

Why is it so important to use natural body and skincare products?

The only hard part about answering this question is where to begin. I'm going to summarize it all for you, but I encourage you to check out the links I've included if you want to do a deeper dive. A warning though. This all may seem very overwhelming at first, because the topic of endocrine disruptors is broad and effects most all components of our lives. If you are on our website and have been getting produce from our farm, then I am sure you already know the importance of organic produce and the dangers of pesticides which is another major endocrine disruptor. So, when I talk about endocrine disruptors in skin care products, keep in mind they are also in candles, shampoo, non-organic food, plastic bottles, clothes, meat, eggs, furniture (particularly the particle board stuff you put together), and so many other things.

That being said, let's dive in.

What is the endocrine system? It's a system of tissues and glands that create and release hormones, which are messengers that carry information to your organs, tissues, skin and muscles- bossing them around, telling them what to get done and when. The endocrine system effects your ENTIRE body.

What are some of the functions in our body influenced by hormones? Growth, development, metabolism, mood, energy level, gut health, response to stress, libido, appetite, reproduction, organ function... I could honestly go on and on but in an effort to keep this a summary I will assume you get the idea!

What are endocrine disruptors? They are chemicals that interfere with hormones by mimicking, blocking or modifying them. Here are just a few (there are over 1,000):

- *BPA (in plastics):* One of the easier ones to avoid since products are often labeled with BPA Free Labels. Crazy sidenote on what BPA does- It tricks the body into thinking it is estrogen and has been linked with all sorts of nasty things. You can read more about if you want [here](#).
- *Dioxin:* This nasty beast is an environmental pollutant that gets absorbed by your fat tissue where it can live up to 11 years! It is highly toxic and can cause cancer amongst so many other things. If you want to learn more about what harm it can do check out this information from the EPA [here](#) or the NIH [here](#). We cannot control many of the things that contain dioxin like the water or the air, but what we can control is where we are getting our food. According to the EPA, more than 90% of typical human exposure is estimated to be through the intake of factory farmed animal fats, meat, dairy products, fish, and shellfish. I could write about this topic for days, but I will spare you that. I encourage you to read more about it and I encourage you to consume pasture- raised meats, egg and dairy from farms that use organic methods when possible. Even better, buy local and know your farmer and their practices because labels can be very deceiving.
- *Perfluorinated chemicals:* This lovely creature is found in non-stick cookware, clothing, rubber, plastic and cosmetics- we are using this stuff on our skin which absorbs all the things! To read more about it check out this [research paper](#).
- *Organophosphate Pesticides:* I am sure you have all heard about this, so my only comment is going to be buy certified organic or organically grown produce if you know who the farmer is. If you can't manage to go fully organic do some research on what the "dirty dozen" are. It's not always practical to only eat organic, so doing the right thing can also look like starting to buy some organic produce. Do what you can, even a small amount of change helps.

- *Glycol ethers*: This is another one that we often see in perfume and cosmetics and has been linked to allergies and asthma amongst other things you can read about [here](#).

Sadly, all of these disruptors tend to effect women more than men because women use twice as many personal care products- applying more chemicals to their bodies- think cosmetics, perfumes, feminine products- The FDA should be handling this right? Nope. The Food, Drug and Cosmetics Act has not been updated since it was passed in 1938. I recommend reading [this article](#) for more eye opening information. It has links to the research which is shocking.

I could go on listing chemicals but I'm really feeling like Debbie Downer at the moment. So let me get to the point I am trying to make. Be careful about what you purchase, particularly items you are putting on your largest organ, your skin. There are companies out there that make completely non-toxic health and beauty products, do your research and NEVER assume because something is on a shelf in a store or sold on a website that it is safe. Buy local if you can.

Andrew and I have been working to fully detoxify our lives for years, but it is a slow process that takes a complete change in lifestyle and that takes time. You can't do it all at once but if I had to offer some suggestions on low hanging fruit it would be this:

1. Ditch the chemical filled cleaning products, dishwasher pods and laundry soap with fragrance. Believe me, the shit without the toxic chemicals works just as well, I have been using them for more than a decade.
2. Be really picky about your beauty care products. Choose companies that do not use these toxic chemicals. Stop using perfume with "fragrance." Switch to essential oils. Don't trust the labels! Read the ingredients.
3. This is a given of course, but eat food grown without chemicals. This includes more than just produce. Get those pasture raised eggs and meat.
4. Cook with safer tools. Ditch the non-stick that has polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) coatings and go with cast iron, glass, stainless steel or ceramic and get rid of the plastic cooking utensils.
5. Don't use plastic containers in a microwave or drink water from plastic bottles.
6. Stop eating ultra-processed food. This is a whole other topic I feel some kind of way about. All I will say is -this crap is making us sick, causing lifelong illness that starts in childhood. The chemicals used to create this "food" are so dangerous that many are banned in other countries. We are talking about sweetened breakfast cereals, soda, processed white bread, candy, energy drinks, packaged cakes and cookies, chips, snacks, fast food and fruit drinks. The good news is it is easy to replace all this toxic "food" with healthy alternatives- just start reading labels and of course having one of these things occasionally isn't terrible. It's the daily consumption that is the problem.
7. Stop using candles with "fragrance". You are contributing to a toxic environment in your home. Read more about that [here](#). Find all natural candles scented with essential oils and made with beeswax or even soy. I struggle with this one sometimes, particularly when its pumpkin spice season. So yes, sometimes I let it burn because I don't let perfect be the enemy of good.

Jenn

Additional Reading

[Endocrine disruptors: Unravelling the link between chemical exposure and Women's reproductive health](#)

[Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals](#)

[The Connection Between Ultra-Processed Foods and Endocrine Disruptors](#)

[Endocrine Disruptors in Food: Impact on Gut Microbiota and Metabolic Diseases](#)

[Endocrine Disruptors—'Food' for Thought](#)

[Do Synthetic Fragrances in Personal Care and Household Products Impact Indoor Air Quality and Pose Health Risks?](#)