

Green Cosmetics

Cosmetics play a big role in many peoples' lives. It is important for people to know what they are applying on themselves and if those items can harm or benefit them. I am interested in this topic because cosmetics are my daily essentials. I want to know why organic products are better than synthetic products. Most of the time, I am not really concerned about the items that are applied onto my skin, so doing this research has helped me gain some knowledge about the products I use on a daily basis.

First of all, what are cosmetics? Cosmetics are substances applied onto the skin to enhance the appearance of the human body. Our skin is the largest organ in the body, so it is important for us to understand why organic cosmetics are much healthier for our skin.

Organic makeup is natural makeup that is manufactured organically from plants of organic sources. The ingredients in organic cosmetic products do not have any synthetic relation and do not contain anything with genetically modified organisms. When any cosmetic is certified as organic, it has to meet an organic certifying standard in all ingredients and processes. The standard prohibits the people who make the cosmetic from using certain specific ingredients that are found in synthetic products.

Organic makeup is natural. It is makeup that is made from essential oils, plant extracts, vitamins and minerals. ("What's the difference," 2010) There is a huge difference between organic makeup and non-organic makeup. Organic makeup should be free of harsh chemicals, synthetic preservatives, parabens, synthetic colors, and fragrances. They should not contain genetically modified ingredients and should be 100% cruelty free and not tested on animals.

The organic cosmetic market is growing rapidly. With arising awareness of health and the environment, many customers today are willing to buy organic products instead of toxic ones

because organic cosmetics provide us with better health treatments. The growth of the cosmetic market is because consumers like purchasing natural and fresh products - their interest expands the market. Studies show that there is an increasing demand for organic products because investors are inspired to spread the market around the world. ("Organic cosmetic market," 2008) Western lifestyle and culture is influencing the way people in the east use makeup.

Chun, the manager of The Body Shop said, "People prefer natural products because they're not made with ingredients that are toxic. Unlike regular cosmetics, these cosmetics are processed differently and carefully. People are very concerned about their appearance, so they would prefer a more natural selection of items, especially these because they have healthy minerals."

Many people are starting to switch to organic cosmetic products because there are no chemicals, or in some cases very few chemical ingredients, involved in the production of these cosmetics. People prefer to pay a little more than average for healthier products to benefit their own skin. Nature provides ingredients that are natural and chemical free. Organic cosmetics can lead to a healthier lifestyle. Most of the times these items are made out of plants produced naturally and that have not been chemically treated. This can also be truly beneficial for the natural environment as there are fewer chemicals that are used inside the fields. There will be fewer hazards of pollution and contaminated water.

According to Chun, she never had the opportunity to use cosmetics because of her skin problems, but her sister recently started switching to natural cosmetics and it has helped her in many different ways. "Before she used natural cosmetics, she used to have a lot of acne, blemishes, scars and blackheads. Then switched to natural products a few months ago and her skin became much healthier. She used to hide all her flaws under so much makeup that were not

even made from natural ingredients, and all that did to her skin was made it worse than before. After switching to natural products, I could immediately see changes on her skin that I thought was impossible. Natural makeup is pretty amazing.” says Chun.

Why are organic or ‘green’ cosmetic products important? Our skin wraps and protects our bodies. It constitutes a living, dynamic tissue system. It has the ability to absorb applied products, partially or completely, into our bloodstream. It is said that up to 60% of the products we use on our skin are absorbed and deposited into the circulatory system. For instance, the average woman absorbs approximately 30 pounds of the ingredients contained in moisturizers over sixty years. (Stryker , 2003) So using natural cosmetic products and make-up are safer and much healthier.

“Natural makeup is very important. In fact, I would highly recommend everyone to use it. Regular cosmetics might be cheaper, but they can do so much harm to your skin. You may think that it’s not harming you because it doesn’t appear on the surface, but everything that lies under your skin is damaged. I believe that everyone wants to have beautiful skin. No matter how expensive the products are, they are worth it. To me, the Body Shop products aren’t that expensive. They are priced really fair and affordable and it helps the small community as well.” says Chun.

Some people aren’t concerned about using organic cosmetics because they don’t know what the toxic substances are doing to their bodies. Some people use synthetic cosmetics but don’t know how they affect the environment and the earth. Different cosmetics are part of peoples’ everyday lives. Cosmetics are essential in many people’s daily lives. Other people think they aren’t affected by this topic because they don’t use any cosmetic products. But have you ever thought of everyday things like hand cream or lip balm? They’re cosmetics as well, and

these products have the same effect in our environment just like make-up, nail polish, hair dye etc. By going green, make-up products and any other cosmetics can help reduce certain things in the environment and make the environment a better-living and healthier place.

“Many people walk into the Body Shop without even knowing that our products are all natural. They come in and just buy items like any other store and that disappoints me. It disappoints me not because they do not know that our products are green and natural, but the fact that they don’t really seem like they are concerned about what they are applying onto themselves. The employers always greet the customers, informing them about our items because we want them to know that our products are naturally made. Our products are beneficial to you and our environment. We try to reduce as much of our packaging as possible and all of our bottles and containers could be easily recycled.” says Chun.

An example would be COSMOS, a European standard developed by organizations from Germany, Belgium, France, Italy and the United Kingdom. ("Natural and organic," 2011) The standard states that cosmetic packaging must use minimal material. They prefer recycled items and should maximize the amount of material that can be recycled or reused.

Black and dark brown permanent hair dyes contain "coal tar" dye ingredients. They contain diaminoanisole and FD&C Red 33 which are recognized as carcinogens in experimental animals. (Tylee, 2007) This evidence is supported by studies establishing that regular use of these dyes poses major risks of relatively rare cancers - non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease, and myeloma. People who dye their hair regularly have a higher risk of losing hair, whether it's when you're shampooing or combing. Going without hair dye is the safest route. Hair coloring professionals should wear heavy plastic gloves and a mask to protect themselves against any fumes and should take work breaks to limit exposure.

Whatever you put onto your skin is absorbed to some degree. That is not the only problem, however, because even makeup that is wiped off or cleaned off has to go somewhere as well. Tissues that are used to wipe the makeup go either into the landfill or down the drain. People who use makeup also discard millions of plastic jars, tubes and other containers and packages each year. By using green cosmetic products, they may provide recyclable containers so you can recycle them instead of throwing them into the landfill.

Another reason green cosmetics are important is because they aren't tested on animals. They are natural products and they do not have to undergo any animal testing. On the other hand, regular cosmetics are usually tested on animals. Many personal-care products go through a safety testing before they're made available to consumers. This includes exposing animals to the compound to see whether they can develop any skin irritations or get sick. Animals that are tested are often given diseases to purposely to see whether a new drug will have an effect on the disease, and if the drug has any serious side effects. ("An easy call," 2004) These animals may develop tumors or other unhealthy conditions, and are often killed intentionally at some point during tests so scientists can examine the animals' internal organs for signs of damage. These animals include rabbits, mice and dogs.

Have you ever wondered what ingredients non organic cosmetics contain and how harmful they may be? A few common cosmetic ingredients include Lanolin. Lanolin is a by-product of sheep's wool. This ingredient can cause irritation due to the residue of any pesticides the sheep came into contact with. Many non-organic makeup products contain artificial colors. These ingredients can also create skin irritation, as well as eczema and dermatitis. Hydrogenated oils are oils that have been processed and heated to an extreme point that changes the chemical make up of the oil. When these oils come into contact with your skin through cosmetics, they

can clog up pores and create acne and break outs. Sodium Lauryl Sulphate is an ingredient that can be found in many skin cleansers. This can take off your skin's natural oils and cause it to become dry, red and irritated. Petroleum is a substance often added to cosmetics as cheap filler. Our bodies cannot absorb this, and it ends up leaving a layer of film on your skin. This prevents our bodies from getting rid of toxins through the skin, and instead, the toxins are trapped inside. Many of the chemicals found in every-day cosmetics are carcinogenic which are cancer causing substances. Out of 169 permanent hair dyes, 150 are mutagenic which can cause changes to our cells' genes. The use of permanent and semi-permanent hair dyes are associated with increased risk of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, myeloma, leukaemia and Hodgkin's disease. (Tylee, 2007)

The most concerning products are hair color and bleach, hair relaxer, nail polish, skin lightener, and nail treatment. A cosmetic that has been getting a lot of attention lately is nail polish. Some brands contain dibutyl phthalate, or DBP which is a chemical linked to cancer in animals. (Jones, 2006) Even lipstick is a concern because it contains man-made oils, synthetic colors and petroleum based waxes.

Artificial fragrances are really toxic. They are able to access into our bodies and olfactory system easily. Toothpaste is a single fragrance that is made up of 200 chemicals which are not labeled. Fragrances are based on petroleum products which can cause many different reactions, such as skin irritation, dizziness and brown tinges to the skin. The safest choices are products with essential oils.

All-natural cosmetic products and make-up can help you to avoid feeding your skin harmful chemicals. Many skin problems, such as acne, contact dermatitis, irritations and allergies may disappear once petroleum or synthetic ingredients are removed from your skin care regimen.

An example of an organic cosmetic is the EOS (Evolution of Smooth) lip balm. It

is a new lip balm which is 95 percent organic and natural. It comes in a sweet mint flavor packed with organic ingredients that are safe for both you and the environment. It is also really affordable, which means more money from your pocket for some other eco friendly cosmetic product. You will notice as you apply this organic lip balm to your lips that there is a strong refreshing mint scent and flavor, and it glides onto your lips without being too oily or waxy. The natural ingredients in this lip balm consists of coconut oil, olive fruit oil, beeswax, jojoba seed oil, peppermint oil, shea butter, stevia leaf flavoring and vitamin E. These ingredients do not only help nourish and keep your lips soft naturally, but they also help keep them younger and healthier looking and feeling because of the strong antioxidants contained inside of them.

Recently, I started using the EOS lip balm and I think it's pretty good so far. This lip balm moisturizes your lips with a minty flavor and is really refreshing. After the lip balm is applied on to your lips, your lips would have a really cool and soothing feeling. Unlike other lip balms, you do not have to re-apply over and over again. You would only need to re-apply after a few hours if you still want the minty flavor and cooling feeling. Otherwise, re-applying isn't necessary because it moisturizes your lips throughout the day.

The cosmetic company called "mark." has products that are made with natural ingredients as well. This is a line created by Avon for young women. It has recently created a new organic line of bath and body care products. These are made with Fair Trade Certified ingredients. "marks,"s Smoothing Body Lotion contains cocoa butter, honey, hibiscus, grape, and papaya extracts. Their Hydrating Body Cleanser is made of honey, white tea, rice bran oil, and sunflower oil. The 15 in 1 Lip Balm is made of cocoa butter, olive oil, vanilla, sunflower oil, and beeswax. Prices for these products are a little high, but it is to support a great cause since the purchase of Fair Trade Certified products provides the money for farmers and their families in

developing countries.

EAU Flirt is the first fragrance that is made for attraction and anti-aging. This product is made of a hundred percent natural ingredients. These ingredients include: pumpkin, mango, plum, orange, melon, lemon, lime, pear, apple, cinnamon and licorice. The natural ingredients used in this fragrance attract men and increase their penile blood flow. (Gold, 2009)

Cosmetic tools could be green as well. Brushes, for example, are the most popular cosmetic tools. The company Eco-tools makes the most popular natural brushes. They are made out of recycled matter, soft talkon bristles and bamboo. The makeup brushes are contained in a reusable pouch. This company is also green because 1% of all sales go to For the Planet. For The Planet® is an organization that inspires the business community to donate 1% of their sales to the environmental groups around the world.

All these cosmetics are carefully made. The whole method of getting eco friendly certification is not easy. It starts from the birth of the seeds which are used as ingredients. The things that the people who make the products focus on many. For example, they pay attention to how the seed grows, how it is processed, where the seeds are preserved, transported and the work production.

What are some common ingredients in green cosmetics? One of them is jojoba oil. Jojoba oil is a wax that is found in shrubs in desert areas. Jojoba oil is an anti-acne treatment and can reduce inflammation. Another ingredient is beeswax which comes from beehives. This ingredient improves your skin texture and moisturizes your skin.

Not only do young adults or adults use cosmetics, babies use them as well. Using organic baby shampoo can help prevent babies from getting dandruff, cradle cap and eye irritation. Cradle cap is when babies develop a yellow crust over their scalp and it looks like dandruff.

Parents usually just wash it off with shampoo, but that makes the problem worse. So a small portion of organic baby oil should be massaged onto the baby's scalp, then wiped off with an organic baby washcloth. A lightly lavender scented candle can help put your baby to sleep. Lavender is a natural de-stresser which includes a scent of serenity. Organic lotions made for babies are more relaxing. The best ones that are available are organic primrose, almond and aloe vera oils.

How does cosmetic products that are not 'green' affect your skin and health? If you are not using certified organic cosmetics, then you might be applying harmful substances which are found in normal cosmetics products onto your skin. Your skin could absorb these harmful ingredients and it would not be easy to get rid of these chemicals once they are in the body. This is why it is recommended to use organic cosmetic products. There is no sure way to check whether natural cosmetics are actually natural, without any harmful ingredients. A good way would be to check the ingredients that are listed on the cosmetic packaging. Natural cosmetics should not contain any man-made or modified ingredients or ingredients modified by chemicals.

The main use of cosmetics and makeup requires that they stay on the skin. If the makeup is absorbed by the skin, this means the makeup does not stay and is undesirable. By using natural cosmetics, you do not have to worry about re-applying it over and over again. These products are safe and doesn't harm your skin. In addition, these products create a way to benefit your skin. Many natural cosmetics today, such as foundations or concealers are created to treat acne problems.

From doing this research, I learned more about the products I use on a daily basis. I wanted to learn about this topic because it does not only affect me, but also the people and the environment. People do not know how to keep our environment clean and healthy, and by

knowing this information, they can change their minds about using synthetic cosmetics and switch to organic and natural products. I have definitely changed my mind about synthetic cosmetics after this research, and I am switching to natural and organic cosmetics after I finish with the products I am currently using. I learned that synthetic products can harm your skin in many different ways while natural and organic products can benefit your skin. Now that I know how organic and natural products benefit me, I would start using them instead of what I have been using. If this information was never researched, I would've never known how much harm and damage those products that I consume daily can do to me.

In addition to gaining knowledge about this topic, I learned how to write a formal research paper. I learned how to do citations for my paper and add footnotes, which I have never done before. My writing skills and vocabulary has improved dramatically. Writing has always been my weakness, but this research paper shaped me up and made built up my confidence about writing. I've also never interviewed anyone professionally before. This was a really fun and exciting experience and I hope to have the opportunity to do something similar to this again.

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