



Is Your Make-Up Making You Toxic?

You wake up and put your make-up on every morning. You expect that your make up is harmless as long as it doesn't irritate your skin or give you a rash. A new report tells us that this may not be the case, and that you may actually be putting substances on your skin that are toxic to your body. A recent report by a Canadian environmental group, Environmental Defence, reveals that cosmetic companies do not list all of the ingredients on their product labels. The ingredients that they are omitting on their labeling can be hazardous to your health.

The Environmental Defence purchased 49 common cosmetics products, (including concealers, powders, blushes, bronzers, mascaras, eye liners, eye shadows, lipsticks, and glosses), in Toronto and sent them to an accredited laboratory to have them tested for heavy metals. They were tested for the presence of arsenic, cadmium, lead, mercury, beryllium, selenium, thallium and nickel. "All of these heavy metals, except for nickel, are banned from being intentionally added to cosmetics in Canada because of the negative health effects that they are associated with.

The May 16, 2011 issue of the Montreal Gazette writes about the report: *"None of the products tested contained mercury, but lead was detected in 96 percent of the products, arsenic in 20 percent and cadmium in 51 percent. Nickel was found in all the products tested, beryllium in 90 percent, thallium in 61 percent and selenium in 14 percent."*

All of the tested products contained heavy metals. Most of the products contained an average of four of the eight metals that were tested. The metals of highest concern are arsenic, cadmium, lead, and mercury. They are designated as toxic in Canada, because of their proven adverse health effects. Each of the products tested contained an average of two of these toxic metals.

Here's the kicker:

None of the metals that are banned as intentional ingredients were listed on the product labels. The heavy metals can get into the products from the manufacturing process, the raw materials used, or from the packaging.

How do these heavy metals affect your health? The authors of the report point out that heavy metal accumulation in the body is linked to numerous health disorders "including cancer, reproductive and developmental disorders, neurological problems, memory loss, mood swings, nerve, joint



and muscle disorders, cardiovascular, skeletal, blood, immune system, kidney and renal problems, headaches, vomiting, nausea and diarrhea, lung damage, contact dermatitis, brittle hair and hair loss. Many are suspected hormone disrupters and respiratory toxins, and for some like lead, there is no known safe blood level."

These metals are absorbed through your skin and build up in your body slowly over time. Lip glosses contained the highest levels of arsenic, cadmium and lead. Lip gloss can be ingested when you consuming food or by simply licking your lips.

The authors of the report wrote: "*Eliminating elements like lead, cadmium, and chromium from the body takes over 40 years, with accumulation leading to problems such as nervous system disruption and kidney damage.*"

I would like to point out that it is not only cosmetics that expose you to heavy metals. Processed foods, medications, lotions, anti-perspirant deodorants, and some drinking water also contain heavy metals. Keep this in mind and try to minimize the amount of heavy metals that you expose yourself to. The body has processes that remove heavy metals from your body, but if it accumulates faster than it can be removed then they can build up in your system and become toxic. At my office, I do Nutrition Response Testing, which includes testing for heavy metals that may be stressing your body.

The [Environmental Working Group](#) created a website that allows you to enter the products that you use and view rating of their safety. [Click here to go to their website.](#)

You can read the full report here: [The Health Risks of Hidden Heavy Metals in Face Makeup](#). The report includes a list of the products tested along with what was found in each product.

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