

Suffolk County Cancer Awareness Task Force



HOME PRODUCT CHECKLIST CHOICES YOU CAN MAKE



CONCERNS / ALTERNATIVES



STEVE LEVY
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

The County of Suffolk, its agents, officers, employees, elected officials, as well as the Suffolk County Cancer Awareness Task Force and its members do not attest to the effectiveness of the products or "home remedies" provided in this checklist. They have been obtained through literature references and not independently tested by Suffolk County.

Cautionary statements in this checklist are made and pertain to the knowledge base relating to ingredients in certain products. The County of Suffolk, its agents, officers, employees, elected officials, as well as the Suffolk County Cancer Awareness Task Force and its members are not concluding that proper use of such products will cause those effects to occur.

Suffolk County Home Product Checklist

PREFACE

In Suffolk County Executive Steve Levy's 2009 State of the County Address, the Suffolk County Cancer Awareness Task Force was charged with developing a Cancer Prevention Strategy. This Home Product Checklist was developed as part of that cancer prevention strategy, however, for completeness; hazards relating to effects other than cancer are also identified in the checklist.

Consistent with the United States Surgeon General "Call to Action" to Promote Healthy Homes, the purpose of the Suffolk County Home Product Checklist, is to identify possible health hazards in homes, as well as the steps residents can take to minimize those hazards.

The Cancer Awareness Task Force has adopted a Prevention and Education Action Plan that includes a precautionary evidence-based approach to environmental factors and cancer prevention. The attached home product checklist has been developed in a manner consistent with this philosophy. It will be updated periodically as new information becomes available.

It is important to understand that if a particular health effect is listed as being associated with a particular ingredient, it does not mean that if you use a particular product with that ingredient, it will result in the health effect occurring. As with all chemical exposures, the nature and extent of any chemical-related health effects from the use or misuse of a consumer product depend, in part, on the amount and duration of exposure (for example, the amount of product used, the way the product is used, the frequency of use and other factors). The sensitivity of the exposed person is also an important factor (for example, health, age, sex, or underlying health condition such as asthma).

INSTRUCTIONS

If you currently use a product which contains an ingredient listed as a concern, check the box on the left. If you use alternatives that are listed, check the box on the right. The goal of the survey is to empower residents with knowledge so that over time, they can make healthy lifestyle changes resulting in more boxes on the right being checked.

References: There is a list of references attached to the checklist, which are identified by a superscript number in the text of the checklist. Most of the information on product ingredients was obtained from the National Library of Medicine's Household Product Database. <http://hpd.nlm.nih.gov/index.htm>

Note: The **home remedies** that are provided in the checklist are examples of what is widely available in the literature. However, home remedies do not carry warning labels or directions on use, so care must be taken. Also, even home remedies have the potential to be harmful if misused. For example, vinegar or lemon juice can be irritating to the eyes and throat. Never mix home remedies or commercial products.

(Refer to Household Cleaning Products-What about Substitutes? Cornell Cooperative Extension, 1992 <http://waterquality.cce.cornell.edu/publications/CCEWQ-90-HouseholdCleaningSubstitutes.pdf>)

Check if Using Products of Concern	Product of Concern / Alternatives	Check if Using Alternatives
CLEANING PRODUCTS		
Dry Cleaning		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Typical dry cleaning processes use perchloroethylene (also known as tetrachloroethylene or PERC) which is considered a potential carcinogen¹ and can enter your indoor air from your dry cleaned clothes.</p> <p>Alternatives: Use dry cleaners that use wet or carbon dioxide cleaning processes² or air out dry cleaned clothes before bringing them inside your living space. Purchase clothes that do not require dry cleaning when possible.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Furniture Polish		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Furniture polish typically contains petroleum ingredients, which are complex mixtures, some ingredients of which can cause nervous system effects³.</p> <p>Alternatives: See Resource #1 - #3, listed at the end of this checklist, for more information on selecting household cleaning products and their use. You may wish to try a simple home remedy of 1 part white vinegar, 3 parts vegetable oil and a few drops of fresh lemon juice (see footnote).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass Cleaners		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Glass cleaners may contain alcohols, glycol ethers, and ammonia. Avoid products containing alcohols and glycol ethers due to concerns about effects on the nervous system⁴.</p> <p>Alternatives: See Resource #1 - #3, listed at the end of this checklist, for more information on selecting household cleaning products and their use. You may wish to try club soda in a spray bottle and wipe as you would glass cleaner. Alternatively, you may want to try a solution of 1 tablespoon of vinegar or lemon juice in a quart of water (see footnote).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All Purpose Cleaners		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Many all purpose cleaners contain a variety of ingredients such as diethanolamine (DEA) or triethanolamine (TEA) which may form carcinogenic by-products^{5,6}; fragrances, ammonia or chlorine which may irritate the respiratory system.</p> <p>Alternatives: See Resource #1 - #3, listed at the end of this checklist, for more information on selecting household cleaning products and their use. For grease, you may wish to try making a paste with baking soda and scrubbing. For other purposes, try a combination of vinegar, water and lemon juice (see footnote).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Check if Using Products of Concern	Product of Concern / Alternatives	Check if Using Alternatives
CLEANING PRODUCTS CONT.		
Oven Cleaners		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Oven cleaners contain very corrosive lye or sodium hydroxide which can cause burns to the skin and eyes. Aerosol sprays may be irritating to the respiratory system.</p> <p>Alternatives: Prevent spills from being baked on floor of oven by lining it with aluminum foil. See Resource #1 - #3, listed at the end of this checklist, for more information on selecting household cleaning products and their use. When cleaning is required, you may want to try leaving a mixture of baking soda, water and soap on oven surfaces overnight. In the morning, scrub off with baking soda and a soapy sponge, then rinse again with water⁶ (see footnote).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilet Bowl Cleaners		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Toilet bowl cleaners often contain sodium hydroxide, bleach or phosphoric acid which can be irritating to the respiratory system, skin and eyes.</p> <p>Alternatives: See Resource #1 - #3, listed at the end of this checklist, for more information on selecting household cleaning products and their use. You may want to try using a toilet brush and baking soda or vinegar (see footnote).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bath & Shower Cleaners		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Some bath and shower cleaners contain alcohols, acetone and glycol ethers which can enter your indoor air; as well as fragrances which may cause allergic reactions⁶. Avoid products containing alcohols and glycol ethers due to concerns about effects on the nervous system⁴.</p> <p>Alternatives: See Resource #1 - #3, listed at the end of this checklist, for more information on selecting household cleaning products and their use. You may want to try mixing 1 part white vinegar to 1 part water and adding to a spray bottle. Spray the shower wall and tub. Let sit for at least 30 minutes and rinse. For rust stains, mix cream of tartar and water until the consistency of toothpaste. Put a little on the stain and use a sponge to wash off (see footnote).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Check if Using Products of Concern	Product of Concern / Alternatives	Check if Using Alternatives
Anti-Bacterial Soaps		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Use of anti-bacterial soaps may encourage the growth of bacteria that are resistant to antibiotics⁷. Anti-bacterial soaps often contain triclosan, which has been found in 75 percent of urine samples from the US population⁸ and has also been detected in the environment, including groundwater in Suffolk County^{7,9}.</p> <p>Alternatives: Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds (as long as it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice)¹⁰. Rinse thoroughly.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carpet Cleaners and Stain Removers		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Carpet cleaning products can contain various chemicals including, glycol ethers, methyl methacrylate, as well as petroleum solvents which can contain carcinogenic components and cause drowsiness³. Avoid products containing alcohols and glycol ethers due to concerns about effects on the nervous system⁴.</p> <p>Alternatives: See Resource #1 - #3, listed at the end of this checklist, for more information on selecting household cleaning products and their use. Or you may wish to try simply washing with water and a mild soap, then rinsing, soon after soiling occurs (see footnote).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fabric Softeners		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Fabric softeners contain fragrances and may contain alcohols¹¹.</p> <p>Alternatives: If you consider it necessary to use fabric softeners, refer to Resources #1 - #3 for guidance on products to purchase.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PLASTICS		
Baby bottles, sippy cups and sports water bottles		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Avoid bottles that are made of polycarbonate plastics since these contain bisphenol A (BPA) which is an endocrine disruptor. There is evidence that BPA affects the breast and prostate glands as well as produces neurological and behavioral effects in young children¹².</p> <p>Alternatives: Choose glass or stainless steel bottles when possible or those that are labeled BPA-free and do not contain the recycle code "7" or "7-PC".</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Check if Using Products of Concern	Product of Concern / Alternatives	Check if Using Alternatives
PLASTICS CONT.		
Plastic Food Containers		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>These may contain polyvinyl chloride, BPA and phthalates which have evidence of carcinogenicity and endocrine disruption and may be released when heated^{13, 14}.</p> <p>Alternatives: Choose glass, stainless steel (not suitable for microwaving), and lead-free ceramic containers.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plastic Baby Toys		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Some soft plastic toys and teethers may contain phthalates, some of which are considered endocrine disruptors and possible carcinogens^{13, 15}.</p> <p>Alternatives: Look for toys labeled as phthalate-free.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS		
Non-Stick Cookware		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Non-stick pans may contain small amounts of perfluoroalkyl compounds, which are a concern because of evidence that they may be carcinogens and endocrine disruptors¹⁵. They are also very persistent in the environment.</p> <p>Alternatives: Choose glass, enamel, or iron cookware.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Air Fresheners		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Air fresheners contain either perfume oils or fragrances which can cause allergic reactions⁶.</p> <p>Alternatives: To remove odors, increase ventilation by bringing in more fresh air. Baking soda may help to remove odors. See Resource #1 - #3, listed at the end of this checklist, for more information on selecting household products and their use.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Check if Using Products of Concern	Product of Concern / Alternatives	Check if Using Alternatives
PERSONAL CARE		
Cosmetics		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Some cosmetics contain formaldehyde, a potential carcinogen or ingredients that are considered endocrine disruptors^{1, 14}.</p> <p>Alternatives: Limit the use of cosmetics that contain: Formaldehyde, Parabens, Placental extracts, Benzophenone-1 or -2, Homosalate, Octinoxate, Oxybensone, or Sulisobenzone¹⁶.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General Personal Care Products		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Personal care products such as deodorants, cologne, hairspray etc., often contain fragrances which can cause allergic reactions⁶. Alcohols and propellants, such as isobutane, and propane, which can be irritating to the eyes, nose and throat.</p> <p>Alternatives: Read the label and avoid formaldehyde, parabens, placental extracts, benzophenone-1 or -2, homosalate, octinoxate, oxybensone, or sulisobenzone¹⁷. See Resource #3, listed at the end of this checklist, for more information on selecting personal care products.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

HOBBIES & CRAFTS		
Glues		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Some craft and hobby glues contain formaldehyde and acetaldehyde which have evidence of carcinogenicity¹.</p> <p>Alternative: Read the label carefully and avoid ingredients listed above. Open windows and increase fresh air circulation when in use. See Resource #4 and #5, listed at the end of this checklist, for more information on safe use and storage, as well as ingredients in household products.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Check if Using Products of Concern	Product of Concern / Alternatives	Check if Using Alternatives
HOBBIES & CRAFTS CONT.		
Art Material		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Art materials may contain toxic ingredients and are particularly a concern for children. Clay can contain asbestos and silica which are concerns if inhaled. Paints and markers may contain volatile organic chemicals which enter the indoor air¹⁷.</p> <p>Alternatives: See Resource #4 and #5, listed at the end of this checklist, for more information on safe use and storage, as well as ingredient in household products. Here are some helpful recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Use wet or liquid clays, pigments, paints and glazes, especially around children b) Use water-based glues, paints, and markers c) Avoid products that contain heavy metals d) Use vegetable dyes when possible e) Avoid instant papier-mâché which may contain asbestos fibers. f) Open windows and increase fresh air circulation when in use 	<input type="checkbox"/>

HOME FURNISHINGS		
Carpets		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>New carpets, as well as the adhesives, padding and stain resistance products that are used, can release volatile chemicals (VOC) which can be irritating to the nose, eyes and throat, and nervous system effects such as drowsiness.¹⁸</p> <p>Alternative: Consider alternative flooring such as wood or ceramic tile or purchase carpet certified by the Carpet and Rug Institute as “low emission” (CRI Green Label Program). Ensure that low VOC adhesives or glues, certified by the Carpet and Rug Institute, are used during installation¹⁹. “Air out” material before installing and ventilate rooms after new carpets are installed.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Upholstery		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Often contain flame or stain resistant materials such as brominated flame retardants (PBDEs), which have evidence of carcinogenicity and endocrine disruption^{14, 15, 20}.</p> <p>Alternatives: Ask your retailer about what kind of fire retardant is used. Consider less flammable fabrics such as leather, wool, or cotton²¹. See Resource #6, listed at the end of this checklist, for more information on selecting household furnishings.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Check if Using Products of Concern	Product of Concern / Alternatives	Check if Using Alternatives
LEAD		
Lead		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p data-bbox="383 342 1284 556">In addition to lead-based paint, lead can be found in some ceramics used for cooking, hobbies such as stained glass and older pipes and solder used for household drinking water. Some ethnic medicines or cosmetics also contain high levels of lead. Lead is sometimes found in the paint used in toys. Lead is very toxic, especially to young children^{22, 23}.</p> <p data-bbox="383 598 1284 812">Alternatives: Test suspect materials by sending to a certified laboratory or using a kit available in most home centers. Never burn products containing lead. If you have lead pipes or solder, use cold water for drinking and cooking and run the water before using²³. Contact the Suffolk County Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (631-853-8495) for more information.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

For superscript numbers, refer to attached reference list.

Footnote: Home Remedies: The Home Remedies provided in the checklist are just some examples that are widely available in the literature. You may wish to research other alternatives as well. However, please remember to never mix remedies and please use in the intended fashion. Suffolk County and the Cancer Awareness Task Force do not attest that these alternatives are as effective as commercial products. See Resource #1 for more information.

Resources:

- #1: Household Cleaning Products-What about Substitutes? Cornell Cooperative Extension, 1992
<http://waterquality.cce.cornell.edu/publications/CCEWQ-90-HouseholdCleaningSubstitutes.pdf>
- #2 US EPA Design for the Environment Screening Program <http://www.epa.gov/dfe/pubs/projects/gfcp/index.htm>
- #3 Green Seal Certification Program <http://www.greenseal.org/about/index.cfm>
- #4 Safe Use and Storage of Hazardous Household Products. Cornell University Program on Breast Cancer and Environmental Risk Factors (BCERF), 1999. <http://envirocancer.cornell.edu/FactSheet/General/fs22.safeUse.cfm>
- #5 National Library of Medicine's Household Product Database. <http://hpd.nlm.nih.gov/index.htm>
- #6 Greenguard Environmental Institute <http://www.greenguard.org/?tabId=1>