

Are there laws that protect?

All cosmetic products are governed by the European Cosmetics Regulation, the Cosmetics Directive, which states that all ingredients have to be listed on the product (INCI names). The 26 allergenic fragrances are listed with their technical terminology (see allergenic fragrances), all other fragrances go under the umbrella term "fragrance" or "perfum".

From July 2013 there will be an obligation to label nanoparticles - insoluble and non-biodegradable nanoparticles have to be labeled with 'nano' on the packaging.

Get active – ask for information!

Please ask your retailer or manufacturer if the cosmetic ingredients have been tested for endocrine disrupting effects and if nano-particles were used in the product. The retailer or manufacturer has to tell you within 45 days if a cosmetic product contains particular chemicals or particles. Unfortunately this obligation to provide information only applies to a few chemicals and substances. However, the more customers that ask specific questions, the faster producers will change their product

policy. By asking about specific ingredients, you can influence the cosmetic manufacturers!

WECF is campaigning for toxic-free products from the manufactures and safe cosmetics legislation in the political arena: Please support us!

You want to know more?

Women in Europe for a Common Future
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Tel 089 23 23 938 0

Further informations
www.wecf.eu
www.nestbau.info

www.wecf.eu

General tips:

- Hands off products containing nanoparticles. The risks to health and environment are not yet known. Watch out for the label "nano" or ask your retailer.
- If you suffer from allergies, try to avoid substances that trigger them, and read the label. People allergic to fragrances should choose certified organic products.
- Avoid anti-bacterial products (wet wipes, cleansing products, washing additives for textile and surface cleansing). They interfere with the skin balance, disturb the skin's natural defense mechanism, and can lead to bacterial resistance.

Shampoos & bath additives	Toothpaste & mouthwash	Sunscreen	Lotions, creams & oils	Deodorants & perfumes
■ ■ ■ ■ ■	■ ■ ■ ■ ■	■ ■ ■ ■ ■	■ ■ ■ ■ ■	■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Tip: Read labels on the products carefully and compare them to the hazardous ingredients named in the table

Links:
www.wecf.eu
www.okotest.de
www.test.de

Natural cosmetics – a better and safer alternative?

In general, the provisions of the cosmetics regulation apply both for natural and conventional cosmetics. The term "natural cosmetics" is not legally protected. Presently the labels named here provide the best choice. Both determine ecological, health and social criteria for raw material production and processing. But just because something is natural, doesn't mean that people will not react to it. Allergies and intolerant reactions cannot be avoided completely. Allergic people should pay particular attention to the products' ingredients.

The COSMOS Standard

is an international and internationally recognised standard for organic and nature cosmetics.
<http://www.cosmos-standard.org/>

NaTrue label for natural and organic cosmetics

with one star (Criteria correspond to BDIH-label), two stars (organic proportion 70%) or three stars (organic proportion 95%). Information about the labels can be found at: www.natrue.org



BDIH-label for controlled organic cosmetics

Information can be found at:
www.ionc.info

Drug class/ hazardous chemicals (INCI*)

Possible health effects

■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Preservatives: Parabens (e.g. Methylparaben, Butylparaben)	<i>Estrogenic effects, disrupt the endocrine system, sensitising agent</i>
■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Presevative: Phenoxyethanol	<i>Irritating after prolonged exposure, neurotoxic, allergenic</i>
■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Preservatives: Chlorhexidine, Digluconate or Cetylpyridinium Chloride	<i>Irritating, can cause allergies and lead to tooth discoloration</i>
■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Presevatives: Formaldehydes and formaldehyde releasers (e.g. Benzylhemiformal, 2-Bromo-2-nitropropane-1,3-diol, 5-Bromo-5-nitro-1,3-dioxane, diazolidinyl urea, Imidazolidinyl urea, Quaternium-15, DMDM Hydantoin)	<i>Carcinogenic, mutagenic, impairs fertility, irritates mucous membranes and skin, allergenic</i>
■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Preservative: Triclosan	<i>Allergenic, creates bacterial resistance, disrupts the endocrine</i>
■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Surfactants: Sodium Lauryl Sulfate (SLS), Cocamidopropylamine Oxide	<i>Irritates and dry out the skin</i>
■ ■ ■ ■ ■	UV-filters: Benzophenone-3 (oxybenzone), 4-Methylbenzylidene camphor (4-MBC), 3-Benzylidene camphor (3 BC), Octyl methoxycinnamate (OMC), Octyl-Dimethylpara-Amino-Benzoic-Acid PABA (OD-PABA)	<i>Disrupts the endocrine system, accumulate in living organisms (e.g. breast milk) and in the environment, can cause photoallergic reactions</i>
■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Nano-particles e.g. nano titanium dioxide, nano zinc oxide)	<i>Indications for toxic effects in cells, accumulation in the body - health risks are currently unknown</i>
■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Solvents and denaturant agents: Phthalates (e.g. used to denature perfumes), no labeling obligation	<i>Disrupt the endocrine system, potentially sensitising</i>
■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Fragrances, musk compounds, parfum, (perfume, scent)	<i>Allergy risk, irritate the skin, accumulate in the environment, the body & the breast milk, some can disrupt the endocrine system</i>
■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Mineral oils (Paraffinum liquidum, Wax)	<i>Accumulates in lungs, liver and lymph nodes</i>
■ ■ ■ ■ ■	Chelating agents: EDTA (Disodium EDTA)	<i>Accumulate in the body and in the environment</i>

(*INCI name in personal care products)



Protect people! Avoid harmful chemicals and substances!

WECF Guide

Personal care



Cosmetics like shower gels, deodorants or toothpaste are an integral part of our everyday lives. It is important that they are safe for daily use, as they are in direct contact with the skin and mucous membranes, and some ingredients can pass through the skin, into our bodies. Toxic or harmful cosmetic ingredients can cause allergies, intolerances, reproductive problems, skin irritations and are linked to cancer and can also disrupt our hormones. With our guide, we would like to advise you about harmful chemicals and substances in cosmetics and give you practical advice on how to avoid them. In Germany e.g. you can find test results for individual products at "Stiftung Warentest" (German Consumer testing organisation) and "Ökotest".

Shampoos & bath additives

Daily showers or long foam baths can dry out and irritate sensitive skin. One of the main reasons for this is surfactants like sodium lauryl sulfate. Also certain preserving agents and fragrances are potentially allergenic, hormonally active or carcinogenic. Organically certified baby-baths and shampoos are usually the best option.



■ Tips!

- **Avoid especially irritating surfactants** are sodium lauryl sulfate and cocamidopropylamine oxid.
- **Avoid products with preservatives of potential concern**, like parabens or formaldehyde releasers. The latter you can recognize by names like diazolidinyl urea, DMDM hydantoin, quaternium-15 or 2-bromo-2-nitropropane-1,3-diol.
- **Avoid products with added fragrances** like oak moss, tree moss, isoeugenol and cinnamal.

■ Tips!

- **Avoid preservatives like chlorhexidine digluconate or cetylpyridinium chloride**, as they can disrupt the endocrine system. When used regularly, they can cause tooth discoloration and taste alterations or have an irritating effect.
- **Avoid products containing triclosan!** It can irritate the mucous membranes, cause allergies, can disrupt the endocrine system and has been linked to cancer.

Toothpaste & mouthwash

Toothpaste contains mechanical abrasives and surfactants, fragrances, flavors, sweeteners and preserving agents, as well as fluoride which supposedly prevents cavities. Preservatives are used to prevent dental plaque; but the potentially harmful substances are triclosan or chlorhexidine. Also mouthwash can contain preservatives and alcohol. A simple wash with slight salted warm water can be used as an alternative.



Sunscreen

Sunscreen provides protection from UV radiation that can cause skin cancer. In sun lotions, chemical filters and mineral pigments are responsible for that protection. Some chemical filters like benzophenone-3 (oxybenzone) disrupt the endocrine (hormone) system and accumulate in the body. Caution is advised with mineral UV protection containing titanium dioxide or zinc oxide as they can be present as nanoparticles.



■ Tips!

- **Avoid products with questionable UV-filters** like benzophenone-3 (oxybenzone), 4-methylbenzylidene camphor (4-MBC), 3-benzylidene camphor (3 BC), octyl methoxycinnamate (OMC) or octyl-dimethyl-para-amino-benzoic-Acid (OD-PABA).
- **Ask your retailer or manufacturer if the product contains the mineral UV blockers titanium dioxide or zinc oxide in form of nanoparticles.**
- **Sunscreens without colorants, fragrances and preservatives are generally the best option.**

■ Tips!

- **Use plant based cosmetic products** (e.g. with almond or olive oil) preferably with a minimum amount of ingredients.
- **Avoid products with synthetic paraffin, paraffinum liquidum or silicones.**
- **People with contact allergies and sensitive skin should use products without fragrances and preservatives.**

Lotions, creams & oils



Skincare products often contain synthetic mineral oils that can accumulate in the body and be damaging to your health. Allergenic fragrances are problematic as well: You can find a list under "Avoid harmful substances". Preservatives like parabens can disrupt the hormone system. Many day creams are supposed to protect the skin from UV damage. Some of those UV filters can accumulate in the body and also disrupt the hormone system (see advice for sunscreen).

Deodorants & perfumes

Deodorants act against the bacteria responsible for odour development using preservatives like formaldehydes or formaldehyde releasers and alcohol. Alcohol can irritate and dry out sensitive skin and some odour covering fragrances are allergenic. Musk compounds are persistent, i.e. they can accumulate in the environment and in the body. Deodorants and perfumes can contain endocrine disrupting phthalates which are used as denaturants and don't have to be listed on the label.

■ Tips!

- **Use only organically certified deodorants.**
- **Ask retailers or manufacturers if deodorants or perfumes contain phthalates.**
- **Avoid perfume if possible, or apply sparingly.** Perfume can cause health problems such as an allergic reaction, headaches or asthma attacks and become a nuisance for sensitive people.



Avoid harmful chemicals and substances in cleansing and skin care cosmetics!

What is the problem?

There are a multitude of products for hair, skin cleansing and body care. Even if most cosmetic ingredients are listed on the packaging with their technical terms, safe products are not recognizable straightaway. The labels are often hard to read and can be confusing for the layperson. Some ingredients have irritating or allergenic effects or are suspected of being endocrine disruptors, or have been linked to cancer. Daily contact with potentially harmful cosmetics ingredients, for example when bathing or applying to the skin, can help certain ingredients to be absorbed into the body.

Allergies induced by cosmetic ingredients?

Reddening, blisters and itchy skin areas can be first signs of an allergic reaction to a cosmetic ingredient. Contact allergies are not curable. Specialised dermatologists or allergists can diagnose the substances that are individually allergenic. The results are noted down and should be compared with the label on cosmetic products when

purchasing. To prevent health problems, allergens like certain fragrances, preservatives or colorants should always be avoided.

Allergies induced by fragrances?

Fragrances are the second most common cause of allergies after nickel and can be found in most cosmetics, but also in cleaning agents and washing detergents. At present, it is mandatory that 26 allergenic fragrances are listed individually on the packaging with their INCI names. However, it is not required to indicate that they might be allergenic chemicals. They are as follows: Amyl Cinnamal, Amylcinnamyl Alcohol, Alpha-Isomethyl Ionone, Anise Alcohol, Benzyl Alcohol, Benzyl benzoate, Benzyl Cinnamate, Benzyl Salicylate, Butylphenyl Methylpropional, Cinnamal, Cinnamyl Alcohol, Citral, Citronellol, Coumarin, Eugenol, Evernia Furfuracea Extract (tree moss extract), Evernia Prunastri Extract (oak moss extract), Farnesol, Geraniol, Hexyl Cinnamal, Hydroxycitronellal, Hydroxyisohexyl-3-Cyclohexene Carboxaldehyde, Isoeugenol, d-Limonene, Linalool, Methyl-2-Octynoate.