

14 WAYS

to reduce your exposure to toxins in personal care products



1 Read the ingredients

Simple enough yet an important reminder.



8 Shop the farmers market & Small Biz

Check out local, small brands for healthy personal and haircare products. Explore the [Black Beauty Project](#) for recommendations.

2 Try fragrance free!

"Fragrance" and "Parfum" on labels can hide countless toxic chemicals.

9 Time

Stretch out the time between chemical hair treatments, using heat, and wearing perfume.



3 Create products

Check out recipes & try making your own products. Some recipe's can be found on [bwwla.org](#).



10 Open a window

Whether at home or in the salon, ventilation is important. Hair dyes, nail polishes, and other products with strong fumes dissipate so you don't breathe in so much.

4 Check in with your stylists

Ask your stylist if they have the ability to use healthier and natural products on your hair.

11 Ever heard of the BBC?

BBC = the Beauty & Barber College. Tell'em you appreciate their work & ask that they encourage toxic-free haircare.



5 Avoid the toxic trio

The trio includes formaldehyde (a carcinogen), Dibutyl phthalate (causes reproductive issues) and toluene (can cause birth defects and developmental issues in children).

12 Talk back, Talk out

Talk back: Let companies know you are seeking safe, toxic free products.
Talk out: Tell your friends & family how they can reduce toxic exposure too!



6 Skip chemical straightening & Try natural hair styles

Ingredients in these treatments have been known to cause breast and uterine cancer, skin allergy, and more. Natural hairstyling can help reduce exposure.



13 FDA + EPA

Let the Federal Drug Administration & the Environmental Protection Agency know you care and are holding them responsible for not better regulating the cosmetics industry.




7 Look for "no" labeling

Products with "no" labeling (ex. No parabens, no sulfates, no mineral oil) are a good place to start looking for clean beauty.

14 Reach out

to your local and state legislators and let them know that toxic chemicals do not belong in our products.





Important Note: Though this flyer highlights ways that Black women and girls can reduce their overall exposure to toxic chemicals, none of this issue is your fault or your sole responsibility. Please be kind to yourself and remember that there are people fighting for change! If you'd like, you can support by staying involved with BWW and keeping an eye out for policy aimed at ushering in safer products for all.

BLACK WOMEN & GIRLS DESERVE...

...safe, healthy, and affordable beauty products.

...innovation in the cosmetic industry because all hair treatments should be safe for use.

...a government that protects consumers from harmful chemicals and greedy industries.

...to wear your hair however you like it! Including how it naturally grows out of your head.

Why Aren't We There Yet?

Racism:

1 Beauty products marketed to Black women often contain the most toxic ingredients used by the cosmetics industry.

Eurocentric beauty standards & colorism:

These systems uphold white supremacy and encourage hair discrimination.

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Poor & little government regulation:

3 There are over 10,000 chemical ingredients used in cosmetics. The US bans or restricts only 11 compared to the EU's 2,400+

Lobbying & politics:

Many cosmetic companies have strong lobbying teams and spend millions to ensure that they have free rein to sell toxic products.

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