

Women's Voices for the Earth



TOXIC CHEMICALS Ten Steps to Reduce Your Exposure

Did you know that products we use every day may contain toxic chemicals linked to women's health problems, like breast cancer, reproductive harm like infertility and birth defects, asthma, and other serious illnesses?

The good news is that WVE has done the scientific research for you on effective ways to reduce your exposure to harmful chemicals in everyday products – and to get rid of toxic chemicals all together!

1. Make Your Own Cleaning Products

- It's easy, fun, and cheap to make non-toxic cleaners from safe and effective ingredients like vinegar and baking soda. Find recipes at www.womensvoices.org.

THE FACTS: Certain chemicals in cleaning products have been linked to reduced fertility, birth defects, increased risk of breast cancer, asthma, and hormone disruption.



2. Avoid Synthetic Fragrance

- Look for cleaners, laundry detergents, and personal care products labeled "fragrance-free" *Warning: "unscented" does not mean fragrance-free!*
- Discontinue use of air fresheners. Go to www.womensvoices.org for tips to reduce odors around the home.

THE FACTS: Synthetic fragrance can be made up hundreds of chemicals, all of which are kept secret from consumers. Common fragrance chemicals include phthalates (reproductive and developmental harm) and synthetic musks (break down the body's defenses against other toxic exposures, linked to increased risk of breast cancer).

3. Give Your Personal Care Products a Makeover

- Read the label to avoid chemicals like parabens, sodium laureth sulfate, and oxybenzone.
- Check the Skin Deep database at www.cosmeticsdatabase.com to find safer products.

THE FACTS: Over 12,000 chemicals are used in personal care products – 89% of them haven't been reviewed for safety.



4. Go "BPA-Free"

- Ditch the canned foods and opt for fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables instead.
- Seek out products from the few companies now using BPA-free can liners like Westbrae Natural, Hunt's, Healthy Choice and H.J. Heinz.
- Look for plastics labeled "BPA-free."

THE FACTS: Bisphenol-A (BPA) is commonly found in can liners and plastic products. BPA exposure is linked to a host of hormone-related health impacts such as increased risk of cancer, infertility, obesity and diabetes.

5. Watch Out for Triclosan

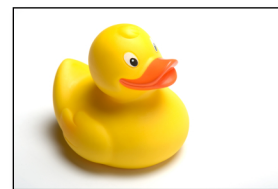
- Avoid anti-bacterial hand soap with triclosan listed on the label.
- Reduce your use of disinfectant products.

THE FACTS: Triclosan is a hormone disruptor that builds up in our bodies, and it's been found in blood and breast milk. Studies show that it's actually no more effective at removing germs or preventing illness than plain soap and water.

6. Choose Plastics with the Recycle Symbols #4 & #5

- Look for plastic products with these symbols signifying PVC-free plastics.
- Use glass jars or bowls to store food.
- Never microwave plastic.

THE FACTS: Polyvinyl chloride (PVC), known as the poison plastic, is found in plastic products from toys and cookware to shower cuttrains. PVC is linked to hormone disruption, reproductive and developmental harm, and other serious health problems.



7. Keep Chemicals Out of the House

- Take off your shoes before entering your house to avoid tracking in oils and chemicals from the street outside.
- Use a door mat to catch dirt at the door.
- Dust with a micro-fiber cloth or wet cloth and vacuum your house regularly (with a HEPA-filter vacuum if you can).

THE FACTS: Shoes can track in toxic chemicals like lawn pesticides, coal tar from a driveway, etc. Dust carries harmful chemicals that shed off of household furniture, electronics, and other household products.

8. Turn Down the Heat on Non-Stick Cookware

- Keep the stove at or below medium heat when using Teflon or non-stick cookware.
- Opt for cast iron or stainless steel pans for cooking when possible.

THE FACTS: Teflon releases perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) when heated to 450 degrees. PFOA is linked to developmental harm and cancer.

9. Ask Your Senators to Support the Safe Chemicals Act of 2011

- Go to www.womensvoices.org to contact your congressional representatives today and ask them to support policies that protect the health of our families!

THE FACTS: The Safe Chemicals Act will require that chemicals be tested for safety before they're placed in products we use everyday.

10. Join Women's Voices for the Earth!

- Exercise your power to ensure a healthy future!
- Sign up to receive action alerts, latest news, and tips for reducing toxic exposures at www.womensvoices.org.
- Donate to our work to eliminate toxic chemicals that harm women's health.