



SAFER CHOICES 101

The top 3 things to look for
in your products. Including
the history & keywords to
make safer choices, today!



INTRODUCTION...

It's nice to meet you, friend! I'm Dana, and I will be your guide over these next few chapters. With my long-standing career in the Natural Health world, I hear about safer products everyday, especially safer beauty products... and I forget that the majority of folks haven't been educated about this topic. In fact, the latest statistic I heard is that only 20% of US consumers are aware that there are potentially harmful ingredients in products they use everyday.

Even then, most people don't understand what "potentially harmful" really means.

So with this ebook, I'll be sharing things that will be equipping you with usable knowledge so you can advocate for yourself and your loved ones. There are 3 main bothersome ingredients that I will be highlighting in this book: lead, petrochemicals, and fragrance. I'll also be talking about some of the history and evolution in the beauty market, and some of the "must haves" for companies I am involved with.

The sobering truth is WE must personally regulate the products we use. The U.S. beauty industry is valued at 66 billion dollars, and it is shockingly unregulated. Did you know the FDA has the equivalent of just 6 full-time inspectors to monitor 3 million shipments of cosmetics coming into the U.S. each year? **So it's time for us to be the inspectors.**

You will hear me discuss specific companies that I value in this industry in the coming pages. One of them is [Beautycounter](#). Right now, Beautycounter is leading the movement towards safer beauty and pushing for more regulation in this industry. I can not say enough good things about them. I do advocacy work for them. There are several other companies I will recommend in this book as well. You can choose to use them or not. I simply want you to walk away with choices.

Have you ever had a job where you had to do inventory? I still have nightmares from doing inventory at some of the stores I worked at in high school! However, just for fun this time, I want you to count up the number of personal care products you use everyday. Don't forget deodorant and soap! The average woman uses a minimum of 12 products which contain 168 chemicals. The average man uses about 4 products. What's your number? Think on that as you read through the rest of this ebook.

DISCLOSURES - *We do not diagnose or treat disease. We do not claim to be medical professionals nor is any advice given on this site meant to replace the opinion of your physician. Our goal is to continue to encourage you to explore all aspects of your body's health—physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Our prayer is that you will create a physical and nutritional environment conducive for achieving balance in your body.*

Please Note: This ebook may contain affiliate links, in which I will receive a small commission of the purchased product. However, I only endorse products that I personally use, believe in, and love. ♥

SCARY HISTORY...



Although the laws regulating personal care products in the U.S. are severely lacking, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the 1938 Food, Drug, and Cosmetics Act of 1938 were both created due to pressure from outraged citizens like you and me.

Here's a little background...

1906: This FDA starts to come into play. The FDA was originally started as the Bureau of Chemistry.

The first real stance by the FDA was taken in 1906 when The [Pure Food and Drug Act](#) was passed in part because of the outrage over the conditions of Chicago's meat packing industry.

1933: A woman by the name of Mrs. Brown bought a product called Lash Lure. Over the course of a few months, her corneas started to deteriorate and she eventually went blind. Sadly, she was not the only woman who had adverse reactions to Lash Lure. Read more [HERE](#) from the American Academy of Ophthalmology. In the same year, The FDA put together an exhibit nicknamed [The Chamber of Horrors](#), showcasing food and personal products that had been preserved with toxic chemicals. The exhibit's most famous visitor, Eleanor Roosevelt, was appalled by what she saw. Read more [HERE](#).

1937: Elixir Sulfamide came to market. Sulfamide was a commonly used pill that treated minor ailments. But in an effort to make it drinkable (taste good), the manufacturer added Diethylene Glycol...also known as ANTIFREEZE. The product was tested for shelf life, ease of shipping, and flavor. However, it was NEVER TESTED FOR TOXICITY. Seriously? Within 1 month, over 100 people died, 34 of them were children. Isn't this crazy?! Read more [HERE](#).

1938: President Roosevelt is forced to pass the Food, Drug, and Cosmetics Act of 1938. Sadly, almost immediately after this was passed, the focus was shifted to World War II. Along with multiple issues, World War II also introduced the chemical revolution. Since that time, over 80,000 chemicals have been introduced into the personal care industry but less than 10% of these have been tested for human safety. Ingredients like mercury, coal tar, formaldehyde, parabens, phthalates, allergens, and pollutants are commonly used in our everyday personal care products. With very few laws for regulation, the FDA has somehow allowed these toxins in our products while deeming that they are "safe enough."

Folks, this is RIDICULOUS! This advocacy work I get to do in the beauty industry is not just a job...it's a MOVEMENT! Please VOTE WITH YOUR DOLLARS. Think about this...McDonald's didn't carry a wide variety of salads until the consumer demanded it. Your voice and where you choose to spend your money matters!

WORDS AND LABELS...



When it comes to choosing safer products, do you look for labels that include words such as natural, botanical, paraben-free, chemical-free, organic, or toxic-free? Those are good things, right? Surely these products are safe to put all over my skin.

Unfortunately, these words mean very little and are no real guarantee for safety. There are so many loopholes in U.S. federal law. Cosmetic and personal care companies can claim all they want about their products

without proper regulation. Basically those terms that we are all drawn to are actually meaningless for the most part.

The actual term for this *mislabeling of sorts* is called GREENWASHING. Companies can use words such as organic, cruelty free, vegan, paraben-free, and phthalate-free all over the packaging, but then list the word “fragrance” to hide a host of chemical offenders.

I used to use a deodorant by a company called Native until it was recently bought out by a big corporation. They now use “fragrance” in their labeling and refuse to disclose the items that give their deodorant the “fragrance.” This is a sure way for me to move on to a company that is more transparent! (In comes [Primally Pure Lemongrass Deodorant](#)-more on that later)

Labels are meant to draw our attention, so of course companies are going to use words based on marketability. Which doesn't always mean they are bad — it just means...we just cannot only depend on words that sound good.

So what's a person to do? How can we actually find the safe stuff?

Well, we have to be educated, know what these terms mean, and seek out companies that are transparent with ALL of their ingredients. For a list of five common, yet misleading terms, check out the list [HERE](#) from Beautycounter's Blog.

Here's the deal: until our laws are more stringent and protective, it's up to us to find the safest options. Get to know the brands you use, seek out full transparency, find out if they are taking measures to safely source ingredients, and whether they conduct their own tests for safety. And like I've said many times, [Beautycounter](#) is not the only option out there- it just happens to be my top pick. In fact, we strive for a time when all companies are held to higher standards so safety isn't an issue. But so far in this industry, I haven't seen anything that even parallels what Beautycounter is doing in the personal care marketplace.

TRANSPARENCY...



Let's talk about the word "transparency" and why it is so important when searching for personal care products. I have tons of allergies and have to be really careful what I ingest and put on my skin. I am constantly reading labels. One thing I am constantly frustrated about is the fact that labels don't disclose everything. In foods you often see words like..."Spices" and "Natural Flavorings." In products you put on your skin, you often see words like

"parfum" and "fragrance." Well, left to my own imagination, anything could be lumped under those words. The point is we just don't always know what toxic chemicals manufacturers are housing under vague labels. Companies aren't required to disclose any ingredients. Experts in this field have reported that thousands of chemicals can hide behind the word "fragrance"!

One of the reasons I fell in love with [Beautycounter](#) is because of its transparency. With Beautycounter, you will always know every ingredient in all of their products. Why? [Transparency](#) is one of their core values. Can you really make an informed decision about whether or not a product is safe to put on your skin if you don't know the ingredients?

Beautycounter (BC) was founded by Gregg Renfrew after learning that the personal care products industry is under-regulated, and that companies aren't required to tell consumers what is in the products they sell. BC wants to offer better and safer, yet high performing products while bringing transparency back to beauty. Cleaner, better beauty can only begin when you know what's in your products. All of the ingredients Beautycounter uses when formulating products, including all known components of fragrances that traditionally fall under the words "fragrance" or "parfum," are on an ingredient list on their website. They have an [Ingredients Glossary](#) where they list the sources of BC ingredients and share whether they

are naturally derived or synthetic. Their testing standards and ingredient screening processes are hard core. I promise you other companies in the beauty industry are NOT testing the way Beautycounter does.

Beautycounter doesn't just believe in transparency, they are demanding it. They not only educate the public, but they are fighting on Capitol Hill for stricter laws for our personal care products. What type of company can you be involved with that provides quality, high performing products, has transparency of ingredients, and is fighting on your behalf in DC for safer laws for ALL of your personal care products?

Transparency is vital. Seek out companies that are following that trend. As you get to know me, you will know that I am loyal. Once I have a good experience with a company and as long as they continue to lead with integrity, I will be with them for life. I use a host of different companies which you may view on my [website](#). For now, since we are discussed personal care products, I do get the majority of my personal care products (shampoo, lipstick, face wash, etc) from [Beautycounter](#). I will highlight other companies but like I said before, Beautycounter does lead the way in the personal care/beauty industry.

LACED WITH LEAD...



For those of you who know me, you know that I don't wear much, if any, make-up. Although, I am a LIPSTICK/LIPGLOSS 🗨️ DIVA. I fell in love with lipstick in college when my roommate shared a Clinique lipstick with me before a party one night. I seriously had really never even worn lipstick until college. When I got into Natural Medicine over 19 years ago, I realized that the ingredients in lipstick were less than optimal, but it was one thing I just wasn't willing to give up right away. However, one of the first things I really learned when I joined Beautycounter almost 2 years ago was the real story on lipstick. This awakening had me throwing away most of the lipstick I owned!

In 2007, the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics released the report "[A Poison Kiss.](#)" They had independently tested 33 popular brands of lipsticks for lead content. The results were alarming. Over 61% of the lipsticks tested contained lead, with levels ranging up to .65 parts per million. Some of the companies that had less than favorable results were companies like L'Oreal, Cover Girl and Dior Addict (commonly found in Nordstroms). So when this study was brought to the attention of the FDA, to say they moved slowly would be an understatement! With tireless efforts, pressure from consumers, and letters from 3 U.S. Senators, the FDA FINALLY did their own follow-up study TWO YEARS LATER! TWO YEARS!! Their study was even more alarming. They found lead in ALL samples of lipstick tested, ranging from .09 to 3.06 ppm- which is 4 times the amount found in the first study by the Safe Cosmetics Campaign. Procter & Gamble

(Cover Girl brand), Revlon, and L'Oreal were the 3 manufacturers with the highest lead levels detected. You can read more about the article on the www.safecosmetics.org website.

The recent evidence shows there is NO SAFE LEVEL of lead exposure. The FDA knows it is a problem, but NOTHING has been done to ensure more regulation. This is incredibly disturbing to me. This isn't just a problem with lipstick, this is also a problem with toys, home repairs, and even high exposure in some areas of the soil. But today, I am just focusing on lipstick.

Daily low exposure of lead can add up to significant exposure. I think about the million times a day women lick their lips that are smothered in lipstick! We are swallowing trace amounts of lead several times a day. Lead has been linked to learning, language, and behavioral problems. Lead exposure has also been linked to reduced fertility in men and women, hormonal changes, and menstrual irregularities. It has even been thought to delay onset of puberty in children.

According to the FDA, our exposure to lead in lipstick is minimal so it shouldn't be a problem. I am quite certain if someone from the FDA took note of how much lipstick I apply and reapply on any given day, they would reconsider that statement! Can somebody (like ANY WOMAN WHO LOVES LIPSTICK) please educate the FDA on how many times we lick our lips and swallow during the day?! And why is it that we are NOT allowed to have lead paint on our walls but it is fine to use it on our lips? I definitely lick my lips more than I would lick my walls! That just doesn't make logical sense to me.

What can you do to avoid lead in your lipstick?

1. Download the [EWG Healthy Living App](#) on your smartphone. One thing I LOVE to do if I have to buy stuff from a department store is scan the products for their safety ratings. Scan barcodes until you find one that has a good rating- 1 is ideal, 2 is doable, possibly a 3 if you had no other choices. Once you learn more about ingredients, you will realize that some things that are labeled a 3--may really be ok. It just takes practice. Read more [HERE](#) on EWG's site about ingredient safety. Do you love chapstick? Fun fact... [Beautycounter's Calendula Lip Conditioner](#) is EWG verified- which is even a stricter, cleaner certification than the numbers EWG uses to rate products. Most [Burt's Bees chapstick](#) products usually scan around a 1! 😊 If you know me, you know that lipstick is my jam- I have no less than 10 tubes in my purse at all times. My favorite type of lipstick from Beautycounter would have to be our [Lip Sheers](#). My favorite colors are Rose, Currant, and Raisin. These lipsticks are also super safe on EWG's rating scale.
2. Make a conscious choice to choose safer products. Do the research.
3. Stick with companies that you know test their products and don't just rely on the manufacturer to tell them they are safe. Ask questions, don't just assume you are protected. When it comes to items I

consume or put on my skin, I only use companies that are rigorous in their testing and transparent about their ingredients.

4. Help companies like [Beautycounter](#) fight for safer! I am sure there are other companies out there that are fighting for safer laws, but I do advocacy work for Beautycounter. You can [CLICK HERE](#) to follow our advocacy efforts and be alerted when there are laws we will be proposing in DC (even if you NEVER buy a thing!!!). During the month of March we do a huge campaign to flood congress urging them to pass more health protective laws in the personal care industry. **Text "betterbeauty" to 52886**- even if it's not March- I am pretty sure you can still make your voice heard.

PADDED WITH PETROCHEMICALS...



A petrochemical is a chemical substance obtained by the refining or processing of petroleum or natural gas. Did you know that many beauty products, especially lip products, that we slather on our bodies, are filled with petrochemicals? True confession...I was completely addicted to one of the BIGGEST offenders...Vaseline. Once I started to research, I found that Vaseline was not good to use on my skin. A huge health concern with petroleum products is that they can generate

1,4-dioxane, a substance that has been linked to cancer. It's also known as a neurotoxin, kidney toxin, and a respiratory toxin. It has been found to be a leading groundwater contaminant. The Environmental Working Group (EWG) found that a disturbing 22 percent of all conventional personal care products contain unsafe levels of 1,4-dioxane. EWG also found that "these trace contaminants in petroleum-based ingredients often readily penetrate the skin...and their presence in products is not restricted by government safety standards." Once again, we go back to little to no regulation in the personal products industry.

Some of these common ingredients are petrochemical-derived: Mineral oil, paraffin wax, toluene, benzene, anything with PEG (Polyethylene glycol), anything with DEA (diethanolamine) or MEA (ethanolamine), Butanol compounds, EDTA (ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid), and Parfum or fragrance.

When doing my research, I found that an estimated 95 percent of the chemicals that hide behind the word "fragrance" are from a petroleum based chemical. The word "fragrance" is another offender with its own chapter, but as for now... **STAY AWAY FROM PETROCHEMICALS** in your products.

Here are some alternatives for you Vaseline lovers...

I LOVE [Beautycounter's Lip Conditioner](#), but it does come in a small glass jar. Some people are wiggled out by that as they have to put their finger in the jar to apply. (My motto is put your clean finger in the jar to apply and you will be fine!) But for those of you who just LOVE a good ole' fashioned chapstick in a tube- you have to try [Primally Pure's Creamsicle Chapstick](#)! Seriously, the first time I put it on-- I went back to 2nd grade when I used to eat push pops at recess! Oh, to be young again. Not to mention, it really works well. I have also used [Beautycounter's Baby Balm](#) for severely chapped lips, you know the ones that need a thicker salve for overnight. And last but not least, [Burt's Bee's](#) are some of my go to chapsticks when I have to purchase one from a store.

FLOWING WITH FRAGRANCE...



So “fragrance” is a generic term many of us don't think too much about. After all, it makes our products smell enticing. (Apple pie candle, anyone?) But you may not realize what is actually in that “fragrance” and what it is doing to your health.

Because ingredients in the U.S. are not regulated, many companies use fragrance as a way to mask other chemicals. The word “ fragrance” you see listed in your personal care products can mask up to 1000 chemicals.

As reported by the Environmental Working Group (ewg.org), up to 72 percent of products with fragrance include phthalates. These nasty little compounds are linked to cancer, hormone disruption, ADHD, diabetes, and more. Most of the fragrances are synthetically produced and have never been tested for safety.

Most of the chemicals that hide under the word “fragrance” are petrochemicals. Fragrance free doesn't even mean it is safe. Many companies use other chemicals to mask the fragrance already added. Deceptive, isn't it? Make sure when you see scent free and fragrance free that you read the labels carefully for additives.

Geez, it's so much work! The companies I will suggest you use will be free of the word fragrance. As of right now, I am getting rid of the last of my Native Deodorant because since it has been purchased by Procter and Gamble they will no longer disclose their fragrances! I strongly suggest you choose companies who disclose how they derive their scents. Don't get discouraged! if you are starting to read

labels for the first time- GOOD JOB! You will not be able to avoid everything, but I know we all DO better when we KNOW better. Baby steps, friends.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL WORKING GROUP...



I have mentioned the Environmental Working Group in several posts, but let's dive a little deeper. The EWG is such an amazing organization. They work tirelessly to find answers to empower people to live healthier lives in a healthier environment. They believe with breakthrough research and education, they can drive consumer choice and civic action.



They are a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to protecting human health and the environment.

Remember if you ever need to make a purchase for personal care products or cleaning products from the store, use the [EWG Healthy Living App](#) to scan products so you can pick the safest product available.

Remember to research items on their website at www.ewg.org. The EWG has a wealth of updated information!

PARTING WORDS...

Now that this is coming to an end, I just want to thank you for reading. I know you have a lot of other things you could be doing with your time. The last thing I want to discuss and remind you of is...

NO ONE will fight for you and your family like you will. Please remember that anyone you work with in the medical or natural medicine field--YOU hire. Even your Doctors- you choose who to go to and you can demand the respect you deserve. I have heard countless times from people that they feel stuck with certain doctors, practitioners, and even relationships. YOU can fire anyone you are working with at any point. You are your BEST advocate. YOU are worthy of respect and answers. If you are currently struggling with health issues and are not getting the attention you feel you should, get a second opinion. There is nothing wrong with that! Remember, YOU are in control of your care. You may not be able to control much in this life but you can pick and choose who you want to work with and to walk alongside of you on your journey. With the proper love and attention, you are growing to be the best version of yourself- that means spiritually, physically, and mentally.

Do YOUR part. Don't rely on others to read your labels. Don't rely on others to do your research. YOU learn to read the labels. YOU do your research. YOU get to decide what health professionals you will trust. If you feel strongly about staying away from certain things (even if it is as simple as reducing your use or eliminating your use of the microwave) do it, even if your family doesn't follow suit. **DO WHAT IS BEST FOR YOU!** If I waited for the people I loved the most to come alongside me when my health journey started, I may have never gotten well. Some of my family members still don't understand my health issues and how strict I have to be. But you know what, it is ok. My health and wellbeing is not their responsibility; it is MINE.

So please... LOVE YOURSELF enough to put YOU first. Oftentimes as women especially, over and over and over, we put everyone else's needs above ours. I am not saying don't care for others. You can still love others well, while loving yourself! Put your health as your top priority and YOU will automatically love others better.

Decide to CHOOSE YOU this year. YOU can't leave the legacy you were meant to leave without nourishing yourself first.

Cheers to Safer Beauty,

 **Dana**

Feel free to join my FB group - [Want 2B Healthy, LLC](#)

Visit my website for more companies I support - www.want2bhealthy.com