

OrganicAuthority.com Get Hip, Go Organic!

CHEMICALS ARE CRUEL: AVOID THEM!

Experts estimate that between 300 and 500 chemicals can be found in our bodies.

U.K. physician Dr. Paula Baillie-Hamilton – one of the first experts to link chemicals and weight management - dubs them “chemical calories,” and has rightly found that chemicals are key contributors to the obesity epidemic.

Whether sprayed on crops or manually placed in prepackaged foods, these unnatural elements force our body to work overtime to eliminate them. They include:

- Pesticides
- Preservatives
- Additives
- Colorants
- Growth promoters
- Heavy Metals
- Packaging plastics that can leach into food
- Toxic Chemicals

Top Tip: If you can’t pronounce it, do you really want to eat or drink it? Label reading is critical. Read the fine print...and think about it.

WHAT IS ORGANIC – REALLY?

“Natural” and “organic” are not interchangeable. Here’s the scoop:

What’s in a Name?

Did you know the term “natural” is 100% unregulated?

Manufacturers can freely use “natural” on product labels without third-party verification. Other labels that need no verification whatsoever include:

- Free-range
- Hormone-free
- 100% natural ingredients
- 100% vegetarian
- Earth-friendly
- Biodegradable
- Vegan
- Cruelty free
- Green
- Eco-friendly

USDA Organic: Only food labeled with the USDA Organic Seal has been certified as meeting official standards. It looks like this:



The USDA Organic Seal

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The USDA organic label means that the item has been produced by farmers who stress the conservation of water and soil, as well as promote the use of renewable resources to develop and boost environmental quality for future generations.

The USDA has established requirements for the use of the word 'organic' on processed foods and agricultural products.

USDA regulations:

- Prohibit the use of irradiation, sewage sludge or genetically modified organisms in organic production and products
- Prohibit antibiotics in organic meat and poultry
- Require 100% organic feed for livestock
- Prohibit the use of most conventional pesticides and fertilizers with synthetic ingredients

FOUR CATEGORIES OF ORGANIC LABELS

There are four categories of organic labels, and they are based upon the percentage of organic content when it comes to packaged foods.

1. "100% Organic"

The Gold Standard

Display of the USDA Organic seal on the packaging and the "100% organic" statement.

2. "Organic"

Pretty Darn Good!

The product is made with at least 95% organic ingredients (excluding water and salt).

- Can display the USDA Organic Seal
- Cannot display "100% organic ingredients"
- Remaining 5% may contain non-organically produced agricultural ingredients which are not commercially available in organic form

3. "Made with Organic Ingredients"

Read-the-Label Organic

The product must contain at least 70% organic materials.

- While the minimum is 70%, it may contain up to 94% organic ingredients
- Cannot display the organic seal
- Can display the phrase "Made with Organic Ingredients," followed by up to three specific ingredients
- May contain up to 30% non-organically produced agricultural ingredients amongst other ingredients

4. Not Organic

Products with less than 70% organic ingredients may not make any organic claims on the front of the package.

- Organically produced ingredients can be listed on the side panel only
- May contain over 30% non-organically produced agricultural ingredients

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PESKY, POISONOUS PESTICIDES

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), health risks linked to pesticides include:

- Birth defects
- Nerve damage
- Cancer
- Immune system and neurological problems
- Underdeveloped reproductive systems
- Death

Pesticides defined:

According to the EPA, a pesticide is “any substance or mixture of substances intended for preventing, destroying, repelling or mitigating any pest.

Pesticides can cause harm to humans, animals or the environment because they are designed to kill or otherwise adversely affect living organisms.

Consider these facts:

- Of the most widely used pesticides on the market, fifty-nine are known to be carcinogenic.
- We are more likely to get cancer from pesticides and environmental pollutants than from hereditary causes according to a July 2000 study from The New England Journal of Medicine
- Behavioral problems in kids may be linked to what their parents ate and what they were fed as young children. According to Charles Benbrook of the Organic Center in an OrganicAuthority.com interview, pesticides in genetic make contribute to the large increases seen in ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) and autism.
- 80 to 90 percent of all cancer in children is caused by exposure to carcinogens in the environment, according to Raising Children Toxic Free by Dr. Herbert L. Needleman and Dr. Philip J. Landrigan.

TRANSITIONING TO A HEALTHY DIET

I just shared some frightening but true facts about pesticides. The good news is that you can **reduce your pesticide exposure by almost 90% by avoiding the 12 most contaminated fruits and vegetables.**

In fact, these 12 ‘most contaminated’ expose you to about 14 pesticides per day according to An Environmental Working Group study!

Produce with the **highest** pesticide residue count:

Apples	Bell peppers	Spinach
Berries	Celery	Lettuce
Peaches	Nectarines	Potatoes
Grapes	Cherries	
Imported grapes	Pears	

Green Goodness Tip:

Cut out these clip-and-go lists and put them in your wallet...this way you'll have 'em when you need 'em!

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Given the health risks posed by pesticides, I always recommend buying organic if you can. However, these are the fruits and vegetables that are “safer” to buy non-organic if you must:

Produce with the **lowest** pesticide residue count:

Bananas	Asparagus	Cabbage
Avocados	Sweet peas (frozen)	Broccoli
Pineapples	Sweet corn (frozen)	Papaya
Mangoes	Kiwifruit	

Pesticides Stay Inside

Contrary to popular belief (and the claims of some pesticide ‘cleaning’ products), you cannot wash pesticide residues off of fruits and vegetables. In addition to being directly sprayed on fruits and vegetables, “fumigation” means that pesticides find their way directly into the soil, making its way into fruits or vegetables. These ‘baked in’ pesticides cannot simply be washed off.

Invest in Organic – For Your Health and the Earth

Organic products may be slightly more expensive, but consider it an investment in your health. You’ll save money in the future on expensive healthcare. In fact, eating nutrition-filled, pesticide-, herbicide- and fumigant-free food is akin to preventive medicine. Great tasting medicine at that!

Buying organic also has many eco-friendly benefits. Organic soil helps reduce greenhouse gases and carbon dioxide, and it uses 50% less energy than conventional farming! When you choose to go organic you’re not only investing in your long term health, you’re investing in planet Earth.

TOXIN-FREE MEAT, FISH, DRINKS AND MORE

As we discovered in part one of the Meat a Better Meat, chemicals are found in the meat that we eat because the animals they are often subject to:

- Drugs
- Hormones
- Antibiotics
- Steroids
- Pesticides, herbicides, insecticides, etc.,

Even animals that are raised on an all-natural diet - like grass - for its whole life can then be fed or ‘finished’ on grains the last few weeks of life in order to be fattened up before processing. Cows are not genetically able to eat grains, and in fact, it can make them sick. Remember: “grass-fed from birth to market” is the best way to go!

All the Fish That’s Fit to Eat!

Rich in essential fatty and amino acids, fish have long been considered an integral part of a healthy diet.

Unfortunately, not all fish are created equal...especially when it comes to chemicals.

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Dangerous Waters

Carnivorous fish – those who eat large quantities of smaller fish -- tend to have a **higher chemical content** and are generally more fatty. They include:

- Swordfish
- Marlin
- Shark
- Bluefish
- Trout
- Salmon
- Tuna
- Eel

It's also wise to avoid farmed salmon (“Atlantic salmon”) and trout. Farmed salmon has less flavor and protein, and it offers fewer omega-3 fatty acids than wild salmon. In addition, it's likely to contain pesticide residues and may be treated with other chemicals (antibiotics and other drugs used to treat infections that occur when fish are crowded into fish-farm pens) as well as added coloring to give it a “natural” pink color.

Healthy on the High Seas

White fish and other noncarnivorous species generally have less fat content and chemicals. They include:

- Cod
- Sardines
- Shellfish
- Tilapia
- White Sea Bass

I find that almost any of the above are perfect, lightly grilled with a little olive oil, lemon and salt.

To find the most sustainable seafood choices available in your region, log onto www.seafoodwatch.org for a handy clip-and-save wallet sized fish-shopping reference card. It pinpoints the safest seafood to eat customized by wherever you live in the country!

Fruits and Veggies

For fruits and vegetables, the obvious choice is organic.

For some reason, if you can't buy organic, keep in mind the fruits and vegetables that carry the highest pesticide loads. Refer to Pesky Poisonous Pesticides – Simply Defined for a clip-ready list of fruits and vegetables with the highest and lowest pesticide residues.

LK Tasty Budget Tip

Reduce the number of prepackaged low-fat, low-calorie and “diet” foods and replace them with healthy whole organic foods.

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Prepackaged Low-Fat Products are NOT Healthier!

As a general rule, prepackaged low-fat products are not healthier for you – not by a long shot. Think about it: this is food that can live on a shelf indefinitely. Doesn't this say something about its level of freshness and the amount of chemicals and additives used to preserve the product?

Think about it: the fat that would normally be used to make the product has to be replaced with *something*. That 'something' is typically a health-free combo of:

- Carbohydrate-like sugars
- Chemical preservatives
- Additives, all of which are fattening.

Low-fat dairy products like cheese and yogurt are often the exception to this rule, as they don't add bad carbs as replacement fats. They're healthful and nonfattening.

Sugar, Artificial Sweetener, and Sipping Smart

The big issue with white sugar is that we are just consuming too much of it.

According to a U.S. Department of Agriculture survey, Americans consume about 64 pounds of sugar per person per year. Clearly, we have a problem. When we consume too much of anything, the human body stores it as fat.

Most of the sugar in prepackaged processed foods has been replaced by the now controversial sweetener, high fructose corn syrup. It's shocking how many everyday foods you'll find high-fructose corn syrup in. I was stunned to find it listed as an ingredient in a package of English muffins, breads, "healthy snacks," "healthy juices" and the list goes on.

High-fructose corn syrup potentially disrupts your metabolism and spurs weight gain. Be on the lookout for it in:

- Processed prepackaged foods
- Regular sodas
- Juice drinks
- Drink mixes
- Processed tea drinks
- Any beverage that is sold in a bottle.

Consuming real sugar in moderation can be okay. Follow these tips for a sweeter life – without sugar:

- Limit your sugar consumption in the prepackaged processed foods
- Limit your sugar intake in the drinks you consume
- Consume sugar in small, moderate amounts
- If you are prone to mood swings, depression, and unpredictable energy levels, consider eliminating sugar altogether
- Use raw agave nectar or stevia, a completely natural sweetener as a substitute for sugar during morning tea or coffee

As for artificial sweeteners, there isn't any evidence that consuming them will actually help you lose weight!

Natural sugars like pure raw, organic, brown or honey have an advantage over super-processed white sugar: their flavor is sweeter so you don't require as much to sweeten a product. Still, they must be consumed moderately, because like white refined sugar, these 'natural' sugars can quickly raise your blood sugar levels, leading to a whole host of physical problems we discuss later.

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Use Sugar Like Salt

I learned something interesting in culinary school: sugar should be used like you would use salt - in small quantities, and to season food or drink to bring out the natural flavors of the food not overpower it.

Begin thinking of sugar as a seasoning rather than a sweetener, you'll be surprised to see how you'll naturally begin to reduce your sugar consumption! **Sip Smart**

Beverages count every bit as much as your food intake when it comes to healthy living.

Eliminate diet and regular sodas all together, they are just liquid candy. Reduce your intake of juice drinks, drink mixes and processed tea drinks altogether. If you can't eliminate them completely, start by reducing your intake and substitute something like lemon water, spa water (water with lemons, limes, oranges and or cucumbers) or a cup of freshly brewed green tea that is high in antioxidants.

Despite popular belief, diet sodas are unhealthy, as they're full of ingredients like aspartame. In tests, aspartame degrades into:

- Formaldehyde
- Diketopiperazine

These two chemicals are known to cause problems in the nervous system -- remember what I said about ingesting things you can't pronounce?

LK Tip: Spa Sipping!

Eliminate high fructose corn-syrup and chemical-filled diet sodas with your own spa water.

Throw a few slices of lemons, oranges, cucumbers or anything else you like into filtered water and voila! It's fun, tasty and 100% fat free – naturally!

CHEMICALS IN YOUR HOME

Did you know the air within our homes can be five to ten times more heavily polluted than outdoor air, even in the largest industrial cities?

Don't take my word for it – ask The Environmental Protection Agency!

Even scarier, we typically spend about 90% of our time indoors.

What's going on?

It turns out that home-sweet-home is actually the number one source of toxic chemicals. In fact, common toxic chemicals found in the home are three times more likely to cause cancer than airborne pollutants.

Clearly, it's time to go deep and clean up at home! Luckily, chemical cleaners - the primary source of indoor air pollution – are one of the easiest areas to fix. Whether you buy natural alternatives or tap into my comprehensive list of do-it-yourself options, it's time to reverse the trend of indoor air pollution when it comes to *your* home!

Chemicals at Home: A Primer

Since the 1970s, there has been a disturbing increase in the number of toxic chemicals that go into the making of household products. Interestingly, this timeline directly coincides with a steady increase in childhood illnesses and asthma.

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Consider the following:

- Childhood asthma has increased more than 40% since 1980, according to the EPA
- Asthma deaths in children and young persons have increased 118% since 1980
- The majority of the 400,000 annual emergency room visits for severe asthma attacks are brought on by poor indoor air quality, according to a recent study

Amazing but True: No Testing Necessary!

Federal law does not require manufacturers to conduct pre-market safety testing on home products.

That means that it's not until consumers have been injured or become sick that the dangerous components of toxic home products reveal themselves!

Don't wait to discover your home products 'true hazards' by falling victim to their toxicity. Become empowered, read labels and take control as an informed consumer.

Identifying Offending Chemical Products at Home

Just as you did with your food and personal-care products, get to know the cleaning products you currently have at home.

At every opportunity, pick up the household products you or your cleaning person uses to sanitize your kitchen, floors, counter-tops, toilets, bathtubs and even your hand soap and start reading the labels.

- Ask yourself the following questions:
- What is in this product?
- Am I familiar with the ingredients?
- Can I pronounce the names of the ingredients?
- Does this product contain fragrance?
- Does the manufacturer commit to full disclosure for all product ingredients, or just some of them?
- Is this an antibacterial or disinfectant cleaner that contains pesticides as its active ingredient?
- Does it have any of the following warning labels?

DANGER - Harmful or fatal if swallowed. A taste to a teaspoonful taken by mouth could kill an average-sized adult.

WARNING - Harmful if swallowed. A teaspoonful to an ounce taken by mouth could kill an average-sized adult.

CAUTION - Harmful if swallowed. An ounce to over a pint taken by mouth could kill an average-sized adult.

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YOUR PERSONAL CARE ROUTINE

Toothpaste, deodorant, makeup, shampoo, conditioner, lotion, face wash, scrub, perfume — on average, we use about 9 products a day. For you ladies it can be more like 12!

So while we've all been persuaded that beauty is only skin deep, we now know that what we put on our skin goes deeper.

Much deeper.

Your skin is your largest organ. It ingests just about anything you put on it, channeling ingredients straight into your bloodstream and carrying them to multiple organs throughout your body.

Applying a product to your skin is just like eating because the skin absorbs pretty much everything that you put on it. Thus choosing what you put *on* your body is just *as important* as what you choose to put *into* your body.

126 Chemicals, Every Day – Day After Day

By using our favorite beauty lotions and potions, you're actually exposing yourself to 126 chemicals on average every single day, and that doesn't even include the chemicals in your food or home environment.

Buyer Beware

Did you know that the FDA has no oversight with respect to what chemical ingredients go in to our personal care products?

Zero.

Manufacturers can put just about anything they want into them. They might smell and feel great, but consider this not so pretty list of all too common ingredients:

- Plasticizers
- Degreasers
- Surfactants
- Carcinogens
- Reproductive Toxins
- Endocrine Disrupters

Rinse – and Repeat

Long ago, the government took the position that small doses of chemicals in personal products are not a threat to human health.

What the government has failed to take into consideration is the repetitive, everyday use of personal, cleaning and food products. Our continuous, daily exposure to chemicals has created a chemical cocktail in the human bloodstream.

The human body can eliminate some of these chemicals, but not all of them. Consider the following:

- Chemicals can be stored in the fatty tissue of the human body.
- Chemicals can interfere with normal functioning of the human body.
- Chemicals can mimic normal hormones in the human body, called endocrine-disruptors.

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You Are What You Eat

Apply this old adage to your personal care routine too. Because what you put *on* your body is just *as important* as what you choose to put *into* your body!



Not-So-Safety Dance

Safety-testing of industrial chemicals that are used as base ingredients in everyday personal-care products like shampoos, conditioners, soaps, lotions, makeup and more are simply **not mandated by the government.**

Fact: Eighty-nine percent of the 10,500 ingredients the FDA has determined to be used in personal-care products have not been evaluated for human safety by the FDA, the Cosmetic Industry Review Board, or any other accountable institution.

Source: Environmental Working Group

Fact: One-third of all personal care products contain one or more ingredients classified as possible human carcinogens. Of the chemicals that have been tested, many are known by manufacturers and the government to be carcinogenic.

Source: Environmental Working Group

“More than 750 personal care products sold in the U.S. violate industry safety standards or cosmetic safety standards in other industrialized countries.”

—Richard Wiles, Executive Director of the Environmental Working Group, to the commissioner of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration

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