

5 Sunscreen Ingredients You Should Stay Away From

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It's natural to want to get out in the sun--especially during a time when most people will be homebound for days and weeks on end--but it should be second nature to take steps to protect your skin from harmful rays when you go outside. While you should use sunscreen every day of the year, it's even more important during the summer when days are longer, and the sun is stronger.

Ultraviolet (UV) rays are the No. 1 cause of skin cancer. Too much exposure can also cause sunburn, eye damage and premature wrinkles. But shielding your skin with broad-spectrum sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30 can help lower your risk.

The last time congress passed a major federal law regulating the cosmetics industry was 1938. Currently, only 30 potentially harmful cosmetic ingredients are banned or restricted in the United States, compared to 1,400 in the European Union. When choosing a sunscreen, it's important to read the label and steer clear of harmful ingredients including:

- *Oxybenzone: This hormone-disrupting chemical may cause endometriosis, early puberty in girls, male infertility and hormone-related cancers.*
- *Avobenzone: Another hormone disruptor, this chemical is a severe eye irritant degrades quickly with sun exposure which increases the risk of skin cancer. People who suffer from acne are especially sensitive and tend to breakout more, as well as experience additional pigmentation issues.*
- *Phthalates: A family of industrial chemicals used as solvents in consumer products can damage the liver, kidneys and lungs. Researchers have linked phthalates to asthma, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, breast cancer, obesity and male fertility issues.*
- *Retinyl Palmitate: Retinyl palmitate is an ingredient composed of palmitic acid and retinol (Vitamin A). Data from an FDA study indicate that retinyl palmitate, when applied to the skin in the presence of sunlight, may result in adverse health consequences like lesions and photosensitization. FDA, Norwegian and German health agencies have raised a concern that daily skin application of vitamin A creams may contribute to excessive vitamin A intake for pregnant women and other populations.*
- *Parabens: A class of preservatives commonly used to prevent the growth of bacteria and mold. Parabens are hormone disruptors, which may alter important hormone mechanisms in our bodies and increase the risk of breast cancer for those with a predisposition. Parabens are everywhere and continue to build up in our bodies.*

The Environmental Working Group has a full list of harmful sunscreen ingredients at ewg.org/sunscreen and Rejuvena Health & Aesthetics recommends the following:

- [Isdin Love Your Skin Photo \(SPF 50\)](#)
- [Coppertone Pure and Simple \(SPF 50\)](#)
- [Neutrogena Sheer Zinc Mineral \(SPF 50\)](#)
- [Australian Gold Botanical Mineral \(SPF 50\)](#)
- [Bare Republic Mineral \(SPF 30\)](#)
- [Eminence Organics Lilikoi Light Defense Face Primer \(SPF 23\)](#)
- [Kypris Heliotropic Treatment Primer \(SPF 30\)](#)