

#### ■ Acrylates

Acrylates are components found in man-made nail products. Consumers are mainly exposed to these chemicals through inhalation or skin contact. Despite evidence of adverse reactions to these chemicals, they continue to be put in nail products. Look out for anything with "acrylate" on the end of its name, or any product labelled as "acrylic".

#### ■ Aluminum

Aluminum is a common component in deodorants due to its antiperspirant effect. Aluminum-based compounds form a temporary plug within the sweat duct that stops the flow of sweat to the skin's surface, which forces toxins to flow back into the bloodstream. It is linked to Alzheimer's, brain disorders and breast cancer.

#### ■ BHA and BHT

Used mainly in moisturisers and cosmetics as preservatives and thickeners. Suspected endocrine disruptors and may cause cancer (BHA). Harmful to fish and other wildlife for the same reasons it is harmful to humans. These products have been banned from baby products in many countries, yet we could be putting them on our skin every day.

#### ■ Chemical Sunscreens with Retinyl Palmitate, Oxybenzone or Octyl Methoxycinnamate

Beware of these ingredients on the label. When many of the chemicals put in popular sunscreens are exposed to sunlight, reactions occur between the sunscreen's active and inactive components and the epidermis. Toxic reactions include inflammation, skin harm, allergic reactions and DNA altering effects. These components actually promote cancer, defeating the point of wearing sunscreen to begin with.

#### ■ Coal tar dyes: p-phenylenediamine and colours listed as "CI" followed by a five digit number

Look for p-phenylenediamine in hair dyes and antidandruff shampoo. Colours are listed as "CI" followed by five digits. The U.S. colour name may also be added. Potentially causes cancer and may be contaminated with heavy metals.

#### ■ DEA and related components

Used in cream and foam products, such as moisturisers and shampoos. Can form nitrosamines, which may cause cancer. Harmful to fish and other wildlife. Look also for related chemicals MEA and TEA.

#### ■ Dibutyl Phthalate

Found in nail products. All phthalates are banned in the E.U., but not restricted in Canada. Dibutyl phthalate is an endocrine disruptor and suspected to reproductive toxin. Used as a plasticizer in some nail care products.

#### ■ Dioxane

1,4-dioxane is a carcinogen linked to organ toxicity found in as many as a fifth of the cosmetics available on the shelf, but you won't find it on component labels. That's because 1,4-dioxane is created when other components react to form the compound when mixed together. Sodium laureth sulfate, PEG compounds, chemicals with xynol, cetareth and oleth in their name.

#### ■ Formaldehyde

Found in some nail products, antibacterial soaps and foundations, formaldehyde is a carcinogen restricted in Canada. Formaldehyde is a highly toxic compound used as a pesticide normally. Look for DMDM hydantoin, diazolidinyl urea, imidazolidinyl urea, methenamine and quarternium-15 on labels.

#### ■ Fragrance / Perfume

Any mixture of scents put in a variety of cosmetics — even in some products marketed as "unscented." Some fragrance components can trigger allergies or asthma. Some have been linked to cancer and neurotoxicity. Some are highly harmful to the environment and wildlife.

*Source: Environmental Working Group Campaign for Safe Cosmetics*