

Common household toxins

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Would you bring something into your home if you knew it could cause allergies, birth defects, or even cancer? Many are doing just that.

The culprits: window cleaners, dishwashing detergents, laundry soaps, and scouring powders, to name a few.

By some estimates, the average American uses 25 gallons of these products in the home every year. That's a potentially dangerous amount when you consider that of the tens of thousands of chemicals available for commercial use, only slightly more than 2000 have been tested by the National Toxicology Program (NTP), a government watchdog group. And of those that have been tested, 198 are known or suspected carcinogens.

The problem is that when we're repeatedly exposed to these chemicals, they accumulate in our bodies. An Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) study found *more than 400 kinds of toxic chemical residues in humans, some of which are linked to cancer, birth defects, and nervous system damage.*"

All-Purpose Cleaners: Many popular household cleaning solutions, like Fantastik and Formula 409, contain a synthetic solvent and grease cutter called butyl cellosolve. This hazardous petroleum-based chemical can irritate your skin and eyes, and repeated exposure to it can cause permanent liver and kidney damage, and impair the body's ability to replenish its blood supply.

Bathroom: Dow Bathroom Cleaner contains dimethyl benzyl ammonium chloride, which can burn eyes and skin. Many traditional scouring cleansers, like AJAX powder, contain crystalline silica, an eye, skin, and lung irritant, classified as "reasonably anticipated to be a human carcinogen" by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences.

Glass Cleaners: Many familiar window cleaning sprays, like Windex and Glass Plus, contain butyl cellosolve, a neurotoxin that's easily absorbed through the skin.

Laundry Detergent: Many well-known laundry powders, like Tide, All, Gain, and Dash, contain sodium silicate—a corrosive that can burn the eyes and skin. Other chemicals often found in laundry detergent are sodium sulfate (a corrosive that can cause severe eye, skin, and respiratory irritation), ethoxylated alcohols (which may contain 1,4-dioxane, which is "reasonably anticipated" to be a human carcinogen). And the harshness of many soaps and detergents can cause mild to severe irritation of the eyes and respiratory tract.

Dishwashing Detergent: Cascade and Sun Light, two of the best-selling brands of automatic dishwashing detergent, contain phosphates and chlorine—two extremely toxic chemicals. Phosphates released into the environment rob lakes and ponds of oxygen, leading to the suffocation of aquatic plants and animals. And chlorine fumes are highly irritating to the eye, throat, and respiratory tract. Inhaling them can cause headaches, burning eyes, and breathing difficulties.

THE SOLUTION?

Eliminate all of the above, Shaklee-ize your home with bio-degradable, non-toxic Shaklee products:



Basic H -- Safe and economical general-purpose household cleaner.



Basic G -- Safe and effective germicide / cleaner.



Basic L-No skin rashes, no eye irritations, no respiratory problems.



Basic D-No toxic fumes from your dishwasher.



At-Ease-For all tough or challenging cleaning projects.

Toxic Household Products

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Source unless noted: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Common household toxins and the products they're found in:

Sodium hypochlorite (chlorine bleach) Lung and eye irritant. (Source: Washington Toxics Coalition) If mixed with ammonia or acid-based cleaners (including vinegar), releases toxic chloramine gas. Short-term exposure to chloramine gas may cause mild asthmatic symptoms or more serious respiratory problems.

Petroleum distillates (metal polishes) Short-term exposure can cause temporary eye clouding; longer exposure can damage the nervous system, skin, kidneys, and eyes.

Ammonia (glass cleaner) Eye irritant, can cause headaches and lung irritation. If mixed with chlorine, releases toxic chloramine gas. Short-term exposure to chloramine gas may cause mild asthmatic symptoms or more serious respiratory problems.

Phenol and cresol (disinfectants) Corrosive; can cause diarrhea, fainting, dizziness, and kidney and liver damage.

Nitrobenzene (furniture and floor polishes) Can cause shallow breathing, vomiting, and death; associated with cancer and birth defects.

Formaldehyde (a preservative in many household products) Suspected human carcinogen; strong irritant to eyes, throat, skin, and lungs.

Spot removers and carpet cleaners can contain (perchloroethylene or 1-1-1 trichloroethane solvents) Can cause liver and kidney damage if ingested; perchloroethylene is an animal carcinogen and suspected human carcinogen.

Naphthalene or paradichlorobenzene (mothballs) Naphthalene is a suspected human carcinogen that may damage eyes, blood, liver, kidneys, skin, and the central nervous system; paradichlorobenzene can harm the central nervous system, liver, and kidneys.

Hydrochloric acid or sodium acid sulfate (toilet bowl cleaners) Either can burn the skin or cause vomiting diarrhea and stomach burns if swallowed; also can cause blindness if inadvertently splashed in the eyes.

Formaldehyde, phenol, and pentachlorophenol (spray starch) Any aerosolized particle, including cornstarch, may irritate the lungs.