

TODAY  
THERE ARE MORE THAN  
**80,000**  
CHEMICALS ON THE MARKET,  
MANY WITH KNOWN OR  
SUSPECTED HEALTH EFFECTS.

Chemicals are released into the environment in the manufacture and use of many products, which then enter our bodies through:

AIR, WATER, FOOD, AND SKIN

We are all exposed to various toxic chemicals in our everyday life, but there are ways to limit that exposure. Here we provide some information on how to adjust your eating, living and purchasing habits to succeed in that goal.

GET IN THE HABIT OF  
READING LABELS & LEARN  
ABOUT HOW CHEMICALS  
AFFECT OUR HEALTH.



Basic principles of environmental health and toxicology are presented in the free e-book, *A Small Dose of Toxicology*. More about all issues mentioned in here can be found on the Silent Spring Institute website <http://www.silentspring.org>.

PROTECT  
YOURSELF

IN YOUR HOME

K E E P I N G  
H A R M F U L  
C H E M I C A L S

out of your life.

### 1. CHOOSE NATURAL, LESS TOXIC, AND

#### FRAGRANCE-FREE PRODUCTS.

Choose these five natural housekeeping necessities that can clean almost anything:

1. white distilled vinegar: disinfects, deodorizes, pulls dirt from wood and dissolves residues
2. lemon juice: used as a cleaner to cut grease, polish metal, lighten stains, and brighten laundry
3. baking soda: neutralizes odors, de-greases and deodorizes drains, used for scrubbing ovens and sinks
4. washing soda: cleaner for extra-tubborn stains
5. borax: mold and mildew solution
6. clean with microfiber cloths: these cleaning aids lift dirt, grease, and do not use chemical cleaning agents

Hand washing prevents spreading germs and reduces the amount of flame retardants and other harmful chemicals that enter our bodies.

Avoid antibacterial soaps that contain a chemical called triclosan, which has been shown to disrupt thyroid function.

### 3. AVOID FLAME RETARDANTS IN YOUR

#### HOUSEHOLD FURNISHINGS.

Select furnishings made from natural fibers, such as wool, cotton, and hemp, or ones that are naturally flame resistant such as wool or polyester.

Avoid furniture made from pressed wood or particleboard, which releases harmful gases like formaldehyde. Formaldehyde and other similar chemicals have been associated with respiratory irritation, allergies and asthma. Decline Scotchguard™ and stain-resistant treatment of furnishings and fabrics.

### 4. CHOOSE BUILDING MATERIALS, PAINTS,

#### STAINS, SEALANTS THAT ARE LOW VOC

#### OR NO VOC.

VOCs, volatile organic compounds, are major sources of air pollution and are known to cause cancer in animals, while some are suspected of causing or known to cause cancer in humans.

Methylene chloride can be found in paint strippers, adhesives, adhesive removers, fabric cleaners, furniture polish, wood sealant and stains, spray paints, shoe polish, and art supplies.

When using glues, paints, or solvents, do so outside or in a well-ventilated area.

Limit your exposure to products containing methylene chloride, a probable human carcinogen.

### 5. AVOID PHTHALATES IN YOUR

#### HOUSEHOLD FURNISHINGS.

These plastic softeners, found in polyvinyl flooring, wall coverings, and shower curtains, are endocrine disrupting compounds.

Choose untreated cloth shower curtains and curtain liners- such as those made from nylon and natural flooring and wall covering options.

### 6. AVOID TRACKING POLLUTANTS INTO

#### YOUR HOME.

Shoes can track pesticides and other toxic chemicals into the home, increasing your exposure to an array of harmful chemicals.

Doormats placed on the outside and inside of your home's entranceway can help minimize the spread of outdoor pollutants to the indoors. Adopt the habit of removing your outdoor shoes upon entry.

### 7. CONTROL HOUSEHOLD PESTS WITHOUT

#### USING PESTICIDES.

Control pests in your home by using borax or sticky traps that do not contain pesticides.

Use mint and lavender to ward off mice and sprinkle red chili powder, paprika, dried peppermint, powdered soap, and borax where ants enter your home.

### 8. CHOOSE ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

#### THAT DOES NOT CONTAIN

#### POLYBROMINATED DIPHENYL ETHERS.

These endocrine disruptors are commercially produced flame retardants that are often added to polyurethane foam, various plastics, and electronics equipment.

### 9. TAKE MEASURES TO IMPROVE

#### YOUR INDOOR AIR QUALITY.

1. Open windows periodically to ventilate your home.
2. Do not allow smoking in your home.
3. Avoid artificial air fresheners and other scented products.
4. Choose a vacuum cleaner with a motorized brush and HEPA filter to help reduce indoor pollution.
5. Do not store gas powered engines, gasoline, or solvents in your basement or garage, as the fumes may enter the house.

### 10. REDUCE EXPOSURE TO BISPHENOL A

#### (BPA) IN RECEIPTS.

Many cash register receipts are printed on thermal paper, which is coated in BPA or BPA substitutes. Handling these receipts can increase your exposure. BPA can move from receipts onto hands and food, or it can pass through the skin directly.

Decline receipts at gas pumps and ATMs. Avoid giving receipts to children, and store receipts in an envelope, wallet or purse. Do not recycle receipts as residues will contaminate recycled paper.