be found in your house in order to protect yourself. A few very common places to look that might be dangerous are listed below.

Flame Retardants

Many things inside your home may be sprayed or made with flame retardants that contain dangerous chemicals called PBDEs. These are commonly found in toys, plastic furniture, furniture foams and upholstery, clothing, small appliances and wire insulation.

Plastics

Several plastics contain BPA, a chemical that is related to breast and other cancers. Plastic cups, bottles, shower curtains, and food-can linings and other plastics that are lightweight, flexible, and heat resistant that contain BPA should be avoided. Instead, use glass or stainless steel containers and PVC-free shower curtains.

Cleaning Products

Many of the products used for cleaning may contain chemicals that are bad for your health. Chemicals like chlorine, phosphates, lead, formaldehyde, monoethanolamine,

xylene, and DEA are commonly found in cleaning products such as detergents, oven and toilet bowl cleaners, furniture polish, and stain removers.

Weed Killers

There are several chemicals in weed killers such as glyphosate. These chemicals can either damage breast cells at the DNA level or disrupt hormones in the human body, both of which can lead to increased breast cancer risk.

Cigarette Smoke

Cigarette smoke contains over 4,000 chemicals, at least 50 of which can cause cancer. Some of the most dangerous chemicals are benzene, formaldehyde, acetone, and tar. Studies have shown that cigarette smoke and even second hand smoke may increase the risk of breast cancer in women.

Look for products that are free of these ingredients and don't hesitate to ask your local retailer to sell products that are free of these toxins. There are many other inexpensive health products on the market. Your questions and demands help to bring about change!

Safer choices can start at home but, let's
make government protect us!

Visit www.mbcc.org for information to support the Safe
Chemicals Act.

Information provided by: The Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition www.mbcc.org

Supporting evidence from: The Environmental Working Group www.ewg.org