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Anti-Aging



Anti-aging products may contain chemicals of concern, including retinol, the “Teflon” chemical PTFE, and polyacrylamide. To protect yourself, choose brands that fully disclose the ingredients in their products, including their fragrance ingredients. Use our Red List of Chemicals on Concern in Cosmetics to avoid so you know what to look for on labels.

Science

The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics 2015 report [Anti-Aging Secrets Exposed: Chemical Linked to Breast Cancer in Skin Care](https://www.bcpp.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Report_Anti-Aging-Secrets-Exposed_October_2015.pdf) (https://www.bcpp.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Report_Anti-Aging-Secrets-Exposed_October_2015.pdf) revealed test results showing a toxic contaminant linked to cancer known as PFOA (perfluorooctanoic acid), a type of PFAS “Forever Chemical” (<https://www.bcpp.org/resource/pfas-forever-chemicals-pfoa-pfos/>) found in anti-aging products from beloved brands Garnier and CoverGirl.

PFOA is a suspected endocrine (hormone) disruptor and possible carcinogen, and PFOS has been linked to fertility problems. Several PFAS chemicals, especially PFOA, have been linked to increased risk for breast cancer. Commonly known as “Forever Chemicals,” PFAS (Per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances) chemicals are a family of synthetic chemicals that build up in humans and are linked to numerous health problems including cancer. PFAS chemicals are used for oil and water repellency, so are also used in waterproof mascara and eyeliner. And, according to the FDA, they are added to products such as “lotions, cleansers, nail polish, shaving cream, foundation, lipstick, eyeliner, eyeshadow, and mascara” to condition, smooth or make skin appear shiny or to “affect product consistency and texture.” A July 2021 Clearya analysis of 50,000 personal care products spotted 34 different PFAS chemicals present in 120 cosmetic brands.

[More Science > \(https://www.bcpp.org/resource/pfas-forever-chemicals-pfoa-pfos/\)](https://www.bcpp.org/resource/pfas-forever-chemicals-pfoa-pfos/)

Retinol in cosmetics is also of particular concern, given its widespread use in anti-aging products to promote healthy skin. An essential micronutrient, Vitamin A is best consumed as part of a healthy diet rather than in cosmetics – it’s found in animal products like oily fish, liver, and cheese or in vegetable form such as sweet potatoes, carrots, squash, and cantaloupe. Avoid the two derivatives – retinoic acid and retinyl palmitate – in cosmetics and personal care products. Retinol itself should not be used at high doses.

Campaign

Our federal Safer Beauty Bill Package includes the [Toxic-Free Beauty Act of 2021](https://www.bcpp.org/resource/toxic-free-beauty-act-of-2021/) (<https://www.bcpp.org/resource/toxic-free-beauty-act-of-2021/>), which would ban 11 of the most hazardous chemicals and the entire class of PFAS “forever” chemicals from beauty and personal care products. Take action to make beauty and personal care products safer for all!

[Take Action > \(/action-alerts/support-the-safer-beauty-bill-package/\)](/action-alerts/support-the-safer-beauty-bill-package/)

Products of Concern

- Anti-aging, anti-wrinkle, and age-defying skincare products
- Anti-aging Masks
- Anti-aging Creams
- Anti-aging Moisturizer
- Anti-aging Serum
- Age-defying Makeup (Pressed Powder)

Chemicals of Concern

Ethoxylated Ingredients

(<https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/ethoxylated-ingredients/>)

Nanomaterials (<https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/nanomaterials/>)

Nitrosamines (<https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/nitrosamines/>)

P-Phenylenediamine (<https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/p-phenylenediamine/>)

Polyacrylamide (<https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/polyacrylamide/>)

Polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE, Aka Teflon®)

(<https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/polytetrafluoroethylene/>)

Preservatives (<https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/preservatives/>)

Resorcinol (<https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/resorcinol/>)

Retinol and Retinol Compounds

(<https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/retinol-and-retinol-compounds/>)

[View all Chemicals of Concern > \(/chemicals/\)](#)



(<https://www.safecosmetics.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Redlist-anti-aging-1.jpeg>).

Tips

1. **Read Labels:** Check ingredient labels to avoid the above chemicals of concern found in body care products.
2. **Simplify:** Choose products with simpler ingredient lists and fewer synthetic chemicals. Select products that fully disclose their fragrance ingredients by skipping products with “fragrance” on the label.
3. **Minimalist:** Using fewer products is the easiest and cheapest way to reduce your risk by minimizing your exposure to harmful chemicals in cosmetics.
4. **Use an App:** Get Clearya or Think Dirty to find out whether products are toxic as you shop.
5. **Look Beyond:** Since the beauty industry is largely unregulated, there are no legal standards for personal care products that are labeled “clean,” “pure,” “natural,” or “organic.” Look beyond false marketing claims by reading ingredient labels.
6. **DIY:** Many products are easy and fun to make yourself. Plus, you can customize your recipes to match your specific beauty concerns and favorites. Make your own moisturizer, sugar or salt scrub, body oil, and more using simple, organic ingredients.

Avoid in anti-aging products

- Polyacrylamide, acrylamide contamination
- PTFE, PFOA contamination

- Placental extracts (can contain progesterone or estrogen)
- UV filters (octinoxate, oxybenzone, homosalate)
- Petrolatum
- polyperfluoromethylisopropyl ether
- polytetrafluoroethylene
- DEA-C8-18 perfluoroalkylethyl phosphate
- retinoic acid
- retinyl palmitate

Explore other products

- [Anti-Aging \(https://www.safecosmetics.org/products/anti-aging/\)](https://www.safecosmetics.org/products/anti-aging/)
- [Body \(https://www.safecosmetics.org/products/body/\)](https://www.safecosmetics.org/products/body/)
- [Dental \(https://www.safecosmetics.org/products/dental/\)](https://www.safecosmetics.org/products/dental/)
- [Fragrance \(https://www.safecosmetics.org/products/fragrance/\)](https://www.safecosmetics.org/products/fragrance/)
- [Hair \(https://www.safecosmetics.org/products/hair/\)](https://www.safecosmetics.org/products/hair/)
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- [Skin Lighteners \(https://www.safecosmetics.org/products/skin-lighteners/\)](https://www.safecosmetics.org/products/skin-lighteners/)
- [Sunscreens \(https://www.safecosmetics.org/products/sunscreens/\)](https://www.safecosmetics.org/products/sunscreens/)

Looking for a Safer Alternative?

Use Clearya's app to find non-toxic products! Clearya alerts you to toxics and helps you find safe products.



[Visit Clearya > \(https://www.clearya.com/\)](https://www.clearya.com/)

Your Action Helps

Together, we can make beauty safer for all.

Take Action Today!

(/take-action/)

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