

Ingredients to Avoid:

Bismuth Oxychloride: This ingredient is used in mineral make-up because it gives a pearlescent sheen to the make-up, which many women find to be too shiny. Unfortunately, for those with sensitive skin, acne and/or rosacea, bismuth oxychloride can aggravate and irritate the condition. It can also enlarge pore size permanently. The chemical structure is similar to **arsenic**. It is the by-product of copper refinement. It is an inexpensive filler. It feels heavy and must be buffed into the skin. It commonly causes irritation (itching and breakouts) and can cause pores to become clogged. Many women experience noticeable itching when they perspire.

Carmine: (also called Crimson Lake, Cochineal, Natural Red 4, C.I. 75470 or E120.) According to the FDA, this red food coloring (also known as cochineal extract) is made from dried, ground bugs. The *Dactylopius coccus costa* insect is native to Peru and the Canary Islands, where it feeds on red berries. The berries accumulate in the females' stomachs and in their unhatched larvae—which is what gives the extract its red coloring. Carmine is one of the most widely used coloring agents, and food manufacturers routinely use it to turn food shades of pink, red or purple. Carmine is used in the manufacture of artificial flowers, paints, rouge, cosmetics, food additives, and crimson ink.

FDC Lakes and Dyes: Studies show that dyes/lakes have a neuro-toxic effect on the brain. Red Dye #40, Alluminum Lake, Yellow #5.

Parabens: (Methylparaben, Propylparaben, Butylparaben.) These are chemical preservatives that have been identified as estrogenic and disruptive of normal hormone function. Estrogenic chemicals mimic the function of the naturally occurring hormone estrogen and exposure to external estrogens has been shown to increase the risk of breast cancer.

Phthalates and Fillers: Common fillers used are bismuth oxychloride, talc (which is a major respiratory irritant), and rice and corn starch (which breeds bacteria extremely quickly).

Propylene Glycol: (PG), Polyethylene Glycol (PEG), Butylene Glycol (BG) and Ethylene Glycol (EG) are all petroleum derivatives that act as solvents, surfactants and wetting agents. They can easily penetrate the skin and can weaken the protein and the cellular structure. In fact, PG penetrates the skin so quickly that the EPA warns factory workers to avoid skin contact to prevent brain, liver and kidney abnormalities. PG is present in many stick deodorants, often in heavier concentrations than in most industrial applications. Propylene Glycol is what is used to carry the “active” ingredients in those transdermal patches into your body. Propylene Glycol may be harmful by ingestion or skin absorption. It may cause eye and skin irritation. Chronic exposure can cause gastro-intestinal disturbances, nausea, headache, vomiting, and central nervous system depression. It has been linked to contact dermatitis, auto toxicity, kidney damage and liver abnormalities. It has been shown to be toxic to human cells in cultures. In fact, PG has been shown to inhibit cell growth in human testes and cell respiration in animal tests, and to cause skin dehydration and chronic surface damage to the skin.

Sodium Lauryl Sulfate: (SLS) is a harsh (caustic) detergent, also known as a surfactant, which breaks down the surface tension of water. It can actually damage the outer layer of the skin, the stratum corium, causing dryness, roughness, scaliness, fissuring, loss of flexibility and reduction of the barrier damage to the moisture retaining ability of the cellular level resulting in water loss and loss of water binding ability.

Talc: This is a mineral and is closely related to the potent carcinogen asbestos. Talc particles have shown up in the ovaries and lungs of cancer victims. A strong link exists between frequent use of talc in the female genital area and ovarian cancer. Talc poses a strong risk when exposed to the lungs. Talc miners have shown higher rates of cancer and other respiratory illnesses from exposure. A 1993 national toxicology report found cosmetic grade talc, without any asbestos-like fibers, caused tumors in animal subjects. Cosmetic-grade talc is not regulated by the government.

Sources: The American Academy of Dermatologists, Inc. Jan 1991; Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), 1996; Atlanta, GA; US Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service; Derm. Beruf Umwelt July/Aug 1998; Cosmetic Science, C. Prottey, 1978.