



BLACK WOMEN FOR WELLNESS PRESENTS
BLACK GOING GREEN
UPDATED!

A how to guide on avoiding toxic chemicals in your everyday life



Black Women for Wellness (BWW) is a woman-centered grassroots community-based organization, seeking to enhance the health and well-being of Black women. Our efforts in providing information, education and advocacy are all about eliminating health disparities, building community and empowering women.

Strategies include:

Increasing communication, networking and information sharing among health care professionals;

Developing and implementing programs and health educational materials culturally and gender attuned to the lifestyles and needs of Black women;

Supporting and empowering women to take leadership roles and positions that advocate and drive resources;

Researching and validating effective prevention strategies and tools while documenting new trends impacting health and well-being; and

Being an active listening advocate and voice focused on the health status of African American women.

In the last 16 years, Black Women for Wellness has touched the lives of over 30,000 women (and our families) with health information and education through a myriad of strategies including print publications. This is the 2nd edition of Black Going Green; the first edition was distributed to more than 5000 community residents.

INTRODUCTION

Black Going Green focuses on the intersection of environmental and reproductive justice, looking at how everyday products can impact our reproductive health. More and more, the links between toxic products, chemicals, pollutants and the reproductive health status of women and girls are coming to light.

Black Women for Wellness (BWW) knows it is not possible to shop our way out of the impact of toxic chemicals. While many may be able to afford non toxic brands of personal care, cleaning, beauty and pesticide products, sadly our water, ground and air are still impacted by the manufacture and distribution of toxic products. Additionally, low income communities and residents have a disproportionate exposure risk in the forms of manufacturing plants, toxic dump sites and cheap retail options. Everyone deserves to be healthy and that's why BWW advocates for policy and regulations supporting community health.

This book focuses on informing and educating consumers about the wide use of unregulated toxic chemicals in our environment. On a daily bases we are unknowingly exposed to toxic chemicals that exist in our air, soil, food, water and personal products. This booklet offers insights, recommendations and resources to increase our ability to make healthier decisions when choosing products.

PERSONAL CHOICES

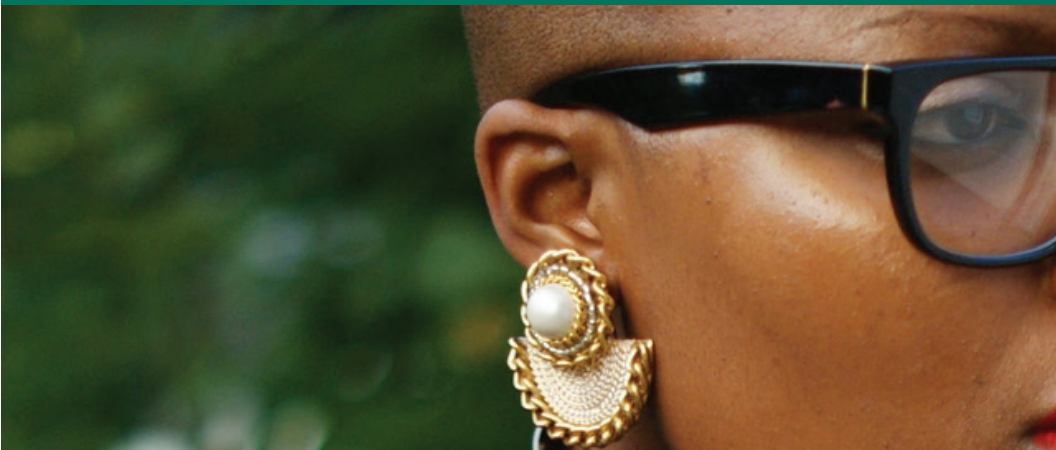
Shopping green with intention is a critical personal option we can take now. Learning and knowing the safety levels of our daily products is a great step in being intentional about our health status. However making proactive, health conscious choices also requires asking local businesses and professionals to carry products that support our healthier options.

ADMINISTRATIVE GOVERNMENT

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), as well as several other government agencies, are charged with overseeing and enforcing regulations and laws that protect our health. As it stands now, our government agencies do not have much, if any, power to recall dangerous chemicals or products. It is up to us, as a united group, to push for sound laws that protect us from harmful chemicals and give oversight agencies the power to fully regulate and recall toxic products.

POLICY & ELECTED OFFICIALS

In addition, we have to make sure that our elected officials are informed and are aware of the dangers of toxic chemicals. Most importantly, we have to show them that we are a community that deeply cares about this issue. Toxic chemicals in our products and environment will be important to our elected representatives when we can effectively demonstrate how important our health is to us. To change policy on the use of dangerous chemicals in our everyday products we have to make those in office realize that this problem is too urgent to ignore.



HOW TO GET INVOLVED

As BWW continues our advocacy efforts at the administrative level, with appointed and elected officials, we will need you to stay in touch, rabble rouse, write letters and support our efforts. This is how change is created that impacts the community and not only the personal.

Black Women for Wellness can be found at www.bwwla.org. In addition, you can like/friend us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and watch us on You Tube at Black Women 4 Wellness Los Angeles. Black Women for Wellness is physically located in the Leimert Park area of Los Angeles. Our telephone number is 323 290 5955. And yes we are on Skype; look for our bwwlosangeles address online for an international chat with Black Women for Wellness. Chat times will be posted on our website and social media accounts when scheduled. Our mailing address is P.O. Box 292516, Los Angeles, CA 90029.

We're a small but mighty cadre of women (and men) that has a global reach. To be part of the campaign, get more information, volunteer, share information, ask questions, comment or order additional copies of Black Going Green, please call 323 290 5955 or e-mail nourbese@bwwla.com

Sincerely
Nourbese Flint
Black Women for Wellness
P.O. Box 292516
Los Angeles, CA 90029





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bisphenol -a

BPA is not limited to formula cans. Cranberry sauce, pumpkin filling, cream of mushroom soup and many other type of canned goods have all came up with BPA in the lining. Plastics such as waters bottles, receipts and toys have also been found with BPA


BABY FORMULA

Yep, it's true. The good old, "innocent" baby formula might contain serious chemicals that can harm both baby and you. Bisphenol a, better known as BPA, is a chemical that is used to make plastics hard, but also shows up in various other non-plastic products. The most common way of exposure of BPA is through oral ingestion, which is the case with baby formula. Many cans have linings that are made with BPA; from that lining the chemicals leach into food which it is then ingested. BPA is not limited to formula cans. Cranberry sauce, pumpkin filling, cream of mushroom soup and many other type of canned goods have all came up with BPA in the lining. Plastics such as waters bottles, receipts and toys have also been found with BPA in them.

BPA is a synthetic estrogen that is linked to everything from diabetes, breast and prostate cancer to infertility and early puberty in girls. It's also known as an endocrine disruptor – a chemical that when introduced into your body mimics hormones. Not only is BPA linked to all the health issues mentioned above, recent studies have also linked BPA to contributing to weight gain and obesity. In the last body burden chemical test by the Center of Disease Control over 90% of people in the United States have traces of BPA in their system.

Breast is the best when it comes to milk, but if that's not an option, look for formula containers, cans and baby bottles that say BPA free. In addition, reach for food that is fresh or frozen to avoid BPA in can linings. Reduce your consumption of plastic water bottles by taking your own canteen/ bottle to the office, use reusable cups and glasses with a pitcher at home and work, or purchase glass bottles or plastic bottles that are BPA free for liquids.

SODA POP



Eeek! Soda manufacturing companies are putting more than carbonated water and sugar in your soda. Recent reports indicate that sodas and sports drinks have halogenated flame retardants in their ingredients labeled as **brominated vegetable oil**. Yes, the same man-made substance that is in our couches/sofas, a chemical that has been banned in 100 countries around the world, is in our sodas. What to do? If you must drink soda, choose clear or natural sodas. If you're feeling especially adventurous, make your own soda. All it takes is carbonated water (or tonic water/club soda) and your favorite juice or flavored syrup. Mix them together and voila, your own personal bubbly without the toxic chemicals and without the added sugar.

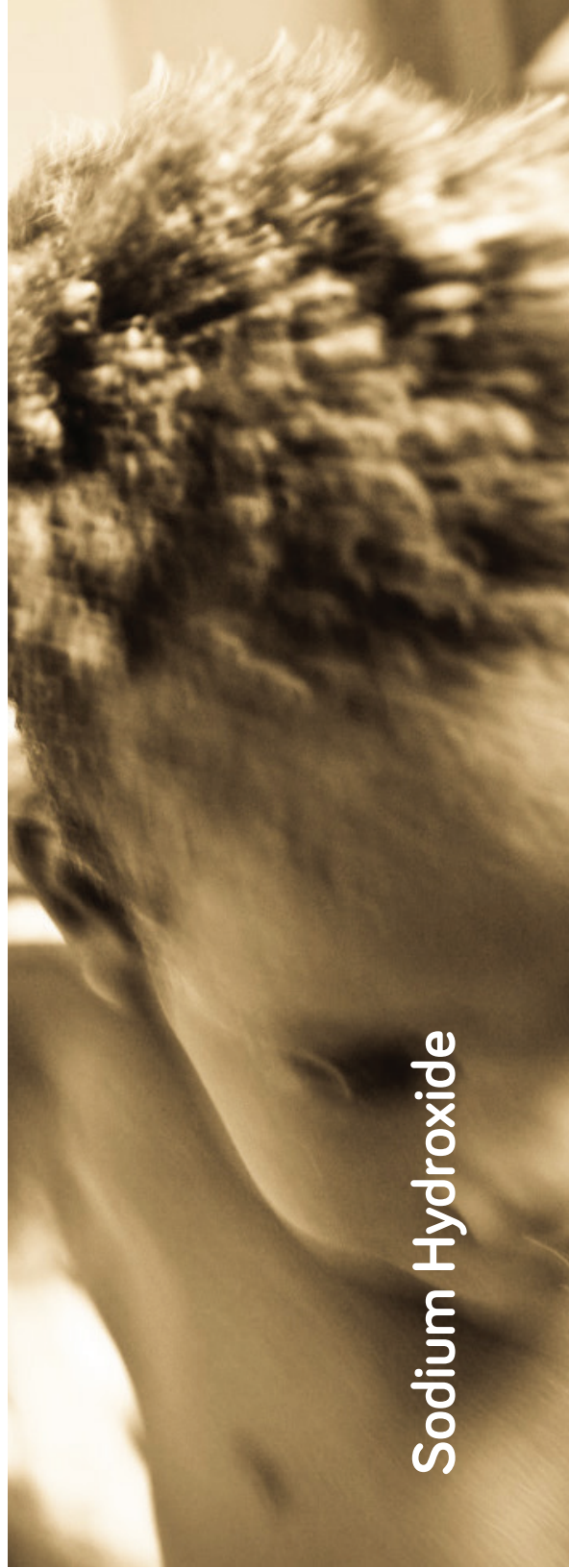
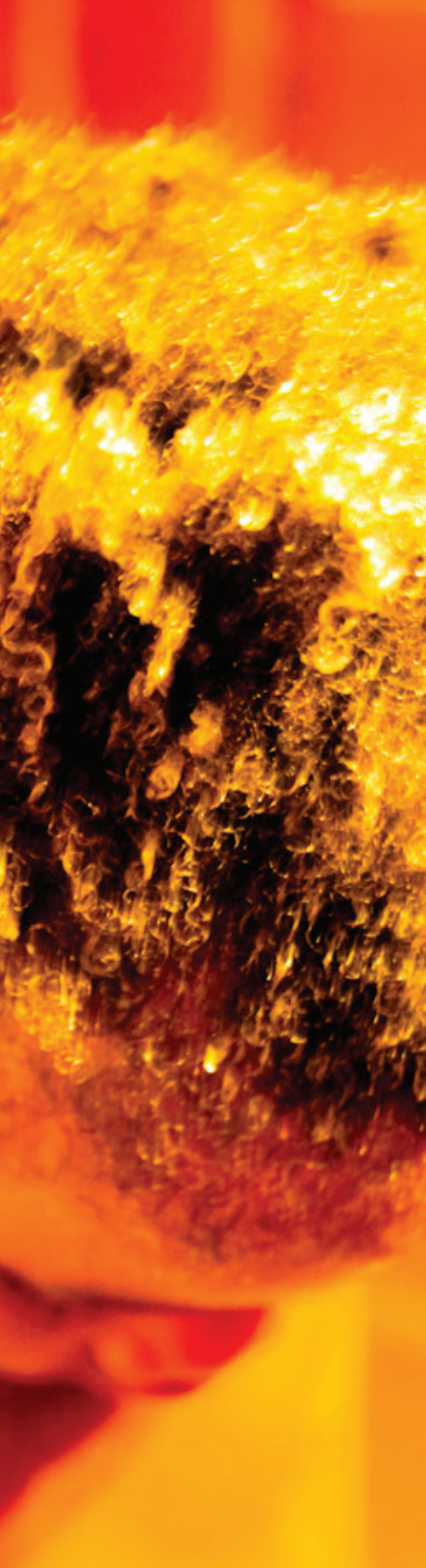
halogenated flame retardants

SOFAS

Being a couch potato can be bad for your health in more than one way. Hidden in many couches across the country, and in almost every couch in California, are chemicals known as **halogenated flame retardants**. At first thought, flame retardants sounds like a good idea: who wants their couch to burn up? But the real story is that these chemicals do very little to keep you safe and a whole lot to make you sick. These chemicals that make up flame retardants are linked to asthma and other respiratory issues, decreased IQ in children, learning disabilities such as attention deficit disorder, undescended testicles, decreased sperm quality and thyroid disruptions to name only a few of the harmful and preventable outcomes associated with the dangerous substance.

Just a note: Because of a special California regulation (TB117), these dangerous chemicals are required to be put in all sofas and mattresses sold in California. As a result, California's children have levels of flame retardants almost as high as foam factory workers and more than twice as high as the average adult in other parts the United States. If you want to be sure about the safety of your sofa, other foam based furniture like a mattress, a seat or seat cushions, check out the label and see if has the TB117 statement on the tag.

Lawmakers will need to develop, vote on and sign policy to impact the toxic levels in our furniture. Currently, many people around the country, especially in California, have very limited choices when it comes to buying a toxic free piece of furniture like a sofa or mattress. Shopping your way out of this challenge is not an option; our only choice is advocacy.



Sodium Hydroxide

RELAXERS


“CREAMY CRACK”

There are a number of chemicals in the creamy solution that make it, well, cracky. Two of the active chemicals, **Sodium Hydroxide (lye)** and **Calcium Hydroxide (no lye)** work by bonding to the hair and changing the structure of the hair permanently. These chemicals cause serious damage to the hair itself by making it weak and prone to breakage. However, these chemicals don't stop there; they can cause serious burns around the face and scalp (and any other body part the chemicals comes in contact with), permanent scarring and blindness. Also, these chemicals serve as a gateway chemical: a chemical that makes it easier for other chemicals to get inside our body through burns and sores. Furthermore, recent studies linked long-term use of relaxers to early puberty in girls and fibroids in African American women.*

Women and girls have better options for hair maintenance and styling. With new technology in heating tools like a good flat iron and a pressing comb, you can achieve relaxer-like straight hair without the chemical exposure and health hazard. If the old tried and true way of heat techniques doesn't work, then try using weaves or wigs to protect your hair and scalp health while still rocking the style you want.

In addition, there is a host of natural styles that eliminate the need for chemicals or heat all together. Natural hair choices do mean more maintenance and time when styling your hair in the real world; however, long-term beneficial impacts include reduced exposure to toxic chemicals that increase the risk for aggressive forms of illness including cancer.

Looking for easy natural hairstyles? Check out You Tube for tons of videos about natural hairstyles that take 10 minutes or less (yes, even styles for those of you who are transitioning from relaxed to natural hair).



The average age of menarche (girls first period) is now 9 compared to in 1980 it was age 11. Given the amount of estrogen and estrogen-mimicking products found in hair and beauty supplies, there is need for additional research to determine if there is cause and effect.

Propylene Glycol

SHAMPOO AND CONDITIONER

Avoid shampoos and conditioners that contain **Propylene Glycol** (it usually looks like PG or PEG on a label). This chemical, commonly found in your favorite hair care products, is also one of the main ingredients in car antifreeze. Other ingredients such as **Diethanolamine, Monoethanolamine, Triethanolamine and Sodium Lauryl Sulfate** (a chemical that makes products lather) should be avoided too. These chemicals can cause skin irritation at the very least but are linked to cancers that reduce the quality of life and can lead to death.

If you have the time, try making your own shampoo with witch hazel, castile soap and essential oils. If this is not an option, research green product companies that use ingredients that are kind to your health and your environment. Natural and health food stores, and even some major chain stores like Target, are now carrying toxic free personal products. Also, talk to your hairstylist about switching to safer, healthier products when getting your hair styled. Check out the back of the booklet for do-it-yourself recipes.



Phthalate

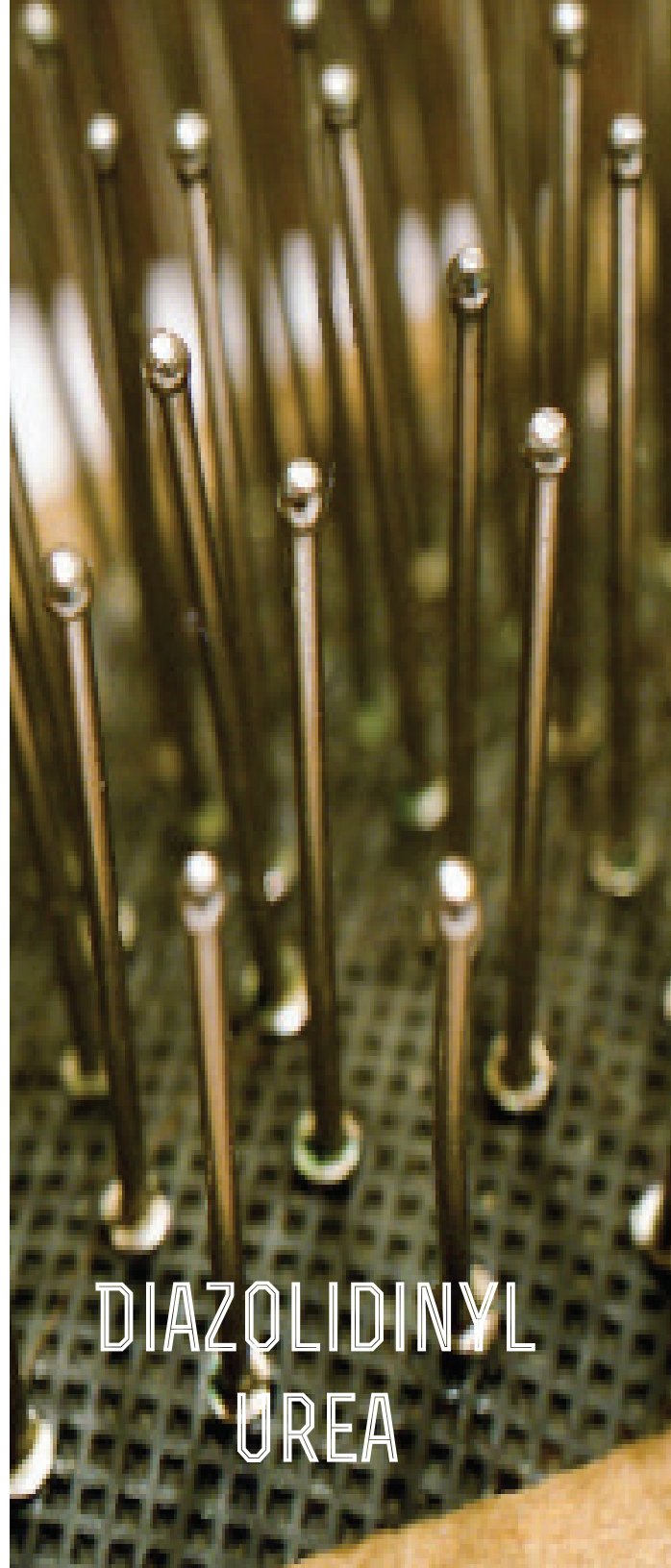
Conditioner
500ml - \$8.00

LOTION, BODY SPRAYS AND SOAPS

Don't we love the fragrance of our favorite lotions, soaps or body sprays that give us a bit of extra yummy appeal in the morning. However, what you don't smell is the toxic chemicals that many of these smell good products contain. **Phthalate** are toxic chemicals that often are a part of the secret ingredient in many soaps, body washes, perfumes, shampoos and other products that have a fragrance. Because of trade secrets around fragrances, some companies are not required to and do not disclose if their product has Phthalates. Phthalates are linked to serious health consequences including reproductive harm, cancer and defects in male genitalia. In a study with pregnant mice that were exposed to this chemical, their male offspring had an increase likelihood of defects of the penis. In addition, phthalates is another member of the endocrine disruptor club.

The endocrine disruptor club is a group of chemicals known to disrupt or interrupt the hormone system in your body. Any part of your body that contains or is controlled by hormones can be infected. That is why chemicals that cause endocrine disruption are scientifically linked to prevalent cancers, irreversible birth defects and mental development problems in babies and children.

Look for products that specifically list all ingredients and avoid buying products that contain phthalates or the generic fragrance label. Try using products that do not have a scent or use essential oil-based fragrances. They are many mainstream products now that have a chemical free or less toxic form of their product. You have options! Be conscious of your shopping choices and the effects on your health and well-being.



DIAZOLIDINYL
UREA

DETANGLERS

Ah, detanglers! They are considered essential to untangling tender-headed little one's hair without tears. However, some detanglers are full of nasty little chemicals that do way more than detangle. Many include **Hydantoin DMDM and Diazolidinyl urea** which are antimicrobial preservatives that are also formaldehyde releasers.

Some detanglers have endocrine disrupting chemicals among the active ingredients. These are chemicals that when enter the body, will mimic naturally occurring hormones, such as estrogen, and disrupt the natural endocrine process. Increased obesity is an impact of estrogen and hormone mimicking chemical use.

Another alarming impact: Detanglers (as well other products that contain these chemicals) have been linked to the early onset of puberty in girls along with a host of other reproductive health issues for both men and women.* Diazolidinyl urea and Hydantoin DMDM chemicals are known carcinogens linked to adverse health effects like asthma and cancer.

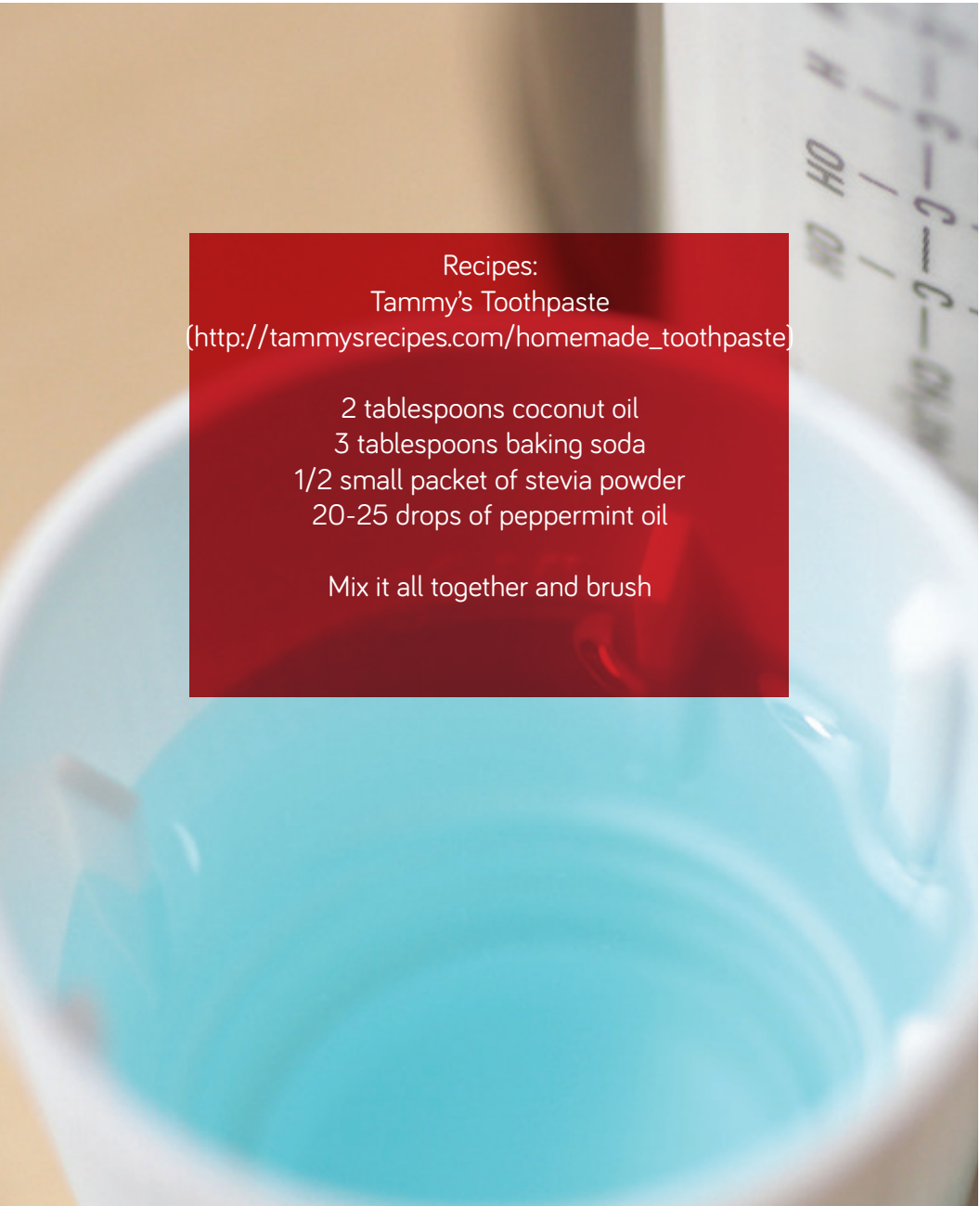
Detangle hair by combing out in sections while the hair is wet; braid sections before and after combing to prevent hair from getting retangled. Also, try using natural ingredients to soften hair, like avocado, Shea butter or coconut oil. For older children and adults, try using a blow dryer with a comb attachment to help detangle. If a good old-fashioned detangler is a must, avoid the chemicals listed above and search for one of the many new products on the markets that are toxic free. Do remember everything labeled organic doesn't necessarily mean that they are all natural and/or organic. Do your research (great start reading this book!) and read labels carefully. And lastly, always remember to moisturize, moisturize, moisturize. Moisturizing the hair properly is a tender-headed person best friend.



Recipes:
Tammy's Toothpaste
(http://tammysrecipes.com/homemade_toothpaste)

2 tablespoons coconut oil
3 tablespoons baking soda
1/2 small packet of stevia powder
20-25 drops of peppermint oil

Mix it all together and brush



TOOTHPASTE AND MOUTHWASH

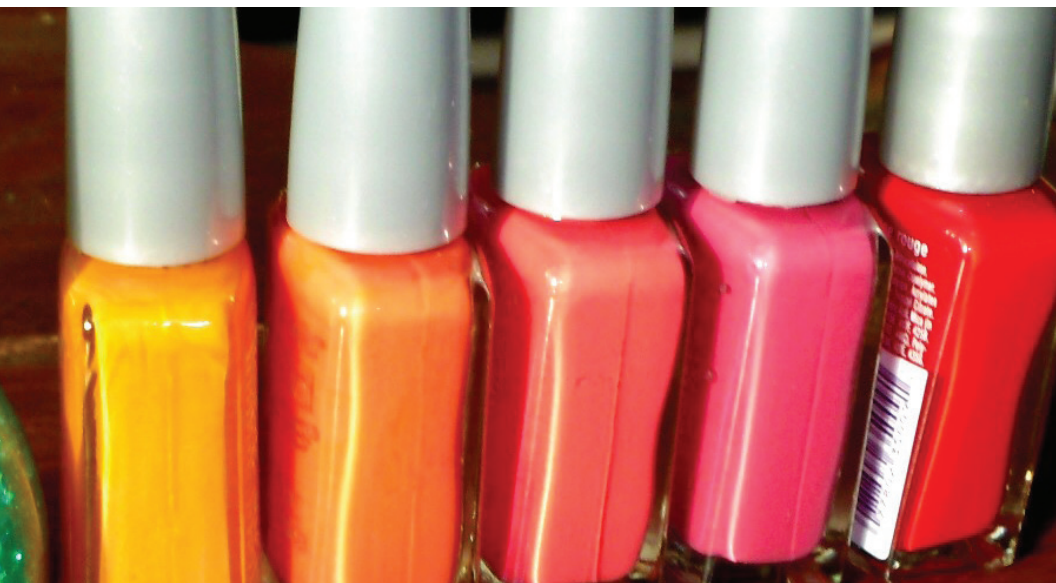
Triclosan

Triclosan is a chemical that can go under many names including Mircoban Biofresh, Cloxifenolum and Lexol. This chemical is a pesticide that can be found in your toothpaste, mouthwash, and range of other products including kitchen appliances and deodorants. Triclosan is primarily used as an antibiotic however, this chemical is linked to adverse health consequences including thyroid issues (important in child development) and increased allergies. In addition, Triclosan has been linked to prolonging sickness (if already ill) and creating antibiotic resistant bacteria.

Turn your toothpaste and mouthwash to the ingredient list and see if it contains any of the chemical names listed above. If it does, chuck it and look for a brand that does not contain all the toxies. Baking soda, hydrogen peroxide and salt water are all safer products to use for dental care and mouthwash. Remember that it is the brushing and flossing that really counts, not the chemicals that foam and make your mouth feel fresh and clean. Flossing and brushing after each meal as well as a healthy diet goes a long way to keeping mouths happy, healthy and toxic free.



TOXIC TRIO



NAIL POLISH

There are three chemicals found in nail polish that are known as the toxic trio. **Toluene, Formaldehyde, and Dibutyl phthalate** can cause health issues varying from leukemia and brain damage to birth malformations and asthma. Developmental toxicity, neuro-toxicity, reproductive toxicity, damage to the kidney and liver and respiratory diseases (such as bronchitis) are some of the health problems linked to this toxic trio we unwittingly use on our nails. Furthermore, formaldehyde in particular, acts as a desensitizer to other chemicals, leaving some people exposed to new allergies to both chemicals and other products.

Purchase your own toxic trio free polish and take it with you to the salon or ask your manicurist/pedicurist for polish that is toxic trio free. However, be extra diligent to find toxic trio free polish. A recent study has shown some nail polishes that were labeled toxic trio free actually had one of the three toxic chemicals in it and, in some cases, higher levels than nail polishes that list these chemicals as ingredients. Plugging your favorite nail polish into the cosmetic database is a great way to learn the level of toxic chemicals in your polish. Remember to use the toxic trio free polish on the top and base coat also. Lastly, try to patronize salons that are well ventilated to decrease inhaling other toxic fumes.

**Toluene, Formaldehyde,
and Dibutyl phthalate**

A close-up, high-angle shot of a red lipstick tube. The lipstick is a vibrant, saturated red color and is partially extended from the clear plastic tube. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows, creating a rich, textured appearance. The background is a soft, warm yellow-orange glow. At the bottom of the frame, the word "LEAD" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

LEAD

Lipstick

Red lipstick can turn the shyest of women into an instant diva. However, some of our favorite lipsticks can contain **lead** and coloring agents that might send our lipstick-wearing divas to an early grave. One colorant, named **coal tar**, is a harmful chemical found in many lipsticks as well as lip glosses and eye shadows. Lead is a classic toxic chemical that has been known for years to cause serious health problems including neurological development issues. These two chemicals together, lead and coal tar, make a deadly team! Coal tar has been linked to several cancers and lead can cause mental disabilities, infertility, cancer and behavioral development deficiencies. In addition, lead has been linked to spontaneous miscarriages in women. Furthermore, lead is found in many places other than lipstick. Watch out for lead in the paint on old buildings and in certain toys, make-up and jewelry.

Lead is not usually listed on labels or products, so reach for things that say lead-free, especially if it's meant for children. These items might be hard to find; however, it's worth the extra effort. Colorants usually are labeled as D&C and FD&C so try to stay away from those ingredients too. Remember to check out your lip glosses since many now have an extra boost of color.

Sunscreen

At one point in time nanotechnology existed only in the science-fiction world, however fiction is rapidly catching up with reality. Nanotechnology is alive and well, and is used in products at your local grocery store and mall. The problem with **nanoparticles** is, well, we don't know what the problem is yet. These particles are so small there is no plan for clean up if they were spilled or released into the environment. In addition, there has been little testing on the health effects of this new technology but it can be found in over 720 consumer products from food to cosmetics. One nanoparticle in particular, **carbon fullerenes** has been linked to brain damage in fish.

Try to find sunscreens that do not contain nanoparticles in it. And while you're at it, make sure it doesn't have **Oxybenzone** either. Look in your local health food stores for natural sunscreens without the chemicals. None there? Ask the bigger chains to start carrying safer, healthier products. Finally, try to stay covered up in direct sunlight with large brim hats and sunglasses.

A close-up photograph of a white sunscreen bottle with a yellow cap, resting on a sandy beach. The background is a blurred view of the ocean and a clear blue sky. The text 'Oxybenzone' is overlaid in white on the upper right portion of the image.

Oxybenzone

SEAFOOD

Tuna is one of the most popular fish on earth. With its versatility, millions of people around the world enjoy tuna. However, tuna is laced with an oldie but goodie toxic chemical, **mercury**. Studies have linked mercury, found in fish products, to complications with children's nervous system including learning disabilities, motor skills impairment and short-term memory loss. A recent study of sushi restaurants in Manhattan found mercury levels so high that eating 6 pieces of sushi a week would exceed the levels considered safe by the Environmental Protection Agency. Seafood that is high in mercury include: mackerel king, shark, swordfish, bluefin tuna, and tilefish which should be eaten sparingly.

Fish products with low levels of mercury include shrimp, catfish and salmon. As a rule of thumb, younger and smaller fish usually have less mercury than bigger or older fish.

Mercury



Specific people to avoid tuna and other mercury enriched seafood are:

- Women who are pregnant should not eat tuna at all.
- Women who are nursing, planning to become pregnant and
- Young children are advised to eat only very small amounts of tuna a week.

STRAWBERRIES FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Strawberries, one of America's favorite fruits...also can be one of the most dangerous. Some non-organic strawberries as well as some other fruits are sprayed with a pesticide called methyl iodide, a very dangerous chemical. **Methyl iodide** is known as one of the most toxic chemicals on earth, linked to late term miscarriages and problems with neurological development. Methyl iodide is sprayed on many other fruits and vegetables including: tomatoes, peppers, grapes and stone fruits including cherries, peaches, plums and nectarines. In addition, it can also be found on tree nuts including pistachios, cashews and English walnuts. And it doesn't stop there. Some non-organic fruit and veggies are sprayed with pesticide fumigant gases like **chloropicrin, telone, and metam-sodium – pesticides** that pose serious health impacts. For a more complete list check out Pesticide Action Network North America.

When it comes to strawberries – go organic or visit your local farmer's market. Get to know the people who are growing your food. They may not have an organic rating but also do not use dangerous pesticides. If you have the time, you can always grow your own or join a co-op that allows you to buy directly from farmers if growing your own food is not your forte. There are some vegetables and fruits that you can get away with going the non-organic route. We have listed them in the back of this book.

**Atrazine, a toxic pesticide, is
found in 94% of US water**



Tips: Environmental Working Group
Dirty Dozen


[http://www.ewg.org/foodnews/
summary/](http://www.ewg.org/foodnews/summary/)

12 fruits and 2 veggies that you
should purchase organic due to
chemical overload

- 1) Apple
- 2) Celery
- 3) Sweet bell peppers
- 4) Peaches
- 5) Strawberries
- 6) Nectarines- imported
- 7) Grapes
- 8) Spinach
- 9) Lettuce
- 10) Cucumbers
- 11) Blueberries - domestic
- 12) Potatoes

Veggies

- 1) Green Beans
- 2) Kale/Greens



Methyl Iodide

Yes, vegetarians, non-meat eaters, vegans and flexatarians: the staple of many diets, the go to for meat substitute is on the toxic list. Not only are soy products a natural obesogen, mimicking estrogen, but in its non-organic form it has a darker twin that belongs to the **GMO (Genetically Modified Organisms)** family. GMOs are part of a growing trend in which foods, plant, animal and bacteria are being genetically altered. Currently over 90% of the corn and soybean crop are genetically engineered in the United States. In the case of soy and corn, chemical companies are genetically engineering the plants to be resistant to herbicides and other chemicals. What's the problem with that? There is research linking GMOs to the uptick in allergy cases and furthermore, insecticides used in GM foods are starting to show up in our bloodstream and even in umbilical cords of newborn babies. A recent study with mice, showed the mice on the GMO diet ended up with huge tumors throughout their bodies. GMOs are not limited to plants either; at the moment a genetically engineered salmon, known to some as frankenfish, is waiting for approval for sale in the US.

Unfortunately, GMO foods are not labeled in the United States and buying organic can be a costly venture. The best way to protect against GMOs is to ask the FDA to label food and food products that have been genetically engineered until we know the full impact to our health.

As of December 2012, the FDA could approve a GMO corn crop that can resist a pesticide made with 2,4-D. What the issues with this? 2,4-D is the active ingredient in Agent Orange, a toxic mix that was used as a weapon in the Vietnam war. Some of the health issues from the use of **Agent Orange** include birth defects, higher incidence of miscarriages and stillborn babies, developmental issues, cleft palates and genetic diseases. People directly exposed to Agent Orange suffered from severe skin damage. Military personnel that worked around this chemical can find traces of it still in their bloodstream many years later. Agent Orange can also be found in the breast milk of women directly impacted from the spraying. Shockingly, the Environmental Protection Agency already has approved 2, 4-D for use in the United States.



SOY & CORN

Genetically Modified Organisms

A photograph showing a white styrofoam box on the left and a white container with a metal handle on the right. A blue circle is overlaid in the foreground, containing the word "Styrene" in white text.

Styrene

Take out

One of things that America is known for is awesome takeout food and, with the amount of hours that we work and that many of us live in food deserts, it makes perfect sense that we reach for take-out at least once a week. In some places, the takeout container can add more to your food than what you asked for! **Styrene**, aka the stuff that styrofoam is made out of, leaks from foam containers into the food when heated or put in contact with acids, grease and oil. Yes, this also includes noodles in a Styrofoam cup/bowl. According to 2012 *Center of Disease Control Body Burden* report, the majority of Americans have some amount of styrene in their bodies. Workers who have higher exposure to styrene suffered from high rates of leukemia and neurological problems such as loss of hearing and balance.

Styrene doesn't stop at humans. Because of the long life of Styrofoam and other products made with styrene, mass amounts of this chemical can be found littering our beaches, rivers and lakes. This causes serious hazards to marine life that mistakenly think the styrene discards are food. There are reports of animals starving to death after eating styrene products (that has no nutritional value) and believing that they are full.

Many counties in California (San Francisco, Berkeley and Alameda) already ban Styrofoam containers. However, since it's not banned nationally, make a suggestion to your favorite restaurant. Patronize food restaurants and other places that use earth friendly take out containers or, if you know that you will need a take home container, bring your own. Most importantly, when heating food in a microwave, take it out of the Styrofoam and use a different, microwave-safe container.



TEFLON

POTS AND PANS

Teflon otherwise known as a **Perfluorinated Compound (PFC)**, started its life as a lubricant for pipes. PFC is one of the most slippery substances on earth, and after some experimentation, it ended up on our pots and pans to help food slide right off of them and onto our plates. However, PFC is linked to adverse health issues such as: ovarian cancer, testicle malformation and low sperm count. It is also linked to an increased risk for kidney and liver disease.

Use pots, pans and grills that do not contain Teflon like a good old cast iron pot, steel or glass pans. This will mean a change in habit on your part like using a bit of oil and watching the pot more closely to make sure the food doesn't burn. After the pots are used, soak in water to help with the clean up. Usually dry or burned on food is what makes cleaning difficult. If you can't give up your Teflon, remember to use non-metal utensils to avoid scraping or scratching the Teflon into your food.

A perfume bottle with a clear glass body and a black cap is shown against a background of soft, out-of-focus pink and white flowers. A red circular overlay is positioned on the left side of the bottle, containing the text 'Glycol Ethers' in white. The bottle is partially filled with a yellowish liquid.

Glycol Ethers

PERFUME

A spray here, a dab behind your ears, a bit on your throat. Who would have thought that what gives you an alluring scent could be so bad? Many perfumes and cosmetics contain **glycol ethers**. This family of chemicals can cause health issues including infertility, spontaneous abortion and other birth defects. The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health in California has designated glycol ethers as a known reproductive and developmental toxicant but it still shows up in hundreds of products.

When using perfume, look on the back label and see if glycol ether (or phthalates) is listed. If so, try another one. However, there is a caveat – the vast majority of perfumes do not list their ingredients as it is hidden under proprietary information.

They are plenty of alternatives to traditional perfume like essential oils or toxic free body sprays. In addition, there is a growing industry of 'natural' fragrances and personal care products as well as natural food stores carrying essential oils and safer products that do not contain harmful chemicals. Some natural fragrance stores will even help you create your own scent that works with your body's natural chemistry.

In the last 20 years (1982 - 2002), there has been a 40% increase in women having problems trying to conceive. Almost 12% of women report difficulty in conceiving or maintaining a pregnancy.



All natural recipes



Aloe Vera Gel Detangler

Our first homemade detangler is a very simple one to make and will help to get out tangles. All you will need to do is combine the following ingredients in a spray bottle:

8 oz distilled water

1 teaspoon aloe vera gel

1-2 drops glycerin (what soap is made out of, if you don't have any skip it)

1-2 drops essential oil (e.g., lavender, jojoba)

10 drops grapefruit seed extract

To use this detangler, spray it on sections of your hair and comb out with a wide tooth comb.

Homemade Hairspray

<http://www.onegoodthingbyjillee.com/2012/03/make-your-own-homemade-hairspray-and.html>

INGREDIENTS:

1/2 cup water

2 teaspoons sugar

2 Tablespoons rubbing alcohol

6-8 drops essential oils

Heat water to a boil and turn off heat source. Add 2 tsps of sugar and stir until completely dissolved. Then add 2 tablespoons rubbing alcohol and 6-8 drops of your favorite essential oil scent.

Glossary

Genetically Modified Organisms is a plant or meat product that has had its DNA artificially altered by genes from other plants, animals, virus or bacteria.

Endocrine Disruptors are chemicals that interfere with the body's hormonal system.

Environmental Justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, sex, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. The Environmental Justice Movement emphasizes prevention and precaution. Its framework expands the concept of environment to include “where we live, work, play, and learn as well as the physical and natural world.

Obesogens are foreign chemical compounds that disrupt normal development and balance of lipid metabolism, which in some cases, can lead to obesity or weight gain.

Reproductive Justice is a concept of linking reproductive health with social justice. Women of color are fighting to have full control over their reproductive lives by tackling the multiple forms of oppression that affects their reproductive decisions. Reproductive Justice brings focus on the complete physical, mental, spiritual, political, economic, cultural well-being of women and girls, and insists that justice will be achieved when women and girls have the power and resources to make healthy, informed, non-coerced decisions about our bodies, sexuality and families.

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Chemicals Index

Common toxic chemicals found in beauty products

BHA: found in relaxers, hair growth products, skin lighteners - linked to immune system toxicity, cancer, hormone disruption, organ toxicity.

Coumarin: found in hair relaxers, hair dyes, fragrance- linked to immune system toxicity, reproductive harm, cancer, cell damage

Hydroquinone: found in skin lighteners, hair dyes - linked to immune systems and skin toxicity cancer, reproductive harm

Octoxynol-40: found in hair dyes hair relaxer - is shown to be a mutagen, and linked to cancer, immune system toxicity.

P-phenylenediamine: found in hair dyes and hair relaxers - linked to immune system toxicity, skin toxicity, hormone disruption and cancer

Peg 10 sorbitan laurate: found in moisturizing or soothing shampoo linked to reproductive harm and skin toxicity

Placental extract: found in conditioners, detanglers and facial moisturizers - is known as endocrine disruptor

Selenium sulfide: found in dandruff shampoos linked to cancer, developmental harm and neurotoxicity)

Black Women for Wellness

bwwla.org

Breast Cancer Fund

breastcancerfund.org

Californians for Healthy and Green Economy

Changecalifornia.org

California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative

www.cahealthynailsalons.org/

Campaign for Safe Cosmetics (cosmetic database)

safecosmetics.org/

Center for Environmental Health

ceh.org

Environmental Working Group

ewg.org

Friends of the Earth

www.foe.org/

Pesticide Action Network North America

www.panna.org

Physicians for Social Responsibility Los Angeles

www.psr-la.org/

WE ACT

www.weact.org/

What's on my food

<http://www.whatsonmyfood.org/>

CurlyNikki hair recipes

Link to flaxseed gel (youtube video)

<http://www.curlynikki.com/2012/02/flaxseed-gel-fsg-benefits-and-recipe.html>

Resources

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Séralini, Gilles-Eric, Emilie Clair, Robin Mesnage, Steeve Gress, Nicolas Defarge, Manuela Malatesta, Didier Hennequin, and Joël Spiroux de Vendômois. -Long term toxicity of a Roundup herbicide and a Roundup-tolerant genetically modified maize. (online) <http://research.sustainablefoodtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Final-Paper.pdf>

Friends of the Earth Brief background on Nanotechnology
www.foe.org/sites/default/.../FoE-CSC_NanoCosmetics_factsheet032309.pdf

Generations at Risk - How Environmental Toxins May Affect Reproductive Health
http://www.psr-la.org/files/generations_at_risk.pdf

Bad Actors Report
<http://www.toxies.com/files/Bad-Actor-Report-2011.pdf>

Research articles used in preparations



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