Harmful Ingredients to Avoid in Your Skincare Products

Description

Did you know that your skin absorbs up to 60% of what you put on it?



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Itâ??s funny that while most of us understand the importance of eating clean (the organic food industry has boomed in the last decade), fewer of us take concern of what we apply topically on the biggest organ on our body, our skin.

If you thought the FDA (or HSA, in Singaporeâ??s case) does a good job in regulating our cosmetics and skincare products, youâ??ll be surprised to find that this is not really the case.

The FDA in July had forged a far-reaching agreement with the industry that would have meant cosmetics would be supervised essentially as closely as drugs are. The agreement was to serve as the basis for legislation to grant the FDA the new authority.

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What is HSA's Role in Cosmetic Products Regulation?

As they are considered to be generally of lower risk than other health products, cosmetic products are currently not subjected to HSA's approval before they are placed on the market. They are also not assessed or approved by HSA for their effectiveness before being sold. Companies who manufacture, import and sell cosmetic products are directly responsible for the safety of their products.

Taken from the Health Sciences Authority website.

Apart from the fact that skincare products are not assessed or approved by HSA before theyâ??re allowed to be sold in Singapore, you should also know that the ASEAN Cosmetic Directive stipulated by HSA is generally just a guideline for product packaging. The truth is, few companies even follow these regulations, if any at all.

For instance, did you know all product ingredients need to be stated on the product itself (or on its packaging)? But just take a look at most of the Korean brands being sold here where you barely even understand the ingredients they use *(yet these products are selling like hotcakes, if I might add. Etude House just opened their largest flagship store in Asia at Wisma Atria not too long ago).*

The truth is, the skincare industry is highly unregulated, and the problem is not just in Singapore alone. There are hundreds of thousands of synthetic chemicals used in cosmetic products, many of which your body absorbs without you realizing it. Many of these chemicals are known skin irritants, linked to cancer, can interfere with pregnancies and cause birth defectsâ?¦yet we continue to apply them on our skin! Scientists have found such cosmetic ingredients like phthalates and fragrance compounds in human tissues and breastmilk.

> *â??Did you know that substances placed on your skin or scalp are actually absorbed into your system up to 10 times faster than substances you eat?â?•* Credits: Soboskincare

In fact, U.S. studies have found evidence of 287 toxic chemicals (out of the 400 screened) present in the umbilical cord blood of newborn babies. They included toxins like mercury, polybrominated diphenyl ethers and many others, which are known to cause birth defects. However, these study results have largely been ignored by the mass media. *(Study conducted in 2005 by the Environmental Working Group)*

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Of course, most of us average folk will not be able to completely avoid chemicals in our daily lifestyles. Yet, there are certain areas where we might want to exercise greater caution in. Budget Babe recommends being picky about the ingredients found in:

1. Stuff you apply and do not wash off
2. Shampoo and conditioner
3. Any product you put on babies and children
4. Anything you soak in for an extended period of time



There are too many toxic chemicals out there for me to list, but hereâ??s my list of common ingredients I personally avoid:

Ingredient	What it is used for	Potential dangers
Parabens (methyl, butyl, ethyl, propyl)	- Preserving cosmetic products	- Increases risk of breast cancer (has been found in breast tumours)
Artificial colouring (FD&C, E-somethings)	- Add colours to cosmetic products to make it look more visually appealing	- Derived from coal tar - Suspected human carcinogen, banned in Europe - A known skin irritant - Linked to ADHD in children
Fragrance / Parfum	- Adds a nice scent to products	- Linked to cancers
Phthalates	- To increase flexibility and soften plastics	- Linked to breast cancers - Linked to reproductive birth defects
Triclosan / Benzoyl peroxide	- Commonly used in acne treatments	- Disrupts thyroid and reproductive hormones - A known skin irritant - Has mutagenic properties that can cause tumours
Sodium lauryl sulfate	- Causes foaming and lather	- Known skin, lung and eye irritant - May react with other chemicals to form carcinogens
Formaldehyde	- Preservative - Prevent bacteria growth	- Suspected carcinogen - Known skin irritant
Propylene glycol	- Used as a skin conditioning agent	- A known skin irritant and penetrator - Associated with causing rashes and hives in humans
Mineral oil and paraffin	- Coats skin with a plastic-like layer to make it smooth	- Clogged pores - Linked to slower cellular development, cancer and hormonal disruptions
Alcohols	- Makes a thick skincare formulation feel weightless	- Slowly breaks down skin's natural protective barrier

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What are some toxic ingredients you generally avoid?

Category

1. Family