

How toxic is my bathroom?

By Alex Swerdloff

My CAPS project

Inspired by our unit on toxicity, I decided to evaluate the toxicity of the products that I use on my skin, hair, and teeth. I did this by reading the ingredient lists on the product, and searching the ingredients on [safecosmetics.org](https://www.safecosmetics.org) to see if they were harmful.

The Products

To the right are the products I evaluated.

They are, from left to right, top to bottom:

Pacha bath salts,

Ogyx

Mint shampoo,

Trader

Joe's Body Lotion,

Crest

Toothpaste, and

Dove



Pacha Bulk Salts

Contains only six ingredients, four of which are salts (epsom salts, dead sea salt, etc.). The rest are essential oils and plant extracts. These are not toxic unless they are ingested. Safe for use.



Ogx shampoo

--LOTS of ingredients

--Contains polyquaternium-6 classified as “medium to high toxicity” by Environment Canada Domestic Substance List--linked to allergic contact dermatitis.

--Contains Laureth-4, linked to skin/eye irritation

--Contains eocamidopropyl betaine, suspected to be an environmental toxin



Ogyx shampoo (cont.)

- Contains cetrimonium chloride, also suspected to be an environmental toxin
- Contains Diazolidinyl Urea, which may be linked to cancer; there is a possibility it could be derived from animals, as it is found in urine and other bodily fluids

Overall assessment: while the majority of the “ingredients” were non-toxic, there were a fair number of toxins on the list as well. I will try to find a more natural replacement for this product next time I shop for shampoo.

Trader Joe's Lotion

--Contains "parfum," which is lingo for an undisclosed mixture of various "scent chemicals." Many parfum mixtures contain carcinogens, are environmental toxins, and can cause skin/eye irritation. The fact that the exact chemicals are not listed should be a red flag for consumers.

Overall impression: I'm going to look for a more natural alternative, one that doesn't include "parfum"/fragrance on the ingredient label.



Crest Toothpaste

--Contains Sodium Fluoride, which can cause irritation and was rated as a “moderate” toxin by the Environmental Working Group.

--Many of these issues can be avoided by avoiding ingestion of the toothpaste.

--Overall Assessment: Just don't eat it.



Dove Hand Soap

--By far the worst offender I found.

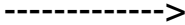
--Contains many ingredients that were classified as “high toxicity” by the Environmental Working Group, like retinyl palmitate, as well as several carcinogens. Nearly all chemicals were ecotoxins.

--I will definitely be looking for a more natural replacement!

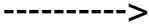




Replacements

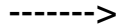


Shea Moisture Shampoo

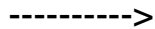


Kokum better botanicals body butter

Replacements (cont.)



Tandi's Naturals Solid Soap



DIY toothpaste! All you need is salt, baking powder, water, and essential oils.

Conclusion

I was shocked at how many of the products I use every day that are labeled as 'all natural' are actually full of dangerous chemicals. I'm glad I looked into this and I am looking forward to re-stocking my bathroom cabinets with less toxic products!

Sources

NLM (National Library of Medicine). 2012. PubMed online scientific bibliography data.
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