

DO YOU HAVE A COSMETIC GRAVEYARD?

The 5 Deadly Ingredients that may be in your Makeup and Skin Care, by Carol Stover
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We all have one – a cosmetic graveyard, that is. You know, that drawer in the bathroom cabinet or bedroom vanity that is chock full of makeup and skin products dating back to the first Ice Age. You bought them because of a slick advertisement that promised “more luminous skin in 21 days”, or “color that won’t fade, crease or turn”. Or maybe because the dewy 19-year old behind the department store counter assured you that this was the most effective wrinkle cream on the market. But whatever the reason, now you’re stuck with a mismatched collection of cosmetics that you just can’t bring yourself to get rid of. “Maybe they’ll work if I try them again later”, you say to yourself as you push them back further in the drawer, thinking of the money you’ve spent. Besides, the containers are so beautiful, you hate to throw them away. And have you noticed that it doesn’t seem to matter how much you spend? Costly products can be just as ineffective as cheap ones.

One thing I’ve learned over many years of using and testing cosmetics for personal and professional use is to NEVER BELIEVE ADVERTISING. It’s not really there to educate you, but to sell you a product. As a veteran of the advertising industry, I can attest to the practice of exaggerating product benefits and letting a seductive visual image tell most of the story. A beautiful package is just that – a beautiful package. It gives no indication of the quality of what’s inside.

Another good rule of thumb is to try not to buy wrinkle cream from someone younger than your oldest wrinkle. Through no fault of their own, many department store and boutique cosmetic salesgirls are given sketchy information about what’s in the products they represent. Their training emphasis is on selling and on product trends, and they have pressure from management to meet high quotas. If you take a product back to the store to ask the salesgirl why it gave you a problem, they probably cannot tell you, because they’ve never been taught that type of information.

The ingredients that skin care and makeup products are made from are critical in determining how effective they will be. The shocking fact is that most cosmetic formulations sold in this country contain ingredients that are harmful or toxic to the skin and to the body, according to the World Health Organization. How is this able to happen? Because the FDA, the organization regulating the cosmetic industry, is also responsible for regulating the food industry and the mammoth pharmaceutical industry. With the incredible number of new drugs released each year, there is not much time left for delving into the effectiveness of cosmetic formulas. As long as a cosmetic company lists the ingredient, it is allowed to use it.

So if you want to stop wasting money on cosmetics that don’t work or cause skin problems, the best thing to do is to become a label reader. Listed here are the Top 5 Problem Ingredients to Avoid when purchasing skin care, lotions or makeup products.

#1: PETROLEUM DERIVATIVES (Mineral Oil – Petrolatum – Vaseline)

Petroleum in its various forms is the most commonly used base for skin care & makeup products because it is very inexpensive. It comes from Crude Oil, which is then refined to Petroleum, then to Diesel, Gasoline, Vaseline and Mineral Oil. Petroleum substances form a barrier and seal the skin, preventing it from breathing, excreting, exfoliating and

absorbing moisture & nutrients. When skin cannot perform its vital functions, the basal cell layer at the bottom of the dermis slows down the production of new cells, which accelerates the aging process. The skin becomes chronically dehydrated under the surface, and starved of nutrients. The large petroleum molecules cannot be effectively broken down and utilized by the skin, so they clog pores and build up in the epidermis. It is now required for all products (even cleaning products) that contain petroleum derivatives to list a warning on the label, because the substance can be toxic to children. Petroleum is the #2 of premature aging. Even scarier – due to an eerie molecular similarity, petroleum is “read” by the body as a form of chemical estrogen, similar enough to confuse our already overloaded hormone receptors, according to Dr. John Lee, the world’s leading authority on natural hormone balance. The petroleum base in makeup is what keeps it from staying where you put it, and what causes that oily shine you can’t get rid of.

#2: ARTIFICIAL COLORS & FRAGRANCES

Beware of lipsticks that smell like perfume, OR lotions and toners that have a beautiful pink, green or blue color to them. Many so-called “hypoallergenic” products still contain chemical colors and/or fragrances, which in addition to being extremely dehydrating, are the #1 cause of allergic reactions. These substances are very irritating to the skin and the sinuses of many people, and can even cause a serious chemical “burn” with the potential for permanent scarring. The chemicals used to create these substances are very photosensitizing, leading to hyperpigmentation and many unexplained sunburns. Sadly, baby products contain a high percentage of them. Market studies have shown that female consumers enjoy the experience of colors and fragrances, so most companies will include them. However, the most insidious purpose behind added chemical color and fragrance is to cover the rancid odor of animal tissue and grease still used by many companies as cheap and readily available fillers in lipsticks and moisturizers.

#3: ANIMAL BY-PRODUCTS (Collagen – Elastin – Lanolin)

It’s hard to believe that cosmetic companies would actually include parts of dead animals in their products, but that’s exactly what you are getting when you purchase products containing Collagen, Elastin and Lanolin. But collagen is good, you say – right? Well, your OWN collagen & elastin fibers that hold your own layers of skin together ARE good, since they help the layers retain their elasticity as you move. But the collagen & elastin that are used in cosmetics come from rendered animals, such as road kill (including skunks & raccoons), euthanized shelter animals, and slaughterhouse scraps left over from meat processing. This material is all taken to rendering plants where it is boiled down, along with the old cooking grease from restaurants. It is put under extreme pressure and the fats are extruded from the bones. What floats to the surface of this mixture is skimmed off the top and sold to the cosmetic industry for 26 cents per pound, as a filler for moisturizers and lipsticks. Howard F. Lyman documents this grisly practice in his book, “Mad Cowboy”. Lanolin is a product of the sheep shearing and slaughter industry. It is an oily substance expressed from the wool, and like the collagen & elastin contained in the boiled-down animal carcasses, it too has a noxious odor. Artificial fragrances are usually included to mask this odor. Animal by-products are rancid and

unsanitary substances that cause allergic reactions and the clogging of pores in the epidermis.

#4: SOLVENT ALCOHOLS

The term “alcohol” merely refers to a chain of carbon molecules, and there are many types of alcohols. Some are actually beneficial, like the conditioning alcohols cetyl and ceteryl alcohol derived from plant oils. But harsh solvent alcohols like SD Alcohol 40, very common in toners and after-shave products, severely dehydrate skin and contribute to scarring in healing blemishes and shaving cuts. They strip the skin’s natural acid pH mantle, exposing the skin to bacteria and giving that tight feeling. “Skin care products that strip do much more than cause skin problems,” reported Dr. Bruce Hensel on Day & Date. “They leave pores exposed, allowing bacterial growth inside them, which is where these harmful elements enter the blood stream and cause illness or even death.”

#5: WAXES

Everyone who has ever cleaned a bathroom is familiar with wax in the form of soap scum. Nearly all soaps, even expensive ones, are held together with wax. When the soap is rubbed across the skin and mixes with water, the wax pastes down some of the dead skin on the surface of the body, and leaves the rest of it stuck to the sides of the bathtub. Yes, even Dove, beloved of dermatologists. The only good thing about Dove is that its pH is not quite as dangerously high as other soaps. The really bad news is that wax is made from sodium tallowate, another name for rendered beef fat. And almost all soaps contain artificial color and fragrance. Wax is the most occlusive and suffocating substance you could ever use on your skin. Think back to how hard soap scum is to remove from the bathtub – that will give you the idea.

Check the labels on all of your products and see if they contain any of these 5 Deadly Ingredients that may be aging your skin, and promoting breakouts and sensitivity. So many people seem to have sensitive skin these days, and usually it is created by repeated exposure to one or more of these substances. Skin responds to numerous factors, like stress, diet, smoking, hormones, etc., and they all should be taken into consideration. But if you discontinue the use of these known irritants, and look for products with healthier ingredients, you’ll be on your way to happier skin.