

Source of Toxicity: Skincare

You would think that something you can buy in a shop to take care of your body would be safe right? Unfortunately, this is wrong. Most High Street skincare products contain some very nasty chemicals which can be very disruptive to the thyroid gland and play havoc with your hormonal health. There are some very commonly used chemicals which are particularly problematic which we will inform you about today. This is stuff that you must know if you want to eliminate substances that may be affecting your thyroid function.

What is wrong with normal skincare available?

- Many of the chemical preservatives used in products affect the way we function on a cellular level and distort our body's natural biochemical pathways.
- Chemical disruptions can result in cancers, hormonal imbalances, nervous dysfunction, skin conditions and eye problems.
- We don't yet know how much these affect us on a cellular level or on the way our genes are expressed over the years, so it really is a health gamble to use them.
- If something does not cause an immediate problem it is authorized by the government, but the studies are often inadequate. The body's systems are so interdependent it is impossible to isolate causes of some disease, so these chemicals remain unquestioned.

Things to look out for.

- **Parabens** are used to preserve products and can mimic estrogen in the body (hormone/thyroid alarm bells!) They can be found in almost all common skincare products.
- **Synthetic Fragrances** often cause rashes, lung problems and disrupt the precious thyroid gland.
- **PVP/VA Copolymer** can damage the lungs when inhaled and then travels around the body through the circulation. It is present in most spray products.
- **Sodium Lauryl/Laureth Sulfate** is a foaming agent which can cause rashes and skin problems and deeper disruptions in the body such as the endocrine system. It is present in most shampoos, shower gels, soaps and toothpastes. The ingredient is

damaging and drying, and can disrupt the surface of tender tissues in the mouth, making them vulnerable to irritants.

- **Synthetic Colors** are often listed as FD&C or D&C and are followed by a number, these make products look pretty but can be carcinogenic.
- **Phthalates** (pronounced Thalates) are chemicals that make our skin care products smell nice. Sadly, they don't have to be declared by the manufacturers so they are just labelled as 'fragrance'. A study by Parlett (2012) found that women who used perfume 24 hours prior to the experiment had phthalate urine concentrations 2.9 times higher than those who hadn't. It makes you wonder about those adverts with beautiful women looking sensual as they spray themselves with hazardous chemicals!
- **Triclosan** – is a substance found in antibacterial soap, but a lot of other products are now carrying this ingredient too—including makeup, deodorants, clothing, and toothpastes. This antibacterial and antifungal agent gives a lot of cleaning products their ability to boast about killing germs and bacteria, though the ingredient has no effect on viruses. According to an FDA report, there is no evidence that antibacterial products protected people any better than regular soap and water. It's known to disrupt the thyroid, the endocrine system and be the cause of many allergies.
- **Aluminium** is often used in deodorants to make them more effective. It is a heavy metal that the body has trouble eliminating. It has also been linked to breast cancer in women.

Where are they found?

- Shampoo and conditioners
- Deodorants
- Toothpastes
- Soaps and shower gels
- Makeup
- Lotions and creams

Do NOT be fooled with labels like “organic” or “natural.” A product can be made of a few organic ingredients but still have parabens (as an emulsifier), phthalates (as fragrance) added to them. Since all these toxins have a direct impact on your thyroid, we recommend always reading the labels and looking out for the above ingredients/chemicals.

Natural Sources of Skincare

There are always natural alternatives available which smell just as good and feels just as luxurious as the chemical options. These natural choices are far more effective and safe to use. If you visit your local health food shop product labels still need checking, so simply turn the bottle round and get used to the ways in which they are labeled. There are some wonderful products out there, you just need to be really careful and know what to look for. This is a source of toxicity that can be very easily avoided if you know what to avoid so get checking! ☺

DIY Shampoos & Soaks

Getting Started With Natural Shampoos

If you're new to using natural shampoos, there are a few things you need to know before getting started. First, store-bought shampoos usually have a pH level of around 5-6, which closely matches your hair's natural pH. While this is a good thing, it is most often achieved using toxic surfactants such as sodium lauryl sulfate.

Most homemade shampoos, on the other hand, are soap rather than surfactant-based. Soap has a much higher pH, which can leave hair dull and gummy. Fortunately it's very simple to restore your hair's natural pH after washing– simply follow with the shine boosting rinse listed below!

Another consideration when transitioning to natural shampoo is the use of silicone in many commercial brands. Silicone coats the hair much like plastic to give it slip and shine. The same results can be achieved by using mineral rich washes like the Lavender & Honey Shampoo, but unfortunately the transition from commercial to homemade formulas can be a bit difficult. Your hair will need to detox – a process that can take up to a few weeks depending on the types of product previously used. During this process hair can feel very dry and tangle easily. As the follicles shed the coating they will begin to be able to drink in moisture, but this can take time. There are a few ways to speed up the process, though!

Detox Hair Mask

- 1/2 cup bentonite clay powder
- 1/2 cup aloe vera gel
- 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 additional cup apple cider or regular vinegar

Instructions: Mix bentonite clay, aloe vera and ¼ cup apple cider vinegar together and work into hair. Put on a shower cap and allow to sit for 20-30 minutes. Don't

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let the mixture dry! Rinse thoroughly. Rinse with 1 cup vinegar and allow to sit for 1-3 minutes, then shampoo. Follow with shine boost rinse or detox hair soak.

Detox Hair Soak

Fill up the bath tub and add

- 1 cup sea salt
- 1 cup apple cider vinegar
- 2 cups of naturally extracted baking soda

Lie down and let your hair soak for 10 minutes, massaging scalp occasionally. Follow with shine boost rinse.

Lavender and Honey Shampoo

Rich in minerals and purifying enzymes, this honey-based shampoo leaves hair soft, shiny and gunk-free!

Ingredients

- ½ cup castile soap
- 1 cup raw honey
- ¾ to 1 ½ teaspoons lavender essential oil

To Make

Blend all ingredients together and store in a clean container.

To Use

Because this is a soap-based cleanser rather than a surfactant, less is more. Using too much can cause build-up, so start by adding a small amount to your scalp and quickly working the lather down to the tips of your hair. Add more at the tips as needed. I have very thick hair and use only a tablespoon per wash.

After washing, rinse thoroughly and follow with a shine boost or conditioning rinse to restore your hair's natural pH levels.

Notes: Honey contains a small amount of naturally occurring hydrogen peroxide, which can lighten hair over time. I have not experienced any lightening after consistent use - probably because a brief washing does not have the same effect as applications, which sit for half an hour. However, it is something to consider when deciding to use this recipe or another from the book.

If your hair develops buildup, a honey or molasses treatment (depending on your hair color) will act as a clarifier.

If you find your hair needs a deep conditioner once in a while, apply prior to shampooing and then follow with the shine boost rinse.

Because it is alkaline, this formula is not compatible with chemically color-treated hair. Herbal rinses are okay.

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Shelf Life: Up to 3 years.

Baking Soda Shampoo

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon of aluminum-free baking soda (not powder)
- 1 cup of water
- 1 teaspoons rose essential oil (optional)

To Make

Combine all the ingredients in a empty shampoo bottle, shake it and it's done. Use larger quantity if you want to have it for later use.

To Use

This is going to be a new experience for you as this shampoo will not lather as we know shampoos to do. All you need to do is rub it into your scalp and massage it for a minute or so. Then, rinse.

Your hair will feel as if it has not been washed and you might find it to be still slightly greasy. Here is the most amazing thing: when you dry your hair, it will have a beautiful and bouncy feel to it. It will also feel as if you had more hair.

DIY Hair Conditioners

Shine Boost Rinse

This simple rinse helps to close the hair cuticle and restore pH.

Ingredients

- ¼ - ½ cup apple cider vinegar or non-petroleum based distilled white vinegar
- enough filtered water to bring vinegar mixture to 1 cup

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- 8 drops essential oil - rosemary and peppermint work well for most hair types – see below for other options. Another option is to infuse fresh herbs such as peppermint or rosemary for a week before use.

How To Choose Essential Oils For Your Hair

Some essential oils brighten highlights while others deepen shine. While this is by no means an exhaustive list, here are a few commonly used oils you might want to consider:

- Chamomile and lemon essential oil will lighten blonde hair
- Peppermint and rosemary essential oils stimulate hair growth and add shine.
Great for normal hair
- Lemon balm, basil, thyme, patchouli, tea tree, yarrow and lemongrass have astringent properties which are beneficial for oily hair
- Chamomile, lavender, sandalwood, rosemary and parsley are helpful for dry hair.
- Clary sage, tea tree, eucalyptus, patchouli and myrrh are helpful for dandruff

To Make

Pour ingredients in an airtight container and shake.

To Use

Pour over hair and allow to sit for 2-3 minutes, then rinse. Cool water is best because it helps the hair cuticle close, but warm is okay.

Shelf Life: 1 year.

Fenugreek Deep Conditioner

Rich in protein, iron, beta-carotene, and vitamins B1 and C, fenugreek is the perfect remedy for dry, brittle hair. Not only does it strengthen the cuticle and promote growth, it leaves hair soft and shiny!

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon fenugreek seeds
- 1 cup purified water

To Make

- Soak fenugreek seeds in water overnight

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- Drain water into a cup and set aside. See the next recipe for a great way to use it!
- Grind into a thick paste in the morning. It should be slimy in consistency.

To Use

- Wet your hair and wring it out so that it is moist but not dripping.
- Work the paste through your hair from scalp to tip and let sit for 20-30 minutes. Don't let it dry in your hair – it will become very difficult to rinse out!
- Rinse and shampoo. Follow with a shine boost or conditioning rinse (the tea you just set aside would be perfect. See the next recipe for instructions.)

Shelf Life - best if used immediately. Can be stored 1-2 days in the fridge.

Fenugreek Conditioning Rinse

This tea made from fenugreek seeds smells faintly like maple syrup, promotes growth and strengthens hair at the shaft. It's fabulous for all kinds of hair, including curly and color-treated varieties.

Ingredients

- 1 cup fenugreek tea (see recipe above)
- 2 tablespoons vinegar

To Make

Combine ingredients and mix thoroughly. Store in an airtight bottle in the fridge if not using immediately.

To Use

Pour over hair and allow to sit for 2-3 minutes, then rinse. Cool water is best because it helps the hair cuticle close, but warm is okay.

Shelf Life: best if used immediately. Can be stored 1-2 days in the fridge.

DIY Face & Body Wash

Peppermint Face & Body Wash

This energizing wash is gentle enough to be used as a facial cleanser. Feel free to experiment with other oils until you find your favorite!

Ingredients

- 1 cup unscented castile soap

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- ½ teaspoon peppermint essential oil* (or other oil – see below for suggestions> Use ¼ teaspoon if this soap will be used on children under 5)
- 1 teaspoon jojoba oil (for acne prone skin substitute hazelnut oil)

*Other oils that may be substituted. This is not a definitive list, just some ideas to get you started!

- Lavender – Soothing and relaxing
- Geranium – Good for oily, acne-prone skin
- Neroli (orange blossom) – Stimulates the production of new cells, reduces scarring
- Ylang Ylang – Balances the skins production of sebum. Beneficial for both oily and dry skin.
- Chamomile – Soothing, healing, stimulates production of new skin cells. Beneficial for acne, eczema, and dry skin.
- Tea Tree – Good for oily, acne prone skin in moderate amounts. Too much can be drying and might actually trigger increased sebum production
- Sandalwood – Balances skin and helps to prevent scarring
- Lemongrass – Healing for the thyroid.
- Grapefruit – Stimulates collagen production. Beneficial for mature and acne prone skin
- Rose – Moisturizes and soothes
- Vanilla – Softens and smooths

To Make

Combine all ingredients in a clean container, preferably with a flip top lid. Store out of direct sunlight.

Shelf Life: about 3 years if the castile soap used contains a natural antioxidant such as Vitamin E.

Face Oil Pulling Method

This is one of my favorite methods to clean my face. You can find the instructions here:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=NShRGyTag3Q

Some Beneficial Oils for Oil Cleansing

- Almond Oil (sweet) - Softens, soothes and reconditions.
- Avocado Oil - Rich in essential fatty acids (EFAs) and Vitamins A, B1, B2, D, and E; good for those with psoriasis, eczema.

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- Borage Seed Oil - Reduces inflammation and calms skin, promotes blood flow, good for eczema, acne, and rosacea.
- Hazelnut Oil – Astringent, good for oily skin.
- Hemp Seed Oil - Nutrition for your skin – antioxidant, protein and mineral-rich. Contains Vitamins A, B1, B2, B3, B6, C, D, and E.

Baking Soda Facial Wash

Ingredients

- 2 teaspoons naturally extracted baking soda
- 1 teaspoon water
- 2 drops lavender essential oil

To Use

Using your fingertips, lightly massage your face using small, circular motions. Gently exfoliate the throat area as well. The entire process should take 5-8 minutes. Rinse with warm water and follow with moisturizer.

Facial Masks

Purifying Clay Mask

Clay masks have long been prized for their ability to detoxify and improve skin firmness.

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoons bentonite, rhassoul or French green clay*
- enough water, aloe vera juice, or apple cider vinegar to make a thick paste**

*use bentonite for normal skin, rhassoul for dry skin, and French green clay for oily skin

** Normal skin will benefit from water or aloe vera juice, dry skin needs aloe, and oily skin can benefit from aloe or apple cider vinegar.

To Make

Blend all ingredients in a bowl until there are no lumps.

To Use

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Tie your hair back away from your face and apply mask to freshly cleansed skin using gentle tapping movements. Allow to dry for 10-20 minutes, then gently wash away using a warm washcloth and light, circular motions. Follow with moisturizer.

Shelf Life: 3-5 days in the fridge.

Moisturizing Honey Mask

When applied to barely damp skin, raw honey draws out impurities while sealing in moisture. Its potent anti-bacterial and anti-fungal properties make it a soothing treatment for conditions such as acne, but it is equally loved by all skin types for its infusion of nutrients: Vitamins B, C, E & K, beta-carotene, magnesium, sulphur, phosphorus, iron, calcium, potassium, copper and manganese.

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon raw honey

To Use

Pull your hair back from your face and neck, then cleanse skin and pat dry. Using your fingertips, massage a thin layer onto your face and throat. As your skin warms the honey it may become runny, so it's best to lie down and rest, keeping a towel nearby to catch any beads that drip. Leave on for 15-20 minutes, then rinse with a very warm washcloth.

Safe Tooth Care

That prior to 1938 fluoride was exclusively sold as rat poison and has since been linked to lowered IQ, endocrine problems (including thyroid suppression), weakened bones, lowered metabolic function, Alzheimer's AND Down's Syndrome.

Unfortunately, most commercial toothpaste manufacturers - even many of the "natural" ones - contain fluoride AND sodium lauryl sulfate (a foaming agent, see above).

Great alternatives to commercial brands are sea salt and baking soda-based tooth pastes and powders.

Safe brands:

Uncle Harry's: <http://www.uncleharrys.com/store/mouth-care>

Good Gums: <http://www.good-gums.com>



Heritage IPSAB Tooth Powder:

<http://www.amazon.com/Toothpowder-Ipsab-Peppermint-4-0-oz-Powder/dp/B0002JHLA6>

Natural Tooth Whitener

Though it may seem counter-intuitive to rub the equivalent of black ink in your mouth as a tooth whitener, this really works. Activated charcoal draws out tough stains and other impurities very effectively, leaving you with a bright, dazzling smile. You can get it in your local drug store.

Ingredients

- Activated charcoal

To Use

Open a capsule and pour half into a cup. Wet your toothbrush and dip it in the charcoal, then brush. Rinse, then follow with a second brushing using your regular tooth powder/paste.

DIY Deodorants

Bentonite Clay Stick Deodorant

This formula, which was adapted from this one at The Everything Soap blog, is a wonderful alternative for those who have sensitivities to baking soda. Bentonite clay is gentle and very effective at controlling odor.

Note: Strong body odor is often a symptom of magnesium deficiency.

Ingredients

- 1 ½ tablespoons grated beeswax
- 2 tablespoons shea or mango butter
- 2 tablespoons cocoa butter, grated
- 3 teaspoons bentonite clay
- 1 teaspoon naturally extracted baking soda
- 20-25 drops essential oil (tea tree, rosemary, lavender, lemon, bergamot, or whatever you like)

Equipment Needed

- 2 deodorant tubes (recycled or new, there are many available online)

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To Make

1. Melt beeswax and butters in a double boiler over low heat
2. Once the mixture is fully melted, add the clay and baking soda. Mix thoroughly.
3. Allow the mixture to cool to for several minutes, then add essential oils and pour into deodorant tube. Store out of direct sunlight.

Shelf Life: one year.

Open your mind to other options and feel your home glow with health! These links will help you make your choices! ☺

www.ewg.org/skindeep/ - a great site to look up your current brands for toxic load!

<http://renegadehealth.com/blog/>

<http://renegadehealth.com/blog/2012/06/27/does-your-toothpaste-have-these-toxins>

DIY Recipe sources: DIY Organic Beauty by Heather Dessinger.

Detoxifying and Healing Baths

Sea Salt and Baking Soda- Alkalizing & Detoxifying



This bath is extremely alkaline and may cause a tingling sensation on the skin. It is also helpful in reversing the toxicity of radiation absorbed from cell phones, pad devices, computers, microwaves, televisions, x-rays and other medical scans. It has a skin-softening effects.

Ingredients

- 1 pound sea salt
- 1 pound baking soda (aluminum-free)
- ½ cup jojoba oil (for skin softening)
- 6 drops of lavender oil

Dissolve the sea salt and the baking soda in a regular-sized tub of water. Add

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jojoba oil and lavender drops. The water should be as hot as you can handle. Stay in the bath till water cools down, approximately 45 minutes. Do not rinse or shower but simply pat your skin dry. It's best to do it in the evening as you might be feeling tired after this bath.

Apple Cider Vinegar- Detoxifying & Pain-Relieving



Apple cider vinegar helps us stay alkaline by lowering the levels of acidity in our bodies. It will balance your pH levels. It also helps reduce arthritis risk and joint pain by eliminating toxins from the joints and helps with urinary tract infections by balancing pH levels.

Ingredients

- 2 cups of organic apple cider vinegar

Add ACV to hot water and soak for 30 minutes. It's best not to rinse afterwards.

Epsom Salts- Relaxing & Replenishing



The scientific name for Epsom salts is magnesium sulfate. By soaking, we deliver both magnesium and sulfate for our body to function well. Most people are magnesium deficient which results in insomnia, muscle aches, anxiety, and many

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more. Sulfate's role is in the formation of brain tissue and joint proteins, and it can strengthen the walls of the digestive tract.

Epsom salt baths are known to relax, replenish, help dry skin and detoxify.

Ingredients

- 2 cups of Epsom Salts
- optional
- ½ cup of olive or coconut oil
- 6 drops of rose oil

Dissolve Epsom salts in warm but not hot water. Soak for 12-15 minutes up to three times per week. For extra skin-softening and moisturizing effects, add oil and/or essential oil of your choice, such as rose oil.

Seaweed- Anti-Cellulite



The seaweed in this mask helps to reduce the appearance of fat cells. Additionally, the acid from the lime juice and the moisturizing properties of the honey are a good combination for your skin.

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup dry seaweed
- 1/2 cup green clay
- 1/4 cup lime juice
- 1 tbsp honey
- 3 tbsp hot water

First, grind the seaweed and add it to the green clay. Add the lime juice, honey and hot water. Spread on your legs, wrap with plastic for 25 minutes and then rinse off in the shower. Use weekly for the best results.