

## Beware Toxic Beauty Products

As a follow-up to the last column on personal care products and their safety not only for us but for the planet, here are some more items to consider. Again, this information was gleaned from an article I read on the Mother Nature Network ([www.mnn.com](http://www.mnn.com)). I have found this website to be really useful and helpful.

- Exfoliating scrubs—Love that abrasive, just-cleansed feeling? Many body/ facial scrubs use tiny plastic beads to give you that feel (listed as polyethylene). Less than 1 millimeter in diameter, these tiny pieces wash down the drain and eventually into our oceans where they are piling up and will never biodegrade. Look for scrubs with sugar, apricot, nuts or other natural abrasives.
- Shaving cream—traditional cans of cream contain petroleum-derived ingredients including propane, butane and isobutene which can also dry out your skin. Great, right? Go for organic and natural brands which use olive oil and aloe, among other things for moisturizing.
- Antibacterial hand soap—You've probably heard how much we are over-using this stuff. Many contain a chemical called triclosan, a hormone disruptor that is starting to build up in our oceans. Stick to plain old soap, especially when at home, or look for natural and organic products which use essential oils or botanicals for germ-fighting.
- Nail polish—Beware of painting on more than just a pretty color on your nails—you are most likely getting some formaldehyde, toluene and dibutyl phthalate (DBP). All is not lost here as some companies, such as OPI, Orly and Sally Hansen have re-formulated to leave out the toxic trio. Read the labels before you buy.

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The best way to keep up on the latest in personal care product safety is to check out the Environmental Working Group's website Skin Deep: A Shopper's Guide to Safe Cosmetics (and personal care products). You can find it on the web at [www.cosmeticsdatabase.com](http://www.cosmeticsdatabase.com). Unfortunately, it is a buyer beware market, but now days, it is fairly easy to find more natural products.

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