



5 Harmful Ingredients to Avoid & Safer Alternatives

*A Quick, Printable Checklist for Your Next
Shopping Trip*

01 Parabens

Why to Avoid:

Parabens are preservatives used in cosmetics, lotions, and shampoos. They mimic estrogen in the body and can disrupt hormonal balance, potentially leading to fertility issues and other health concerns.

Safer Alternatives

- Look for products labeled **paraben-free**.
- Try products with ****natural preservatives**** like vitamin E or rosemary extract.
- Examples: Acure, Native, or Honest Beauty (all paraben-free).



When shopping for beauty and personal care products, it's essential to be mindful of harmful ingredients that can disrupt your hormones and negatively impact your health. Below is a guide to help you identify and avoid five common endocrine-disrupting chemicals and their safer alternatives.

BLACK WOMEN
PURCHASE 9X MORE
BEAUTY PRODUCTS

MELANIN IN BALANCE

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02 Phthalates

Why to Avoid:

Phthalates are often used to make fragrances last longer or to soften plastics. They are linked to hormonal imbalances, reproductive issues, and developmental problems.

Safer Alternatives:

- **Choose fragrance-free or products with natural fragrances (like essential oils).**
- **Look for products labeled phthalate-free.**
- **Examples: Dr. Bronner's, Beautycounter, or Earth Mama Organics (phthalate-free).**



Glow up
shouldn't be
harmful

03 Formaldehyde (or Formaldehyde-releasing preservatives)

Why to Avoid:

Formaldehyde is a known carcinogen and can also disrupt hormonal processes. It is often found in hair straightening products and nail polish.

Safer Alternatives:

- Avoid hair straighteners or treatments that contain formaldehyde.
- Look for nail polish brands that are **5-free** (free of formaldehyde, toluene, DBP, camphor, and formaldehyde resin).
- **Examples:** Zoya, and 100% Pure (formaldehyde-free options).



This guide is for educational purposes only and is not intended to diagnose, treat, or replace professional medical advice. Always consult a healthcare provider for concerns about hormone health, allergies, or product safety. While we strive for accuracy, ingredient formulations can change—please read labels and research current information.

Melanin in Balance does not endorse or guarantee the safety of any third-party product mentioned. Use your own judgment and do what's best for your body.

04 Bisphenol A (BPA)

Why to Avoid:

BPA is commonly found in plastics and packaging and can leach into the products we use. It disrupts hormone production, affecting fertility and overall reproductive health.

Safer Alternatives:

- **Choose BPA-free products or opt for glass or stainless steel containers.**
- **Avoid plastic packaging for beauty products when possible.**
- **Examples: Choose brands like Burt's Bees or Weleda (BPA-free packaging).**



Your Health,
Your Wealth

05 Synthetic Fragrances

Why to Avoid:

The term "fragrance" is often a catch-all for many chemicals, some of which are hormone disruptors. Synthetic fragrances can also cause skin irritation and allergies.

Safer Alternatives:

- Choose products with **natural essential oils** or labeled **fragrance-free**
- Look for products with **clean, plant-based ingredients**.
- Examples: Lush, Ava Anderson Non-Toxic, or Native (fragrance-free options).



Quick Tip: How to Read Labels

Check for key terms:

- **Look for labels** that specifically say "phthalate-free," "paraben-free," and "BPA-free."
- **Go natural:** The fewer ingredients on the label, the better. Choose products with simple, natural ingredients that you can easily recognize.
- **Know the packaging:** If a product is in plastic, check if it's labeled BPA-free or consider choosing products in glass packaging.

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