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Sunscreens



Many sunscreens contain chemicals that can mimic estrogen in the body, disrupt the endocrine system, and play a significant role in breast cancer development. However, safer sunscreens are available if you know what to look for.

Science

Ultraviolet filters, or UV filters, are chemicals that can screen out UV-A and UV-B rays from the sun. Some UV filters are chemicals of concern such as octinoxate, octyl methoxycinnamate, [benzophenone](https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/benzophenone/) (<https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/benzophenone/>), [oxybenzone](https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/benzophenone/) (<https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/benzophenone/>), [PABA](https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/paba/) (<https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/paba/>), and padimate O. Safer alternative sunscreens are those that use sun-blocking compounds derived from minerals, such as zinc oxide or titanium dioxide, in a non-inhalable form.

[Read More > \(https://www.bcphp.org/resource/uv-filters/\)](https://www.bcphp.org/resource/uv-filters/)

Sunscreens may also contain parabens like isobutylparaben and isopropylparaben as preservatives. [Parabens \(https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/parabens/\)](https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/parabens/) are hormonally active chemicals linked to breast cancer, reproductive harm, and endocrine disruption.

Campaign

We think you shouldn't have to choose between skin cancer and breast cancer. The CSC-cosponsored [Toxic Free Beauty Act \(https://www.bcphp.org/resource/toxic-free-beauty-act/\)](https://www.bcphp.org/resource/toxic-free-beauty-act/), part of the [Safer Beauty Bill Package \(https://www.bcphp.org/resource/safer-beauty-bill-package/\)](https://www.bcphp.org/resource/safer-beauty-bill-package/) in U.S. Congress, would ban two harmful parabens, along with the other worst-of-the-worst toxic chemicals found in personal care products like sunscreens. 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

- Skin lighteners
- Facial and skin cleansers
- Facial moisturizers

Chemicals of Concern

[Benzophenone & Related Compounds](https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/benzophenone/)

[\(https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/benzophenone/\)](https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/benzophenone/)

[Butylated Compounds \(https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/butylated-compounds/\)](https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/butylated-compounds/)

Carcinogens in Cosmetics (<https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/known-carcinogens/>)

Ethanolamine Compounds (MEA, DEA, TEA And Others) (<https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/ethanolamine-compounds/>)

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

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

Lead And Other Heavy Metals (<https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/lead-and-other-heavy-metals/>)

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

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

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

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

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

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

Styrene Acrylates Copolymer (<https://www.safecosmetics.org/chemicals/styrene-acrylates-copolymer/>)

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



(<https://www.safecosmetics.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/CSC-Sunscreen-Toxic-Chemicals-to-Avoid.jpg>).

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.

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/>).
- [Makeup](https://www.safecosmetics.org/products/makeup/) (<https://www.safecosmetics.org/products/makeup/>).
- [Nail](https://www.safecosmetics.org/products/nail/) (<https://www.safecosmetics.org/products/nail/>).
- [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!

[\(/take-action/\)](/take-action/)

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