

Danger Lurks At Home

Everyday household products trigger untold family ills

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EVERYDAY household products such as shampoo, baby lotion and body wash could be making people sick with children most at risk, an environmental campaigner has warned.

Research commissioned by Ecostore into leading household brands found that many laundry detergents, fabric whiteners and softeners, shampoos, body washes and baby lotions contained potentially dangerous chemicals.

Some could weaken immune systems and cause itchiness, severe eczema, dermatitis and allergies.

The founder of Ecostore, Malcolm Rands, yesterday urged people to read labels and ensure their products didn't contain things such as toxic petrochemicals, sodium lauryl sulphate and optical brighteners.

Often consumers need to ask companies what their products contained, he said.

An analysis by NGO Safer Solutions found of more than 10,500 chemicals found in Australian personal care products only 11% had been tested for safety.

Most people used between 11 and 30 products at home.

Mr Rands said optical brighteners commonly found in laundry powders had been linked to immune system problems.

Parabens, used in some skin-care products had been found in some breast cancers.

"The most dangerous way for a chemical to enter your body is not through your mouth ... it's actually through your skin", he said.

While the reasons for allergies and skin problems were complex, it was no coincidence that people in developing countries with limited access to chemical products had fewer allergies.

"Children and babies are at much greater risk of chemical exposure than adults because they inhale or ingest more chemicals per unit of body weight", he said.

Since he started making natural products in New Zealand 17 years ago, Mr Rands said he had heard countless reports of people whose sneezing, rashes, eczema and asthma have disappeared after "going natural".

Families should ask what was in products, he said, and consider natural alternatives such as diluted white vinegar as a spray cleaner and baking soda in the dishwasher or washing machine.

Net Link www.ecostore.net.au

Laundry

- Detergent

Phosphates:	dangers to aquatic life
Optical brighteners	skin allergies, toxic to aquatic life
Nonylphenol ethoxylates	harms fish
Synthetic dyes and perfumes	Common sensitivity in humans and toxic to animals
Enzymes	Potential irritant

- Laundry Whitener

Enzymes

- Laundry Prewash

Enzymes

- **Fabric softener**

Tallow based softeners Often uses animal fat.
Petrochemical solvents Allergies, skin irritants.

Kitchen – Dishwashing Liquid – for dry skin

Phosphates Danger to aquatic life
Triethanolamine, Diethanolamine and Monethanolamine Hormone-disrupting effects, potentially carcinogenic
EDTA Remobilise heavy metals in the environment
Sodium lauryl sulphate Can penetrate organs and increase absorption of other chemicals

Bathroom

- **Multipurpose Spray Cleaner**

Benzyalkonium chloride Cancer mutagen, toxic to organs and nerves, skin and eye
Ethanalamine Cancer mutagen, allergen, toxic to organs and immune system, skin and eye irritant.

- **Hand wash**

Sodium laureth sulphate associated with organ system toxicity, skin and eye irritant
Cocoamidopropyl betaine Potential allergen for skin or lungs, known human immune system toxicant
Methylchloroisothiazolinone Mutagenic, immunotoxicity hazard, skin irritant
Benzophenone-5 Known endocrine disrupter and human skin toxicant, eye irritant, causes liver damage.
Parabens Mildly estrogenic (ability to mimic female hormones in the body when applied to the skin)
DMDM hydantoin potential allergen to skin and lungs, shown to cause gastrointestinal ulceration and liver damage to animals.

- **Body Wash**

As for hand wash

- **Bar of Soap (for sensitive skin)**

Cocoamidopropyl betaine
Tocopheryl acetate allergies, immunotoxicity

- **Shampoo and Conditioner**

Sodium laureth sulphate
Sodium lauryl sulphate Can penetrate organs and increase absorption of other chemicals
Cocoamidopropyl betaine
Cocoamide MEA Possible nitrosamine contamination which has serious cancer, developmental, reproductive and endocrine disruption issues
Propylene glycol Skin irritant, has caused liver abnormalities and kidney damage in lab animals.
Parabens
Cyclopentasiloxane Known carcinogen, endocrine disrupter. Toxic to organs and nerves, and skin irritant
Stearamidopropyl dimethylamine No known health and safety issues
Quaternion 18 Toxic to organs and nerves

Cleaners

- **Cream Cleanser**

Ammonia Irritant for eyes, skin and respiratory system, possible carcinogen

- **Window cleaner**

Isopropyl alcohol Cancer mutagen, toxic to organs, nerves
Ammonium hydroxide Corrosive, possible carcinogen, irritant to eyes and skin, toxic to organs and nerves
Methanol Possible carcinogen, toxic for development, organs, nerves, irritant to skin and eyes.
Ethanalamine Cancer mutagen, allergen, toxic to immune system and organs, skin and eye irritant.
Ethylene glycol monoethyl ether Cancer mutagen, potent neurotoxin, immunotoxicity hazards, suspected skin irritant.

- Toilet cleaner

Alcohol ethoxylate	Toxic to aquatic organisms
Benzalkonium chloride	Cancer mutagen, toxic to organs and nerves, skin and eye irritant.
Methylchloroisothiazolinone	Mutagenic, can trigger immune system response

For Baby – for sensitive skin**- Baby Moisturiser**

Petrolatum	Contamination issues
Isopropyl palmitate	Toxic to organs, irritant for skin, eyes or lungs
Benzyl alcohol	Toxic to immune system and nerves, irritant to skin, eyes or lungs

- Baby Massage Oil

Mineral oil	Cancer, allergies, immunotoxicity
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- Baby wash soap – for sensitive skin

Sodium lauryl sulphate	Can penetrate organs and increase absorption of other chemicals.
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