



# The Clean Swap

## Your Guide to a Low-Toxin Household



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# Introduction

## The Importance of a Low-Toxin Home

This workbook aims to empower you with knowledge about these potential hazards. We'll guide you through understanding the risks, identifying the sources of Endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs) in your home, and taking proactive steps to replace hazardous products with safe, health-conscious alternatives.

### EDC in everyday products

“The average woman uses 12 products a day, while men use five or six and teens use even more,” says Nicole Acevedo, Ph.D., a reproductive and environmental health scientist. “What if one product has parabens (an EDC), but you use 12 of those a day? You’ll have a bigger exposure. The danger is the additive effect and everyday exposure.”

You can't eliminate all contact with endocrine disruptors, but you can reduce your contact.

There are online resources committed to clean products. Apps like Think Dirty, Yuka, Clearya, and [EWG's Skin Deep Database](https://www.ewg.org/skindeep) (website) where consumers can type in (or scan) the name of a product or an ingredient and get a rating of it.

- <https://www.ewg.org/skindeep>
- Yuka, Think Dirty, and Clearya are available in the App Stores.

## FREE steps to reducing exposure

There are several small actions you can take to reduce your exposure to toxins.

- Take your shoes off at the door! Our shoes contain so many germs, mold, feces, etc.
- Switch plastic containers to glass and NEVER heat your food in plastic
- Open your windows for 5-10 minutes a day (with good air quality) Our homes nowadays are more closed off and less ventilated than ever before
- Pour your cup of coffee from a shop into your own stainless steel or glass cup to decrease the amount of plastic that leeches off of the paper/styrofoam cups
- Toss the artificial air fresheners
- Damp dust and vacuum frequently, dust contains phthalates, flame retardants, BPA and more.

Reflecting on your environment and home and at work, what are some additional ways you can reduce your exposure? Write them below.

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# Part 1: Understanding Toxins in the Home

## Chapter 1: The Hidden Dangers

### What are endocrine disruptors?

Endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs) are substances that may disturb the body's hormonal balance and negatively impact your health.

These can be natural or synthetic and are found in many everyday items such as personal care products, plastic containers, and household goods.

EDCs can mimic or block hormones, crucial for regulating growth, metabolism, and reproduction.

Even small hormonal shifts can have significant health effects, including reproductive issues, developmental problems, and increased risks of certain diseases (ie. Types of cancers, thyroid issues, obesity, type 2 diabetes, prostate problems, and more).

### How may endocrine disruptors enter the human body?

Endocrine disruptors primarily enter the human body by ingestion (food/water intake), skin contact, air, and inhalation. The majority of these chemicals accumulate in the adipose tissue (body fat). This results in a very long half-life of these chemicals in the body. They can stay in your body for years and combine with other EDCs or react to them.

The timing of exposure is an important parameter in determining the exact impact of endocrine disruptors in humans. In most cases, the effects develop gradually and manifest in later life stages.

This workbook is designed to help you identify EDC sources in your home and offer healthier, safer alternatives to minimize potential health risks.

## Common endocrine disruptors

This is nowhere near an all-inclusive list, however, they are very common in the product categories outlined below. Be on the lookout for these ingredients.

- Personal care products that contain: Parabens, Phthalates, UV Filters, Fragrance (with no ingredients listed), triclosan
- Cookware and food storage that contain: Bisphenol A (BPA), Phenol, Phthalates, Perfluorochemicals, Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl (PFAs)
- Clothing may also contain perfluorochemicals.
- Foods that are wrapped in plastic, artificial sweeteners (ie. Stevia), processed foods (if you can't pronounce it, don't eat it), soy-based products, unwashed fruits and vegetables, caffeine in excess, dairy products in excess.
- Alcohol



## Reading labels 101

The terms "natural" and "non-toxic" are frequently used in marketing to suggest that products are safe and healthy. However, these terms are not always clearly defined by regulatory agencies and can be misleading with regard to endocrine disruption.

### When it comes to endocrine disruptors, here's what to consider:

**Check the Ingredients:** Regardless of claims like "natural" or "non-toxic," always review the product's ingredients for known endocrine disruptors, such as phthalates, parabens, BPA, and certain pesticides.

**Look for Certifications:** Some third-party certifications can give more credibility to safety claims. For instance, products certified organic or those with an "EWG Verified" and "Made Safe" marks have been evaluated for harmful chemicals.

**Be Informed:** Understand which substances are endocrine disruptors and which ones are safe to use.

To sum up, while "natural" and "non-toxic" are appealing terms, they are not definitive indicators of a product being free from endocrine disruptors. It's essential for consumers to look beyond marketing and assess the actual ingredients and certifications to determine the safety of a product.

Notes:

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## Chapter 2: Toxins in Cleaning Products

### Common Toxic Ingredients in Cleaners

Many cleaning products contain a variety of chemicals that can be toxic to the endocrine system. Here's a list of some of the most common ones and how they may affect the endocrine system:

#### 1. Phthalates

- **Where They're Found:** In fragranced household products, such as air fresheners, dish soap, even toilet paper.
- **Endocrine Effect:** Phthalates can mimic hormones and are linked to reproductive abnormalities and decreased levels of sex hormones.

#### 2. Perchloroethylene or "PERC"

- **Where They're Found:** In dry-cleaning solutions, spot removers, and carpet and upholstery cleaners.
- **Endocrine Effect:** PERC is classified as a possible carcinogen and can affect the nervous system; its role in endocrine disruption is associated with reproductive toxicity.

#### 3. Triclosan

- **Where They're Found:** In products labeled "antibacterial," like hand soaps and detergents.
- **Endocrine Effect:** Triclosan may interfere with thyroid hormone regulation and potentially contribute to antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

#### 4. Ammonia

- **Where They're Found:** In polishing agents for bathroom fixtures, sinks, and jewelry; also in glass cleaner.
- **Endocrine Effect:** Ammonia exposure can disrupt endocrine function, particularly impacting the thyroid.

## 5. Chlorine

- **Where They're Found:** In scouring powders, toilet bowl cleaners, mildew removers, laundry whiteners, and household tap water.
- **Endocrine Effect:** Chlorine and chlorine by-products can disrupt thyroid function.

## 6. Sodium Hydroxide

- **Where They're Found:** In oven cleaners and drain openers.
- **Endocrine Effect:** Although not well-studied for endocrine disruption, sodium hydroxide is highly corrosive and can cause burns; it may alter hormonal function if absorbed through the skin.

## 7. 2-Butoxyethanol

- **Where They're Found:** In window, kitchen, and multipurpose cleaners.
- **Endocrine Effect:** This chemical can contribute to reproductive problems and has shown to affect the ovary and testicular function in animal studies.

## 8. APEs (Alkylphenol Ethoxylates)

- **Where They're Found:** In laundry detergents, multi-purpose cleaners, floor cleaners, and carpet cleaners.
- **Endocrine Effect:** APEs can mimic estrogen and have been associated with reproductive issues.

## 9. Bisphenol A (BPA)

- **Where They're Found:** In plastic bottles and containers, can linings, and sometimes in the lining of water pipes.
- **Endocrine Effect:** BPA is known to mimic estrogen and has been linked to reproductive disorders and an increased risk of certain cancers.

## 10. Parabens

- **Where They're Found:** Although more commonly associated with personal care products, parabens can also be found in some cleaning products.
- **Endocrine Effect:** Parabens can mimic estrogen and may be linked to reproductive problems and an increased risk of breast cancer.

## **Minimizing the impact of endocrine disruptors**

When these chemicals act as endocrine disruptors, they can cause a cascade of health issues, because the endocrine system regulates virtually all cellular processes in some manner.

To mitigate these effects, you can:

- Choose cleaning products with simpler, non-toxic ingredients.
- Use natural cleaning agents like vinegar, baking soda, and lemon.
- Check for products with environmental certifications.
- Ventilate your home well when using these products to minimize inhalation.
- Wear protective gear such as gloves and masks when using products containing these chemicals.

## **Rethinking Disinfection Practices**

Many are unaware that effective disinfection requires a two-step process. First, thoroughly clean the surface with soap and water. Only then should a disinfectant be applied. Without this initial cleaning, using a disinfectant alone is largely ineffective. Safe disinfectant alternatives include white distilled vinegar and hydrogen peroxide, but remember to use them separately. It's crucial to recognize that conventional disinfectants can contaminate indoor air quality, potentially weakening the immune system and harming respiratory health.

### **Optional Activity**

Step 1:

Create an inventory sheet: List all your current cleaning products.

Step 2

Use the inventory sheet and create a column labeled "Risk".

Mark the toxicity for each product (from the list of provided resources located in the Introduction of this workbook).

## Cleaning Supplies – Inventory

Product	Risk (High-Low)



## Cleaning Supplies – Inventory

Product	Risk (High-Low)



# Chapter 3: Dangerous Beauty and Personal Care

## Makeup and Skin Care Culprits

Personal care and beauty products often contain a variety of chemicals that can act as endocrine disruptors. Here is a list of common toxic chemicals found in these products and the potential effects they can have on the endocrine system:

### 1. Parabens (Methylparaben, Propylparaben, Butylparaben, etc.)

- **Found In:** Moisturizers, shampoos, conditioners, and various makeup items.
- **Endocrine Effect:** These chemicals can mimic estrogen and are associated with reproductive issues, including impacts on fertility and an increased risk of certain cancers.

### 2. Phthalates (DBP, DEHP, DEP and others)

- **Found In:** Nail polishes, hair sprays, aftershaves, perfumes, lotions, and skin care products.
- **Endocrine Effect:** Phthalates are known for disrupting the endocrine system by interfering with hormone production, particularly testosterone, which can lead to reproductive abnormalities, including developmental disorders.

### 3. Triclosan

- **Found In:** Some toothpastes, antibacterial soaps, and deodorants.
- **Endocrine Effect:** Triclosan can interfere with the regulation of thyroid hormone and possibly other hormones, affecting metabolism and potentially leading to other health problems.

### 4. Oxybenzone (Benzophenone-3)

- **Found In:** Sunscreen lotions and other products with sun protection.
- **Endocrine Effect:** Oxybenzone acts like estrogen in the body, alters sperm production in animals, and is associated with endometriosis in women.

## 5. Synthetic Fragrances

- **Found In:** Many personal care products, including perfumes, lotions, and body washes. Can also be found in menstrual products.
- **Endocrine Effect:** Fragrance formulas are considered trade secrets, so manufacturers are not required to disclose specific ingredients, many of which may be phthalates or other endocrine disruptors.

## 6. Formaldehyde and Formaldehyde Releasing Preservatives (Quaternium-15, DMDM hydantoin, imidazolidinyl urea)

- **Found In:** Nail polish, hair gel, hair-smoothing products, body washes, and other cosmetics.
- **Endocrine Effect:** Formaldehyde is a suspected endocrine disruptor and is known to be a carcinogen. Its role in the endocrine system can be related to reproductive toxicity.

## 7. Lead and Other Heavy Metals (Arsenic, Mercury, Aluminum, Zinc, Chromium, and Iron)

- **Found In:** Lipsticks, whitening toothpaste, eyeliner, nail color, foundations, and deodorant.
- **Endocrine Effect:** Heavy metals can accumulate in the body and disrupt hormonal activity, particularly affecting thyroid function and potentially leading to reproductive health problems.

## 8. Siloxanes (Cyclomethicone, Cyclotetrasiloxane, Cyclopentasiloxane, Cyclohexasiloxane)

- **Found In:** Hair products, deodorant creams, moisturizers, and facial treatments.
- **Endocrine Effect:** Certain siloxanes can interfere with hormone function and reproductive processes.

## 9. Sodium Lauryl Sulfate (SLS) and Sodium Laureth Sulfate (SLES)

- **Found In:** Shampoos, body wash, foundation, face wash, mouthwash, and toothpaste.
- **Endocrine Effect:** SLES can be contaminated with 1,4-dioxane, which may act as an endocrine disruptor.

## 10. Toluene

- **Found In:** Nail polish, hair dyes, and bleaching products.
- **Endocrine Effect:** Toluene vapors can disrupt the endocrine system and may affect fetal development during pregnancy.

### **To minimize exposure to these endocrine disruptors:**

- Read labels and look for products free from these harmful chemicals.
- Opt for beauty products with natural ingredients.
- Look for certifications indicating products have been screened for harmful substances.
- Research product safety using apps referenced in the Introduction of this workbook.
- Reduce the number of products used to lessen the chance of exposure.

By becoming more informed about the ingredients in your personal care and beauty products, you can make choices that reduce your risk of endocrine disruption and promote better overall health.

### **Optional Activity**

Step 1:

Create a beauty product breakdown: Catalog your personal care products and their ingredients.

Step 2

Self-Audit: Note any adverse reactions you've had to these products.

or

Mark the toxicity for each product (from the list of provided resources located in the Introduction of this workbook).



## Beauty Product Inventory

Product	Risk (High-Low)



## Personal Care Product Inventory

Product	Risk (High-Low)



# Part 2: Creating a Safer Home

## Chapter 4: Green Cleaning Alternatives

### Recipes for Natural Cleaners

Making your own non-toxic all-purpose cleaner is simple, cost-effective, and safe for most cleaning tasks around your home. Here's a basic recipe that you can try:

#### DIY Non-Toxic All-Purpose Cleaner Recipe

##### Ingredients:

- 1 cup distilled white vinegar
- 1 cup water
- 15-20 drops of essential oil (such as lemon, lavender, or tea tree oil for their natural disinfectant properties)
- 1 tablespoon baking soda (optional for extra scrubbing power)
- 1 glass spray container (available on Amazon)

##### Instructions:

#### 1. Prepare the Vinegar Solution:

In a spray bottle, mix the distilled white vinegar and water. Vinegar is a natural disinfectant and deodorizer, making it effective for many cleaning tasks.

#### 2. Add Essential Oils:

Add your choice of essential oils to the vinegar solution. Essential oils add a pleasant scent and can also have additional antimicrobial properties. Lemon is particularly good for cutting grease, lavender has a calming scent and disinfectant properties, and tea tree oil is a strong disinfectant.

## **Instructions (continued):**

### **3. Combine Ingredients:**

If you're using baking soda, add it slowly to the mixture to avoid too much fizzing. The baking soda is optional, but it can be helpful for tough grime and adds a gentle abrasive quality to the cleaner.

### **4. Shake Well:**

Once all ingredients are in the spray bottle, shake well to ensure they are thoroughly mixed. Be sure to shake the bottle gently before each use as the ingredients can separate over time.

### **4. Label Your Bottle:**

Label the spray bottle with the contents and date so anyone can safely use it.

## **Use with Caution on Certain Surfaces:**

While this all-purpose cleaner is safe for most surfaces, it's worth noting that vinegar can damage natural stone, such as granite or marble. Always test a small area first if you're unsure about a surface.

## **Usage:**

Spray the cleaner on surfaces such as countertops, tables, sinks, and tiles, then wipe with a clean cloth or sponge. For tougher stains, let the solution sit for a few minutes before scrubbing.

Remember that while this cleaner is non-toxic, it's always good practice to use cleaning products in a well-ventilated area. Additionally, natural doesn't always mean allergen-free, so if you or someone in your household is sensitive to fragrances or other natural compounds, adjust the recipe as needed.

## **DIY Non-Toxic Liquid Laundry Soap Recipe**

Creating your own non-toxic laundry soap is an excellent way to ensure you're washing your clothes with safe, gentle ingredients. Here's a simple recipe to make your own liquid laundry soap:

### **Ingredients:**

- 1/2 cup of borax (optional, but it's a natural mineral that softens water and is effective at removing stains and boosting cleaning power)
- 1/2 cup of washing soda (sodium carbonate, which is great for removing stains and boosting detergent)
- 1 cup of castile soap (a plant-based soap that cleans without synthetic detergents)
- 10-20 drops of essential oil (optional, for scent; e.g., lavender, lemon, or eucalyptus)
- 4 cups of hot water (to dissolve the ingredients)
- Enough additional water to fill a gallon jug (non-BPA plastic jug or glass jug)  
You can repurpose glass half-gallon milk containers.

### **Instructions:**

#### **1. Dissolve Dry Ingredients:**

In a large bucket or container, pour the hot water. Add the washing soda and borax (if using), and stir until completely dissolved.

#### **2. Add Soap:**

Gently stir in the castile soap until well combined. If you add the soap too quickly or vigorously, it might create too many suds.

#### **3. Add Essential Oils:**

If desired, add your choice of essential oils to the mixture for fragrance.

#### **4. Dilute and Store:**

If you're using a bucket, transfer the mixture to a gallon jug or container. Fill with cold water until you reach a gallon. If you've been mixing directly in a jug, simply fill the rest of the jug with cold water to dilute.

### 5. Shake Before Each Use:

Shake well before using to mix the ingredients as they can separate when sitting.

### 6. Use in Laundry:

Use about 1/4 to 1/3 cup of laundry soap per load. This can vary depending on the size of the load and the level of soiling.

#### Notes:

If you prefer a thicker consistency, you can reduce the amount of water or experiment with adding a small amount of a natural thickening agent.

If you have hard water, the borax can be especially helpful.

Be cautious when using essential oils, as some can cause irritation or allergic reactions. Always conduct a patch test for clothing to ensure the oils do not cause staining or damage.

This homemade laundry soap is low-sudsing, making it safe for HE (high efficiency) washing machines.

Store your homemade laundry soap in a cool, dry place, and it should last for several months.

Remember that homemade laundry detergents may work differently than commercial ones, especially in cold water, so experiment with the amount you use and the temperature settings on your washer to find what works best for your laundry.

### **Optional Activity**

#### Step 1:

Make your first natural cleaner and/or laundry soap using the recipes above or search the internet for additional recipes.

#### Step 2

Create a swap schedule for replacing toxic cleaners with natural alternatives.

## Swap Schedule

Product to be replaced	Replacement date



## Swap Schedule

Product to be replaced	Replacement date





## Chapter 5: Safe Beauty Regimen

### Finding Safer Makeup and Skin Care

Do your homework to choose safe beauty products. If you don't know where to start, use the resources provided in the Introduction section of this workbook.

#### To minimize exposure to these endocrine disruptors:

- Read labels and look for products free from these harmful chemicals.
- Look for certifications indicating products have been screened for harmful substances.
- Research product safety using apps referenced in the Introduction of this workbook. Apps like Yuka, Clearya, and EWG have scanning capabilities so you can scan products in store.
- Reduce the number of products used to lessen the chance of exposure.
- Ask one of the coaches at True North Performance for what they are using.

Generally speaking, these are toxin-free brands:

1. Honest Beauty
2. Well-People
3. BeautyCounter

### Optional Activity

Step 1:

Personalized Beauty Plan: Chart to create your own safe beauty routine.

Step 2

Product Research: Find safe products that suit your needs.

It's also important to check with professionals like dermatologists or allergists when making significant changes to your skincare or cleaning routines, especially if you have underlying health conditions

## Personalized Beauty Plan

Product to be replaced	Replacement Item



## Personalized Beauty Plan

Product to be replaced	Replacement Item



# Part 3: Maintaining a Toxin-Free Lifestyle

## Chapter 6: Sustainable Shopping Habits

### **Tips on maintaining a toxin-free lifestyle while shopping**

Maintaining a toxin-free lifestyle requires mindfulness about what you buy and where you shop. Here are some practical tips to help you make toxin-free choices:

#### 1. Educate Yourself About Ingredients

**Learn to Read Labels:** Familiarize yourself with common toxic ingredients and their alternatives. This knowledge will help you make informed decisions.

**Use Resources:** Leverage databases and apps to check product safety ratings. (Resources listed in the Introduction section of this workbook)

#### 2. Choose Whole Foods Over Processed Ones

**Opt for Organic:** Whenever possible, choose organic fruits and vegetables to reduce exposure to pesticides.

**Avoid BPA:** Buy fresh or frozen produce to avoid BPA in canned goods. Look for cans labeled as BPA-free if canned products are necessary.

#### 3. Be Mindful of Packaging

**Reduce Plastic:** Choose products with minimal packaging, or packaging made from recycled or safer materials. Glass and stainless steel are good alternatives.

**Avoid Certain Plastics:** Steer clear of plastics with recycling codes 3 (phthalates), 6 (styrene), and 7 (bisphenols) unless they are labeled as "biobased" or "greenware," indicating they are made from plants and do not contain bisphenols.

#### 4. Prioritize Natural and Non-Toxic Brands

**Research Brands:** Support companies with a commitment to non-toxic products. Brands that are transparent about their ingredients tend to be more reliable.

**Look for Certifications:** Products certified by organizations like USDA Organic, Green Seal, or EcoLogo have met certain environmental standards.

## 5. Simplify Your Routines

**Use Fewer Products:** The fewer products you use, the less you're exposed to potential toxins.

**Multi-Use Items:** Opt for items that serve multiple purposes to reduce the number of different chemicals you introduce into your home.

## 6. Make Your Own Products

**DIY When Possible:** Make your own cleaning and personal care products using simple, natural ingredients like vinegar, baking soda, and essential oils.

## 7. Choose Sustainable and Ethical Fashion

**Natural Fibers:** Choose clothing made from organic cotton, bamboo, wool, or other natural fibers that are less likely to be treated with harmful chemicals.

**Eco-Friendly Brands:** Support fashion brands that are committed to sustainability and that use non-toxic dyes and processes.

## 8. Stay Informed About Toxins in Household Items

**Furniture and Decor:** Choose furniture made with natural materials, and look for those free of flame retardants.

**Toys and Children's Products:** Opt for toys made of solid wood or BPA- and phthalate-free plastics, and avoid those with toxic paints or finishes.

## 9. Filter Your Water

**Use a Good Water Filter:** Invest in a high-quality water filter for your home to reduce exposure to contaminants that may be present in tap water.

## 10. Avoid Fragrance

**Skip Artificial Fragrances:** The term "fragrance" or "parfum" on labels can hide a multitude of chemicals. Choose fragrance-free or products scented with natural oils.

## 11. Stay Connected to Nature

**Indoor Plants:** Some indoor plants can help remove pollutants from the air, contributing to a toxin-free home environment.

## 12. Opt for Non-Toxic Cookware

**Avoid Teflon:** Use cast iron, stainless steel, or glass cookware instead of non-stick coatings that can release harmful substances when overheated.

## 13. Maintain a Toxin-Free Mindset

**Consistency Over Perfection:** It's not about being perfect but making better choices consistently.

**Community Support:** Join communities focused on living toxin-free lifestyles for support and information sharing. True North Performance is an excellent community to share information.

By incorporating these tips into your shopping and lifestyle habits, you can significantly reduce your and your family's exposure to toxins and promote a healthier home and environment.



## How to avoid marketing traps and find genuine healthy products.

Avoiding marketing traps and finding genuinely healthy products can be a challenge, as many companies use misleading labels and buzzwords to attract health-conscious consumers. Here are some strategies to help you navigate through marketing ploys and identify authentic healthy products:

### 1. Understand Labeling Language

- **"Natural" is not Regulated:** The term "natural" is not strictly regulated and can be used on products without significant meaning. It does not necessarily equate to being healthy or chemical-free.
- **"Organic" has Standards:** Look for labels like "USDA Organic," which have legal definitions and require products to meet specific standards.
- **"Non-Toxic" is Vague:** This term is not a regulated descriptor and can be used loosely. There's no standardized definition of what "non-toxic" means.
- **"Hypoallergenic" Isn't a Guarantee:** This term suggests that the product is less likely to cause allergic reactions, but it isn't proof of being irritant-free or safer.

### 2. Be Skeptical of Health Claims

- **Check for Evidence:** When products claim to provide specific health benefits, look for scientific evidence or approval by legitimate health authorities to back up these claims.
- **Don't Rely on Endorsements:** Celebrity endorsements or influencer promotions do not guarantee the healthfulness of a product.

### 3. Investigate the Ingredient List

- **Shorter is Often Better:** A shorter ingredient list often means fewer additives and a simpler product.
- **Watch for Hidden Chemicals:** Some products may list ingredients that contain or release harmful chemicals, like formaldehyde-releasing preservatives.
- **Use Trusted Resources:** Websites and apps like EWG's Skin Deep Database or the Think Dirty app can help analyze the safety of the ingredients.

#### 4. Seek Transparency

- **Transparent Sourcing:** Companies that openly share where their ingredients are sourced tend to be more trustworthy.
- **Production Processes:** Understanding how products are made can also indicate their healthfulness. Look for companies that are transparent about their manufacturing processes.

#### 5. Recognize Greenwashing

- **Beware of Greenwashing:** This is a marketing tactic used to make a company appear more environmentally friendly than it really is. It often involves using green imagery and terms like "eco" without substantive practices to back them up.
- **Check Company Practices:** Investigate the company's environmental and health initiatives beyond their product labels.

#### 6. Look for Certifications

- **Certifications to Trust:** Labels such as "Certified Organic," "Fair Trade Certified," "Non-GMO Project Verified," and "Green Seal" usually have strict guidelines and are good indicators of a healthier product.

#### 7. Avoid Fragrances

- **Go Fragrance-Free:** Synthetic fragrances can be a source of hidden chemicals. Opt for fragrance-free or those scented with 100% essential oils.

#### 8. Prioritize Whole, Unprocessed Products

- **Whole Foods:** When shopping for food, the healthiest items are usually whole, unprocessed foods. These are less likely to contain additives and hidden sugars.

#### 9. Contact Manufacturers

- **Ask Questions:** If you're uncertain about a product's claims or ingredients, contact the manufacturer directly for clarification.



## 10. Stay Informed and Educated

- **Continuous Learning:** Health and wellness information is constantly evolving. Stay informed by reading reputable sources, attending workshops, and engaging with health and wellness communities.

## 11. Trust Your Intuition

- **Be Mindful:** If a product or claim seems too good to be true, it often is. Trust your intuition and do your research.

## 12. Know the Dirty Dozen and Clean Fifteen (Highest to lowest level of pesticides)

- Dirty Dozen, 2023 in order from the most polluted to the least:

Strawberries	Bell and hot peppers
Spinach	Cherries
Kale, collard, and mustard greens	Peaches
Nectarines	Pears
Apples	Celery
Grapes	Tomatoes

- Clean 15, 2023 in order from the least polluted.

Avocados	Cantaloupes
Sweet corn	Mushrooms
Pineapple	Cabbage
Onions	Kiwi
Papaya	Mangoes
Sweet peas (frozen)	Sweet Potatoes
Asparagus	Watermelon
Honeydew melon	

By using these lists, you can make informed decisions about the produce you purchase. It's important to note that even the fruits and vegetables on the Clean 15 list can still contain trace amounts of pesticides, but by choosing these items over the Dirty Dozen, you can significantly reduce your exposure to harmful pesticides.

By using these guidelines, you can navigate the complex marketplace more effectively and make choices that are truly healthier for you and your family. Always remember that marketing is designed to sell, not necessarily to inform, so your own informed judgment is your best tool.

### **Optional Activity**

#### **Step 1**

Shopping List Makeover: Practice making a toxin-free shopping list.

#### **Step 2**

Look at your favorite recipes for meals and snacks. How can you swap in more healthy alternatives?

## Toxic-Free Shopping List

<b>Household &amp; Cleaning Products</b>	<b>Beauty &amp; Personal Care</b>	<b>Grocery &amp; Food Items</b>

## Resources

### Further Reading and Resources

- [EWG's Skin Deep Database](https://www.ewg.org/skindeep) (<https://www.ewg.org/skindeep>)
- Yuka, Think Dirty, and Clearya are available in the App Stores.

### Good Instagram Follows

- Drjoshredd
- Saragottfriedmd
- Glucosegoddess
- Theguthealthmd
- Drjamesclinic
- Drmarkhyman
- Drbradleycampbell
- Paulsaladinomd
- Drgabrielleon
- Elie\_jarrouge
- Lynnkwagnermd
- Peterattiamd

### References

- National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences ([www.niehs.nih.gov](http://www.niehs.nih.gov))
- [www.endocrine.org](http://www.endocrine.org)
- [www.ethikel.com](http://www.ethikel.com)
- [www.elcaminohealth.org](http://www.elcaminohealth.org)
- Environmental Working Group ([www.ewg.org](http://www.ewg.org))
- [www.foodsafetynews.com](http://www.foodsafetynews.com)

## Embrace Your Toxin-Free Journey

Each step towards a toxin-free lifestyle is a leap for your health and the environment. Remember:

- **Celebrate Small Wins:** Every non-toxic choice is a personal victory.
- **Stay Curious:** Knowledge empowers you to make better choices.
- **Be Patient:** Sustainable change takes time.
- **Connect with Others:** Sharing experiences can bolster your resolve.
- **Remain Flexible:** Be ready to adjust as you learn more.
- **Notice the Benefits:** Let the positive changes in your well-being motivate you.
- **Inspire Change:** Your choices can encourage others to follow suit.
- **Reflect and Adapt:** Continuously refine your approach to wellness.
- **Enjoy the Ride:** Find joy in building a healthier life and planet.

Your efforts count more than you know. Keep going!

# Conclusion

Reflect on Your Journey – Use this space to write about your experience and changes you've noticed.

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## Feedback

Was this guide helpful?

What was your biggest take-away?

What suggestions do you have for future editions?

