



TOP 10 UNTOUCHABLES BY MARY SCULLY

❖ **Isopropyl Alcohol:** As a solvent and denaturant (poisonous substance that changes another substance's natural qualities), this ingredient is found in hair color rinses, body rubs, hand lotions, after-shave lotions, fragrances and many other cosmetics. It is a petroleum-derived substance that is also used in antifreeze and as a solvent in shellac and diluted essential oils. According to *A Consumer's Dictionary of Cosmetic Ingredients*, ingestion or inhalation of the vapor may cause headaches, flushing, dizziness, mental depression, nausea, vomiting, narcosis, anesthesia, and coma. The fatal ingested dose is about one ounce.

❖ **Mineral Oil:** Baby oil is 100% mineral oil. As a commonly used petroleum ingredient, mineral oil coats the skin like a plastic wrap. The skin's natural immune barrier is disrupted as this plastic coating inhibits its ability to breathe and absorb the Natural Moisture Factor (moisture and nutrition). As the largest organ of elimination, the skin's ability to release toxins is impeded by this "plastic wrap", which can promote acne and other disorders. This process slows down skin function and normal cell development causing the skin to age prematurely.

❖ **PEG:** This is an abbreviation for polyethylene glycol that is used in making cleansers to dissolve oil and grease as well as thicken products. A number next to "PEG" refers to its molecular weight, which influences its characteristics. Because of their effectiveness, PEG's are often used in caustic spray-on oven cleaners and yet are found in many personal care products. PEG's contribute to stripping the Natural Moisture Factor, leaving the immune system vulnerable. They are also potentially carcinogenic.

❖ **Propylene Glycol (PG):** As a "surfactant" or wetting agent and solvent, this ingredient is actually the active component in antifreeze. There is not a difference between what is used in industry and what is used in personal care products. It is used in industry to breakdown protein and cellular structure (what the skin is made of), yet is found in most forms of make-up, hair products, lotions, after-shave, deodorants, mouthwashes, toothpaste, and is even used in food processing. Because of its ability to quickly penetrate the skin, the EPA requires workers to wear protective gloves, clothing and goggles when working with this toxic substance. The Material Safety Data Sheets warn against skin contact, as PG has systemic consequences such as brain, liver, and kidney abnormalities. Consumers are not protected nor is there a warning label on products such as stick deodorants, where the concentration is greater than that in most industrial applications.

❖ **Imidazolidinyl Urea & DMDM Hydantoin:** These are just two of the many preservatives that release formaldehyde (formaldehyde-donors). According to the Mayo Clinic, formaldehyde can irritate the respiratory system, cause skin reactions and trigger heart palpitations. Exposure to formaldehyde may cause joint pain, allergies, depression, headaches, chest pains, ear infections, chronic fatigue, dizziness and loss of sleep. It can also aggravate coughs and colds and trigger asthma. Serious side effects include weakening of the immune system and cancer. Formaldehyde releasing ingredients are very common in nearly all store brands of skin, body and hair care, antiperspirants and nail polish. A more complete list of products that contain formaldehyde can be found in *Is This Your Child's World?* By Doris J. Rapp, M.D.

❖ **Parabens (methyl-, poly-, or propylparabens):** Parabens belong to the benzene family; benzenes are serious allergens. Benzene was at one time outlawed, but the chemical industry pushed for allowing its use again. Parabens are used as preservatives, and are usually the last two ingredients on the ingredient list. They adversely affect hormones and possibly the DNA of cells. Look for grapeseed extract as a safe preservative.

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❖ **Sodium Lauryl Sulfate (SLS) & Sodium Laureth Sulfate (SLES):** Used as detergents and surfactants, these closely related compounds are found in car wash soaps, garage floor cleaners and engine degreasers, yet are even more widely used as major ingredients in cosmetics, toothpaste, hair conditioner, and about 90% of all shampoos and products that foam. Mark Fearer in an article, “Dangerous Beauty”, shares that “in tests, animals that were exposed to SLS experienced eye damage, along with depression, labored breathing, diarrhea, severe skin irritation, and death. . . According to the American College of Toxicology. The report is also bad news for children’s eyes. “Studies indicate SLS kept young eyes from developing properly by possibly denaturing (dissolving) the proteins and not allowing for proper structural formation. This damage was permanent.” Still other research has indicated SLS may be damaging to the immune system, especially within the skin. Skin layers may separate and inflame due to its protein denaturing properties. Perhaps the most dangerous of all ingredients in personal care products, research has shown that, “SLS when combined with other chemicals can be transformed into nitrosamines, a potent class of carcinogens, which causes the body to absorb nitrates at higher levels than eating nitrate-contaminated food.” According to the American College of Toxicology report, “SLS stays in the body for up to five days . . . Other studies have indicated that SLS easily penetrates through the skin and enters and maintains residual levels in the heart, liver, lungs, and the brain. This poses questions of it being a serious potential health threat through the use of shampoos, cleansers and toothpaste.”

❖ **DEA** (diethanolamine), **MEA** (monoethanolamine), **TEA** (triethanolamine): DEA & MEA are usually listed on the ingredients label in conjunction with the compound being neutralized; thus look for names like Cocamide DEA or MEA, Lauramide DEA, etc. These are hormone-disrupting chemicals and are known to form cancer causing nitrates and nitrosamines. These are commonly found in most personal care products that foam, including bubble baths, body washes, shampoos, soaps, and facial cleansers. On the show CBS This Morning, Roberta Baskin revealed that a recent government report shows these are readily absorbed into the skin. Dr. Samuel Epstein, Professor of Environmental Health at the University of Illinois said, “repeated skin applications. . .of DEA-based detergents resulted in a major increase in the incidence of two cancers – liver cancer and kidney cancer.” John Bailey, who oversees the cosmetic division for the FDA, said that the new study is especially important since “the risk equation changes significantly for children.” Tests at the University of Bologna in Italy, found TEA to be the most frequent sensitizer used in cosmetics, gels, shampoos, creams, and lotion, etc.

❖ **FD&C Color Pigments:** “. . .many cause skin sensitivity and irritation. . .absorption (of certain colors) can cause depletion of oxygen in the body and death, *A Consumer’s Dictionary of Cosmetic Ingredients*’ Debra Lynn Dadd says in *Home Safe Home*, “colors that can be used in foods, drugs, and cosmetics. . .are made from coal tar. There is a great deal of controversy about their use, because animal studies have shown almost all of them to be carcinogenic.”

❖ **Fragrance:** Most deodorants, shampoos, sunscreens, skin care, body care and baby products contain fragrance. Many of the compounds in fragrance are carcinogenic or otherwise toxic. “Fragrance on a label can indicate the presence of up to four thousand separate ingredients – most or all of them are synthetic.

Plus. . .

❖ **Chlorine:** According to Doris J. Rapp, M.D., author of *Is This Your Child’s World?*, exposure to chlorine in tap water, showers, pools, laundry products, cleaning agents, food processing (fish, flour, meat, fruit, vegetables), sewage systems and many others, can effect health by contributing to asthma, hay fever, anemia, bronchitis, circulatory collapse, confusion, delirium, diabetes, dizziness, irritation of the eyes, nose, throat, lung, skin, and stomach, heart disease, high blood pressure, and nausea. It is also a possible cause of cancer. *Even though you will not see chlorine on personal care product labels, it is important for you to be aware of the need to protect your skin when bathing and washing your hair. Organic Essentials Nourishing Body Cleanser removes chlorine from the skin and hair during cleansing.*