

# 100 Ingredients You Don't Want in Your Beauty Products

Here's the most comprehensive list of harmful chemicals currently used in skincare, hair care, makeup and fragrances. Use this list anytime you buy a beauty product. Don't keep it secret: photocopy it and give it to your family members and friends. Minimize your exposure to these chemicals. Ideally, eliminate them from your beauty routine. They are the worst enemies of your skin and hair.

1. **Acrylic Acid** – respiratory toxin for humans; causes asthma, severe skin burns, and allergic reaction in the skin or lungs; causes renal and kidney damage in animals; causes blood tumors and skin tumors in animals.
2. **Aluminum (pure aluminum powder)** - strong human neurotoxicant; causes irritation of eyes, skin, and lungs; endocrine disruptor; linked to Alzheimer's disease and breast cancer; causes birth disorders in animals.
3. **Aluminium Chloride** – nose and lung irritant; causes liver and bladder abnormalities in animals; causes brain disorders in animals; human endocrine disruptor linked to breast cancer and Alzheimer's disease; aluminum compounds are generally neurotoxic to humans.
4. **Aluminium Hydrochloride** – endocrine disruptor linked to breast cancer and Alzheimer's disease; aluminum compounds are neurotoxic to humans.
5. **Aluminium Oxide** – strong nose and lung irritant; causes skin cancer in animals; endocrine disruptor linked to breast cancer and Alzheimer's disease; aluminum compounds are neurotoxic to humans.
6. **Ammonium Laureth Sulfate** – causes skin irritation, water contaminant, may be contaminated with carcinogen 1,4-Dioxane.
7. **Ammonium Persulfate** – strong eyes, respiratory system and skin irritant; can trigger asthma; restricted in cosmetics.
8. **Amyl Acetate** – neurotoxin; eye and lung irritant; lung allergen.
9. **Benzalkonium Chloride** – immune system, lung and skin toxicant; can trigger asthma; restricted in Canada and Japan.
10. **Benzyl Alcohol** - strong neurotoxicant; can cause allergic reaction in lungs; causes itching, burning, scaling, hives, and blistering of skin; caused liver damage, coma and death in animals.
11. **Boric Acid** – strong reproductive toxin; potent endocrine disruptor; unsafe for use on infant, injured or damaged skin; causes death and birth defects in animals; banned in Canada and Japan.
12. **Bronopol** (2-bromo-2-nitropropane-1,3-diol) – one of the **strongest** lung and skin toxicants; endocrine disruptor; forms carcinogenic nitrosamine; causes allergic contact dermatitis environmental contaminant; poisonous to wildlife.
13. **Butylated Hydroxyanisole (BHA)** - human carcinogen; caused brain and liver tumors in animals at low doses; endocrine disruptor; causes allergic contact dermatitis and skin depigmentation; banned in European Union; persistent environmental toxin.
14. **Butylated Hydroxytoluene (BHT)** – endocrine disruptor, skin and lungs toxicant at low doses; caused death, liver and stomach cancers, thrombosis, fibrosis, liver and brain damage in animals; strong skin and eye irritant.
15. **Butylene Glycol** – skin, lung and eye irritant; environmental toxin.
16. **Butylparaben** - skin and eye irritant; endocrine disruptor linked to breast and ovarian cancer; environmental contaminant.

17. **Calcium Fluoride** – neurotoxic to humans; leads to bone weakness; causes birth abnormalities and depression in animals.
18. **Ceteareth (with any numeral following it)** - unsafe for use on broken skin; eye and lung irritant; may be contaminated with 1,4-Dioxane.
19. **Cetrimonium Chloride** - skin and eye sensitizer that can include itching, burning, scaling, hives, and blistering; caused cell mutations in animal studies.
20. **Cetyl alcohol** - skin and eye irritant in humans.
21. **Cetrimonium Chloride** – can cause itching, burning, scaling, hives, and blistering of skin; caused lung cancer in animals.
22. **Chloroacetamide** - strong skin, eye, and lung irritant; toxic if inhaled; causes paralysis, goiter, and birth defects in animals; banned in Canada.
23. **Coal Tar** – known human carcinogen; causes lung and urinary tract cancer; potent skin irritant; causes multiple cancers in animals; banned in most countries including Canada and European Union; still used in anti-dandruff shampoos in the US and the U.K.
24. **Cocamide DEA** (ethanolamide of coconut acid) – strong human skin toxicant and suspected carcinogen; causes irritation of skin, eyes, and lungs in humans; causes liver and bladder cancer in animals.
25. **D&C Red 30 Lake** - strong nervous system toxicant; as an aluminum compound, disrupts endocrine system and linked to breast and ovarian cancer; persistent wildlife contaminant.
26. **D&C Violet 2** - coal tar dye; skin and eye irritant; long-time use of coal tar hair dye linked to bladder cancer.
27. **Dibutyl phthalate** - neurotoxicant, linked to impaired fertility and urinary abnormalities, linked to breast and ovarian cancers, contaminates wildlife.
28. **Diethanolamine** (DEA) – linked to brain abnormalities in animals; may be contaminated with carcinogen 1,4-Dioxane.
29. **Dimeticone** (dimethicone) – petroleum derivative, environmental toxicant.
30. **Direct Black 38** - diethanolamine-containing dye that is a confirmed human carcinogen; strong evidence of causing bladder cancer; may harm unborn child; causes liver and kidney cancer in animals; banned in European Union.
31. **DMDM Hydantoin** - contains carcinogenic **Formaldehyde**; skin, eye and lung irritant; environmental toxicant.
32. **Ethylparaben** - skin and eye irritant; endocrine disruptor linked to breast and ovarian cancer; environmental contaminant.
33. **Eugenol** - endocrine disruptor, skin, eye and lung irritant; well-recognized consumer allergen; caused death, coma, insomnia, convulsions, hematuria, pulmonary edema and liver cancer in animals.
34. **Ext. D&C Violet 2** – this coal tar dye is a strong skin irritant; long-time use of coal tar dyes is linked to increased risk of bladder cancer; this dye is restricted in cosmetics.
35. **FD&C Blue 1** - derived from coal tar; linked to allergies and hyperactivity disorders.
36. **FD&C Green 3** - causes sarcomas and bone marrow hyperplasia in animals; not studied for safety in humans; prohibited in European Union.
37. **FD&C Yellow 5 (E104, tartrazine)** – causes severe allergic and intolerance reactions, especially among asthmatics and those with an aspirin intolerance; linked to thyroid tumors, chromosomal damage, hives, and hyperactivity in humans.
38. **FD&C Yellow 5 Aluminum Lake** - aluminum compounds are neurotoxic to humans.

39. **FD&C Yellow 6** - human skin and eye irritant; caused coma, convulsions, testicular damage, and changes in leucocytes in animals; cannot be used in eye cosmetics
40. **Fig (Ficus Carica) Extract** – immune system toxin; cannot be used as fragrance ingredient due to potential carcinogenicity; banned in European Union; allowed in the US as fragrance ingredient in shampoos and body washes.
41. **Formaldehyde** - known human carcinogen linked to leukemia, pancreatic, skin, liver, and lung cancer; strong skin, eye, and lung irritant; irritates human liver (causes cirrhosis), stomach, kidneys, and bladder; can cause skin burns; triggers asthma; hazardous air pollutant; environmental toxin; banned in Canada and Japan; determined as safe for use in cosmetics in the US.
42. **Formaldehyde Resin** - contains **Formaldehyde** and carries same risks; can trigger allergic reaction in the skin or lungs.
43. **Formaldehyde Solution (Formalin)** - linked to leukemia, nasal and nasopharyngeal cancer; neurotoxin in humans and animals; linked to bladder and liver cancer; restricted in Canada and European Union known human carcinogen linked to leukemia, pancreatic, skin, liver, and lung cancer; strong skin, eye, and lung irritant; irritates human liver (causes cirrhosis), stomach, kidneys, and bladder; can cause skin burns; triggers asthma; hazardous air pollutant; environmental toxin; banned in Canada and Japan; determined as safe for use in cosmetics in the US.
44. **Glyceryl Stearate** – weak skin, eye and lung irritant.
45. **Iodopropynyl Butylcarbamate** - contains **Diethanolamine**; can affect thyroid function; gastrointestinal or liver toxicant; cannot be used in aerosols; causes allergic contact dermatitis; restricted in Japan.
46. **Imidazolidinyl Urea (Uric Acid)** – can cause itching, burning, scaling, hives, and blistering of skin.
47. **Isobutylparaben** – skin and eye irritant; endocrine disruptor linked to breast and ovarian cancer; environmental contaminant.
48. **Isoparaffin** – petroleum derivative; environmental toxin; mildly irritating; produced kidney damage in animals; not carcinogenic in humans.
49. **Isopropyl Alcohol (SD-40)** - human neurotoxin; skin, eye, and lung irritant; vapors cause drowsiness and dizziness; causes skin dehydration, may promote brown spots and premature aging of skin; petroleum derivative.
50. **Hydroquinone** - eye, lungs, and nervous system toxin; can cause itching, burning, scaling, hives, and blistering of skin; suspected liver and stomach carcinogen; causes liver cancer, DNA and ovary mutations in animals; restricted in Canada.
51. **Lactic acid** – strong skin and eye irritant; can cause skin burns; causes changes in liver, brain and blood in animals; caused mutations and birth defects in animals; restricted in Canada.
52. **Lanolin** - strong skin irritant and toxicant; can cause allergic reaction in the lungs.
53. **Laureth-7** (polyethylene glycol ether of lauryl alcohol) – may be contaminated with carcinogen 1,4-Dioxane.
54. **Lead acetate** – possible human carcinogen and neurotoxin; skin and eye irritant; environmental toxin; banned in the European Union.
55. **Lecithin** - can irritate lungs in aerosol form; a potent asthma trigger; forms carcinogenic nitrosamine compounds if mixed with nitrosating agents.
56. **Manganese Sulfate** - strong human neurotoxin; harmful during prolonged exposure or inhalation; causes convulsions, DNA mutations, and protein loss in animals; toxic to wildlife.

57. **Methamine** - strong skin, eye, nose, and lungs irritant; can cause itching, burning, scaling, hives, and blistering of skin; may be contaminated with carcinogenic 1,4-Dioxane; cannot be used in aerosol cosmetics.
58. **Methyl Methacrylate** - strong neurotoxin; strong eye and lung irritant; causes asthma and skin burns; causes cancer and stomach bleeding in animals; hazardous air pollutant; banned in Canada and in the US.
59. **Methylparaben** - skin and eye irritant; endocrine disruptor linked to breast and ovarian cancer; environmental contaminant.
60. **Mineral oil (liquid petrolatum)** - caused blood and skin cancer formations in animals; eye and skin irritant; derived from petroleum; non-biodegradable environmental toxin.
61. **Monoethanolamine (MEA)** - skin and eye irritant at low doses, can be irritating to the respiratory tract.
62. **Nonoxynol** (ethoxylated alkyl phenol) – endocrine disruptor; skin and lung irritant; caused liver damage in animals; may be contaminated with 1,4-Dioxane.
63. **Octoxynol** (10, 11, 13, 40) – strong skin and eye toxin that can cause itching, burning, scaling, hives, and blistering of skin; may contain carcinogen 1,4-Dioxane; caused cancer of reproductive organs in animals.
64. **Oxybenzone** (benzophenone-4) – strong photoallergen, endocrine disruptor; produces free radicals that can increase skin aging; environmental toxicant.
65. **Padimate O (Octyl Dimethyl PABA/PABA Ester)** – has estrogenic activity; releases free radicals that damages DNA when exposed to sunlight; causes allergic reactions and photoallergic dermatitis; restricted in Japan.
66. **Para Amino Benzoic Acid (PABA)** - causes allergic dermatitis and photosensitivity; produces free radicals that cause mutations, lead to cell death and may be implicated in cardiovascular disease; causes changes in blood components and muscle weakness in animals; banned in Canada.
67. **Paraffin (paraffinum liquidum, paraffin petrolatum)** - petrochemical bleached with carcinogen acrolyn; releases carcinogens benzene and toluene upon heating; caused kidney or renal system tumor in animals; environmental toxin.
68. **PEG-100 Stearate** - polyethylene glycols are often contaminated with 1,4-Dioxane; suspected endocrine disruptor; linked to cancer in animals; skin and eye irritant.
69. **Petrolatum (soft paraffin, white petrolatum, petroleum jelly)** - lung irritant upon inhalation; derived from petroleum; non-biodegradable environmental toxin.
70. **Phenol** – strong respiratory irritant; toxic by skin contact, causes skin burns; causes kidney damage and cyanosis in humans; causes skin cancer, birth defects, brain and nervous system damage in animals at very low doses; environmental contaminant; banned in Canada, restricted in Japan, permitted in the US.
71. **Phenoxyethanol** - endocrine disruptor and carcinogen in animals; linked to allergic contact urtica and dermatitis.
72. **Picric acid** - human immune system toxicant; toxic by inhalation, skin contact, and ingestion; causes allergic reaction in the skin or lungs; causes coma, convulsions, body temperature increase in animals; banned in Canada and European Union.
73. **Placental Extract** – endocrine disruptor containing estradiol and progesteron; banned in Canada.
74. **Polyethylene Glycol (PEG)** - often contaminated with carcinogenic 1,4-Dioxane; suspected endocrine disruptor; linked to cancer in animals; skin and eye irritant.

75. **Polyethylene Terephthalate** – causes cancer in animals; not studied for safety in humans.
76. **Polysorbate 80** - contaminated with 1,4-Dioxane; suspected endocrine disruptor; linked to cancer in animals; skin and eye irritant.
77. **Potassium Persulfate** - strong irritant to eyes, lungs, respiratory system and skin; restricted for use in cosmetics.
78. **P-phenylenediamine** - linked to bladder and prostate cancer; human neurotoxin; skin and lung irritant; causes liver cancer and birth defects in animals; very strong environmental toxin.
79. **Propyl Acetate** – skin, eye, nose and lung irritant.
80. **Propylene glycol (PG)** can cause eye irritation and conjunctivitis, as well as upper respiratory tract irritation.
81. **Propylparaben** - skin and eye irritant; endocrine disruptor linked to breast and ovarian cancer; environmental contaminant.
82. **Resorcinol** (m-hydroquinone, euresol, 1,3-benzenediol) – strong skin irritant, linked to adenomas in animals, suspected to trigger skin cancer in humans, environmental toxin.
83. **Quaternium-7, 15, 31, 60** - formaldehyde releasing; can cause skin and eye irritation; linked to several cancers (see **Formaldehyde**)
84. **Saccharin** – suspected human carcinogen; causes liver, kidney and bladder damage in animals, as well as reproductive damage and birth abnormalities, during numerous studies.
85. **Silica** - linked to esophageal cancer, renal disease, pulmonary fibrosis, mesothelioma, sarcoma, rheumatoid arthritis, bronchitis; strong nasal and lung irritant; wildlife toxicant; accumulates in human body.
86. **Sodium Metabisulfite** - immune system toxicant; eye and skin irritant; emits toxic gas when contacts with acids; dangerous for asthmatics; causes stillbirth, muscle weakness and brain degeneration in animals.
87. **Sodium Methylparaben** – endocrine disruptor; caused mild brain damage in animals; skin irritant causing itching, burning, scaling, hives, and blistering of skin; causes depigmentation of skin; banned for use in EU.
88. **Sodium Monofluorophosphate** - nervous system toxin; harmful if swallowed during teeth bleaching; causes convulsions, proteinuria, osteoporosis and changes in DNA in animals; restricted in Canada.
89. **Sodium Laureth Sulfate** - skin irritant, water contaminant, may be contaminated with carcinogen 1,4-Dioxane.
90. **Sodium Lauryl Sulfate** - skin and eye irritant, in toothpaste may cause canker sores.
91. **Talc** - even when it contains no asbestos, was proven fibrogenic (causes tissue injury and fibrosis), skin and lung irritation.
92. **Teflon** – causes toxic pneumonitis and skin cancer in animals; no studied for safety in humans.
93. **Tetrasodium EDTA** - contains **formaldehyde**; cytotoxic and genotoxic in animals; strong skin and lung irritant in humans; most widespread poison to waterways.
94. **Thimerosal (Thiomersal, Merthiolate)** – strong toxin to skin, nervous and immune system; mercury is linked to autism; causes cancer in animals; environmental toxin
95. **Thioglycolic Acid** (contains mercury) – strong human skin irritant; causes itching, burning, scaling, hives, and blistering of skin; lung allergen; restricted in cosmetics; banned in Canada
96. **Toluene (methylbenzene)** - skin and lung toxicant; carcinogen; accumulates in fat tissue; soil contaminant.

97. **Triclosan** – endocrine disruptor, affects thyroid hormone-associated gene expression, caused fetal death in animals; strong skin irritant; environmental toxicant
98. **Triethanolamine (TEA)** – causes lymphoid, kidney and renal tumors in animals; may be contaminated with carcinogen 1,4-Dioxane; skin and eye irritant even when used in low doses.
99. **Triphenyl Phosphate** – human neurotoxin; skin, eye and lung irritant; causes tremors, depression, and diarrhea in animals.
100. **Xanthene (AKA106, CI 45100)** – found unsafe for use in cosmetics in the US; caused cancer and various organ mutations in animals.