

# The *Lotus Live* Guide to *Personal Care*

In this guide, Lotus Live presents the collective knowledge of our members and of many reliable internet and print sources regarding the eco-effectiveness of all the major generic personal care products currently on the market. For each product, ingredients that should be avoided for environmental, social, or health reasons, are labeled **known culprits**, and ingredients and products which are recommended are labeled **passive positives**.

## Deodorant

### *Known Culprits*<sup>1</sup>:

- **Aluminum Chlorohydrate:** Found in virtually all deodorants, it is used to block sweat glands and prevent wetness. Research suggests that it might contribute to aluminum buildup in the body, which, from other sources, has been linked to brain disorders, dementia, and Alzheimer's. A recent, well-respected study also linked aluminum salts to estrogen-like effects, and increased growth in cancer cells-which frighteningly suggests that aluminum absorbed through small cuts from shaving could contribute to breast cancer.
- **Aerosol Sprays:** Aerosols make it easy to breathe in the aluminum, which is one of the few toxins which can actually penetrate the blood-brain barrier.
- **Triclosan:** Deodorants often use this chemical to kill bacteria. It has been shown to cause liver damage when absorbed through the skin.

### *Passive Positives:*

- **Aluminum-Free, Natural Deodorants:** Widely available in many traditional shapes, sizes, and scents, these deodorants work just as well as the toxic aluminum ones. See our [Personal Care Products](#) page for recommendations.
- **Natural Minerals Salts:** Available as a natural crystal stone, or in modified stick form, these all-natural minerals will completely and safely prevent the growth of odor-causing bacteria throughout the day.

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<sup>1</sup> Horn, Greg. [Living Green: A Practical Guide to Simple Sustainability](#). Topanga, CA: Freedom Press, 2006. 63.

- **Baking Soda:** This simple everyday substance works well enough as a deodorant for some people.

## Makeup

### *Known Culprits<sup>2</sup>:*

- **Lipstick** frequently contains many suspected carcinogens, including polyvinylpyrrolidone plastic, saccharin, mineral oil, and artificial colors. This fact is especially scary when combined with this tidbit from *Glamour*: The average woman swallows 4 to 9 *pounds* of lipstick in her lifetime.
- **Mascara** contains formaldehyde (a known carcinogen), alcohol, and plastic resins which can easily enter the bloodstream when they get in your eye.
- **Eye Shadow, Blush, and Powder** are made from talc, a lung irritant that may be contaminated with carcinogenic asbestos.
- **Nail Polish** often contains formaldehyde and phthalates. Use a water based one.
- **Perfumes** and **Aftershaves** are simply soups of hundreds of hazardous petrochemicals. They are highly allergenic, and may cause skin irritation, headaches, and nausea in the wearer and those around them.

### *Passive Positives:*

- **All-Natural Cosmetics:** All of these products are available in beautiful, all-natural formulations from companies that care about the health of their customers. See our [Personal Care Products](#) page for recommendations.

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<sup>2</sup> Horn, Greg. [Living Green: A Practical Guide to Simple Sustainability](#). Topanga, CA: Freedom Press, 2006. 68.

## Mouthwash

### *Known Culprits<sup>3</sup>:*

- **“Kill-99.9% of Bacteria” Mouthwashes:** These potent mouthwashes kill all of the good bacteria along with the bad. When swallowed, it can do even more damage.

### *Passive Positives:*

- **Natural Mouthwashes** will freshen your breath without treating it like a hospital floor. See our [Personal Care Products](#) page for recommendations.

## Hair Dye

### *Known Culprits<sup>4</sup>:*

- **Conventional Hair Dye:** *Consumer Reports* found that 20 different chemicals used in common hair dyes are suspected carcinogens.
- **Lead:** In some cases, the lead content of hair dye may be up to 10 times the allowable level for house paints.

### *Passive Positives:*

- **Non-Toxic Hair Dye** is now widely available.
- **Chamomile, Black Tea, or Lemon Juice** can highlight light colored hair.
- **Paprika, Red Zinger Tea, or Beet Juice** can enhance red hair.
- **Ginger, Nutmeg, or Coffee** can enhance brown hair.
- **Henna** can enhance dark color hair and cover grays.

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<sup>3</sup> *ibid.* 67.

<sup>4</sup> Horn, Greg. [Living Green: A Practical Guide to Simple Sustainability](#). Topanga, CA: Freedom Press, 2006. 66.

## Hairspray

### *Known Culprits*<sup>5</sup>:

- **Phthalates (often identified as DBP)** are petrochemical derivatives designed to make things more pliable. They exhibit estrogenic qualities in even trace amounts, and are suspected to cause early puberty, breast cancer, and low sperm counts.
- **Aerosol Sprays** make it easy to absorb the toxic ingredients straight into the bloodstream through the lungs.

### *Passive Positives:*

- **All Natural Hair Gels** can't boast that they have a musical named after them, but they can say that they are keeping you healthier. See our [Personal Care Products](#) page for recommendations.

## Shampoo

### *Known Culprits*<sup>6</sup>:

- **Quaternium-15** is a preservative that releases formaldehyde (a known carcinogen).
- **BNPD, TEA, and DEA** can combine to form carcinogenic nitrosamines.
- **Selenium Sulfide**, used in dandruff shampoos, may cause vital organs to degenerate if swallowed.
- **Resorcinol**, also found in dandruff shampoos can cause skin and eye irritation, drowsiness, unconsciousness, and convulsions.
- **Coal Tar** is another dandruff shampoo ingredient, and an unappetizing carcinogen.

### *Passive Positives:*

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<sup>5</sup> Horn, Greg. [Living Green: A Practical Guide to Simple Sustainability](#). Topanga, CA: Freedom Press, 2006. 66.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.* 65.

- **All Natural, Biodegradable Shampoos** are widely available that work and smell just as good as toxic shampoos. See our [Personal Care Products](#) page for recommendations.
- **Omega-3 Fish Oils** may help with your dandruff.

## Sunscreen

### *Known Culprits<sup>7</sup>:*

- **Di-, tri-ethanolamine (DEA, TEA)** are suspected carcinogens.
- **Benzophenone (oxybenzone), Homosalate, Octyl-methoxycinnamate (octinoxate), and Parabens (ethyl-, butyl-, propyl-)** are suspected endocrine disruptors.
- *In addition to possibly being absorbed through the skin, these chemicals wash off of us when we swim, entering the food chain, and finding its way into our food and water.*

### *Passive Positives:*

- **Titanium-, or Zinc- Oxides** sunscreens scatter the sun's rays before they hit your skin, and are known to be safe, unless they consist of "nano-particles." See our [Personal Care Products](#) page for recommended sunscreens.
- **Carotenoids:** Instead of relying on external lotion, eat carotenoids, like astaxanthin or lycopene (from tomatoes), and build a protective layer under your skin, as plants do to protect themselves from the sun.
- **Cover up** in the sun if you're going to be outside for a long time-wear a hat and wear a long sleeved shirt.
- **Note:** *None of these solutions is going to be an effective solution for tanning. But, as sun-kissed and sexy as tanning makes you look, its actually incredibly bad for you, as you are voluntarily exposing yourself to increased skin cancer risks. If you simply must have a tan though, don't slather on sunscreen and sit out for hours and hours. Allow yourself a natural bit of sun exposure (10-15 minutes) each day, which will produce necessary vitamin D and give you a natural tan over time instead of exposing yourself all at once, or using an even more dangerous tanning salon or chemical tanning lotion.*

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<sup>7</sup> Horn, Greg. [Living Green: A Practical Guide to Simple Sustainability](#). Topanga, CA: Freedom Press, 2006. 63.

## Toothpaste

### *Known Culprits*<sup>8</sup>:

- **Petrochemical Derivatives, Artificial Colors, and Sweeteners** are present in most common toothpastes, and are completely unnecessary for providing effective, pleasant tooth-cleaning and protection.

### *Suspects*:

- **Fluoride**: Although fluoride was once touted as an effective shield against cavities, a growing number of scientific reports are showing that fluoride may do little to nothing for most people. In addition, in amounts larger than 4 ppm, fluoride is classified by the EPA as a toxic contaminant, and it is undisputed that ingestion in large amounts is unwise. For a summary of arguments on both sides of the issue, see: [Fluoride: Safe and Effective? or Not?](#) (*Source is non-scientific, but its citations are*).

### *Passive Positives*:

- **Fluoride-Free, All-Natural Toothpaste**: For the same price as leading brand pastes, you can get a safer, healthier toothpaste that is just as effective. See our [Personal Care Products](#) page for recommended natural toothpaste.

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If you have any ideas, suggestions, or corrections you would like to contribute to this guide on Personal Care Products, please send us an email at [additions@lotuslive.org](mailto:additions@lotuslive.org).

Feel free to make use of any of the information in this guide for any purpose--we simply ask that you credit us and our predecessors, and link to us.

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<sup>8</sup> Horn, Greg. [Living Green: A Practical Guide to Simple Sustainability](#). Topanga, CA: Freedom Press, 2006. 67.