



COALITION FOR PREVENTION

# HEALTHY-LIVING POCKET GUIDE

Simple Steps to Limit Harmful  
Exposures & Optimize Health

**Understand the Causes  
to Find the Cures**

\*Based on Peer-Reviewed  
Research Studies\*



Additional copies & information: [www.coalition4prevention.org](http://www.coalition4prevention.org)

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This is intended to be a broad-range guide in a convenient, portable format.

Use it to make informed decisions as a consumer.

It is not always possible to follow each suggested step; choose those that are manageable for lifelong practice.

Spread awareness.



An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

-Ben Franklin






## LEGEND & KEY TERMS



TRY TO AVOID

HEALTHY HABIT

-  **Carcinogen:** substance that causes cancer
-  **Endocrine Disruptor:** compound that mimics &/or blocks the actions of hormones such as estrogen, testosterone, thyroid & adrenal hormones
-  **Neurotoxin:** chemical that poisons the brain & nerves

# THE BAD NEWS

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**Environmental exposures are now linked to cancer, diabetes, obesity, autoimmunity, reproductive challenges & neurological disorders.**

We take in low levels of toxins daily; common chemicals in what we eat, drink, breathe & absorb through our skin can greatly influence our health.

**Risks for future disease are set early in life.**

\*Exposures in the womb & during childhood carry the most concerning long-term effects.\*

**Chronic inflammation promotes chronic illness.**

# THE GOOD NEWS

**FOOD CAN BE MEDICINAL: Plant-based diets *fight inflammation*, promote healing during illness & prevent future disease; especially when started young & practiced consistently.**

Plants are sources of nutrients, like antioxidants, that counteract harmful environmental exposures.

**Cultures that consume anti-inflammatory diets enjoy longevity & low rates of chronic disease.**

**To prevent & fight disease, there are simple steps that minimize toxic exposures & maximize nutrition to maintain balance & well-being.**

**Our choices today shape our lifelong health.**

## ✓ PLASTICS SHOULD BE:

- Aired out to remove 'new' smell
- **Recycled** or up-cycled for a non-food/beverage use
- Replaced by reusable containers

## ⊘ PLASTICS SHOULD NOT BE:

- Micro-waved or heated
- Washed in a hot dishwasher
- Mouthed or chewed upon
- Used if worn, warped or scratched
- Used for long-term food storage, especially for acidic or oily foods
- Left in the sun or a hot car with contents you plan to consume
- Burned- this creates toxic fumes

## CHECK THE CODES OF FOOD & BEVERAGE CONTAINERS



### **AVOID WHEN POSSIBLE:**

- ⊘ #3- polyvinylchloride (PVC)\*
- ⊘ #6- polystyrene/styrofoam (PS)
- ⊘ #7- polycarbonate (PC)

### **SAFE WHEN USED PROPERLY:**

- ✓ #1- polyethylene (PET)
- ✓ #2- polyethylene (HDPE)
- ✓ #4- polyethylene (LDPE)
- ✓ #5- polypropylene (PP)

## PLASTIC ADDITIVES OF CONCERN:

- Hardeners
- Bisphenol-A (BPA)** ⊘
- Plasticizers (softeners)
- Phthalates** ⊘
- Metals (stabilizers)
- Lead & cadmium** ⊘
- Flame retardants
- Organobromines- DBDE**
- Stain/water repellants
- Organofluorines- PFCs**

★ **BPA & PFCs are present in 99% of individuals tested.** Avoid canned soups, tomatoes, coconut milk & infant formulas with BPA linings (cloudy). Plastics are petroleum by-products, leach additives & break down slowly in the environment. **\*PVC (vinyl) is VERY toxic- found in certain toys, shower curtains, building products, school supplies, clothing/shoes & furniture.**

# PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS

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In addition to what we eat & drink, it is very important to consider what is absorbed through our skin. This is a significant exposure source for females considering the number of products typically used daily, but males are also affected. **Read labels.**

## TRY TO AVOID THESE INGREDIENTS:

- Aluminum (antiperspirant)
- 2-bromo-2-nitropropane-1,3-diol (baby wipes)
- BHA, BHT      Benzene, benzoic acid
- Cocamide DEA      Ethanolamines: MEA, DEA, TEA
- Formaldehyde & Toluene (nail polish)
- DEET (bug spray)      Chemical dyes: FD&Cs, CI[5-digits]
- Parabens: methyl-, ethyl-, propyl-, butyl-
- Phthalates: dimethyl-, diethyl-, dipropyl-, dibutyl-
- Oxybenzone (chemical-based sunscreen)
- Polyethylene glycol (PEG) (shampoo, lotion, toothpaste)
- Triclosan (anti-bacterial soap, toothpaste)

\*Fragrance is a vague ingredient term referring to undisclosed aromatic chemicals, with formulas regarded as industry trade secrets.\*

Although safe for anti-aging at night, do not wear **retinol**-containing products in the sun.

Check your products' safety ratings at:

[www.ewg.org/skindeep](http://www.ewg.org/skindeep)



These products are generally unsafe for pregnant women & children:

Hair straightener      Permanent hair dye  
Loose make-up powders (talc-based)  
Nail salon chemicals      Perfume/cologne

Aerosol applicators (ex: sunscreen & hairspray) create the added risk of inhalation.

# PESTICIDES IN PRODUCE



















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## WHEN TO CHOOSE ORGANIC? IT DEPENDS:

When grown conventionally, certain types of produce carry high levels of harmful pesticides, while others do not.

☹️ Hundreds of pesticides are known endocrine-disruptors. ☹️  
Organic crops are grown without toxic chemicals, making them sustainable & safe for humans & the environment.















## **EAT THESE ORGANIC:** (Give priority to lower #s)

1  Apples	2  Strawberries	3  Grapes	4  Celery	5  Peaches	6  Spinach
7  Sweet Pepp.	8  Nectarines	9  Cucumbers	10  Potatoes	11  Ch. Tomatoes	12  Hot Pepp.
13  Blueberries	14  Lettuce	15  Kale	16  Collards	17  Cherries	18  Pears

I: Imported

D: Domestic

## **IF NOT ORGANIC, THESE ARE SAFEST TO EAT:**

1  Sweet Corn	2  Onion	3  Pineapple	4  Avocado	5  Cabbage
6  Peas (frozen)	7  Mango	8  Asparagus	9  Eggplant	10  Kiwi
11  Grapefruit	12  Melons	13  Sweet Potato	14  Mushrooms	15  Bananas

## **GENETICALLY-MODIFIED (GMO) CROPS ON THE MARKET:**

Corn Soy Canola Alfalfa Zucchini Yellow Squash  
Hawaiian Papaya Cotton Sugar Beets

# FATS: HEALTHY & UNHEALTHY<sup>5</sup>

Our bodies require *certain* fats to function. ✓

Fat is needed to absorb vitamins A, D & E from food.

Essential fatty acids (EFAs) are vital fats that our bodies cannot produce- they must come from what we eat.

Some fats promote disease, while others are preventive.

⊖ Too much body fat promotes inflammation.

Fight inflammation & decrease risk for

**HEALTHY FATS:** heart disease & type 2 diabetes

Unsaturated Fats such as Omega-3 EFAs

ex- ALA, DHA & EPA (important for eye & brain development)

Found in oily fish like *wild-caught* salmon & sardines, sunflower seeds, walnuts, olive oil & peanut oil.



Cause inflammation & promote  
**UNHEALTHY FATS:** obesity, heart disease & diabetes

Saturated Fats, Trans-unsaturated Fats & Omega-6 EFAs

Found in partially hydrogenated oils like margarine & shortening, canola oil, soybean oil, foods fried in these oils, beef fat, pork fat, cheese, butter & cake.



✓ **BALANCING FATS:** Try to eat a 1:1 balance of Omega-3 to Omega-6 EFAs; most people are at 1:20. Healthy fat is still fat; **moderation is key** for managing weight. Instead of only counting calories, focus on using them healthily.

# PROCESSED FOOD ADDITIVES <sup>6</sup>

Food that has been highly processed & factory-prepared is *lower in nutrition & higher in additives.*

## ✓ Read Ingredient Labels

Ask yourself: Why are these additives included? How will they affect my body? Is this worth an extended shelf-life?

## AVOID FOODS & BEVERAGES CONTAINING:

### PRESERVATIVES

BHA, BHT (🚫)  
Parabens (ex: butyl or propyl) (🚫)  
Sodium benzoate  
Sodium nitrate/nitrite (🚫)  
(packaged meats)  
TBHQ

### ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS

Acesulfame potassium (🚫) (🚫)  
Aspartame (NutraSweet/Equal)  
Saccharin (Sweet'N Low)  
Sucralose (Splenda)

### ARTIFICIAL COLORS

Caramel color (soft drinks)  
FD&C red, yellow, blue, etc. (🚫)

### OTHERS

Artificial flavor  
Azodicarbonamide  
Potassium bromate or  
Brominated flour or (🚫)  
Brominated vegetable oil (🚫)  
(certain breads/baked goods)  
High fructose corn syrup  
(concentrated calories)  
MSG (salt substitute)  
Olean/Olestra (fat substitute)

Choose freshly prepared foods made with ingredients you recognize. Choose flavors, colors, sugars & nutrients made by nature.

**DID YOU KNOW?** There are over 84,000 chemicals registered with the EPA. **3,000 food additives are listed by the FDA- only 10% have been evaluated for health effects.** Compared to Europe, the food industry in the US is loosely regulated concerning artificial ingredients.



# MEAT, DAIRY & SEAFOOD

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Meat is viewed as a major source of protein. However, protein quality has decreased & fat content has increased in meat products over recent decades. **It is common for conventionally-raised animals to be contaminated with long-lived toxins that build up in fatty tissue.** TRIM FAT FROM MEAT. Choose organic dairy & cage-free eggs.

Examples of pollutants that accumulate in the environment, animal food chain & humans:

### Pesticides:

DDT\*

Chlordane

Dieldrin



### Industrial products:

Dioxins

PCBs

Furans

\*Banned in US in 1973, yet persists in present-day Americans

Antibiotics & hormones can also be present in animal products.

Run-off goes to waterways. Polluted waters yield toxic seafood.

## SAFEST SEAFOOD: (smaller species = low toxin levels)

Salmon

Croaker

Flounder

Blue Crab (mid-Atlantic)

Shrimp



\*If possible, choose local & wild-caught over farm-raised.\*

## SEAFOOD TO AVOID: (larger species = high toxin levels)



Mercury

Tuna

Mahi-mahi

King Mackerel

Shark

Swordfish

Gulf Coast Oysters

Largemouth &amp; Sea Bass

We do not require as much meat & dairy as once recommended. **A plant-based diet alone can provide high levels of quality protein & essential fats.** Try to eat 'meatless' at least one day a week; view meat as a source of accent flavor, not as the focus of your meals.

# ANTI-INFLAMMATORY FOODS <sup>8</sup>

Think of inflammation as redness, heat, swelling, pain & fatigue. We can calm, cool & balance our internal states by eating an anti-inflammatory diet: this is the most important step towards complete health. Plants produce powerful compounds to defend & protect themselves. The human body uses these same nutrients to prevent & fight disease.

## EAT A FEW OR MORE OF THESE FOODS DAILY:

**Green, Leafy Vegetables-** Broccoli, Brussel Sprouts, Cabbage, Spinach, Kale, Collards, Cauliflower: sulforaphane, chlorophyll

**Sweet Potato:** fiber, vitamin B6 & C      **Carrots:** beta-carotene

**Extra Virgin Olive Oil:** omega-3 EFAs

**Tomatoes:** lycopene      **Mushrooms**

**Fermented Soy (tempeh, miso):** genistein

**Blueberries & Strawberries:** anthocyanins

**Kiwi & other Tropical Fruits:** vitamin C

**Grapes:** polyphenols-resveratrol

**Ginger:** gingerol      **Beets**      **Sprouts** ✓

**Garlic, Onion:** diallyl sulfide, quercetin

**Hot Peppers:** capsaicin      **Yogurt**

**Turmeric:** curcumin, found in curry blends      **Cinnamon**

**Herbs like Oregano, Basil, Cilantro, Parsley & Rosemary**

**Honey:** caffeic acid      **Flax Seeds**      **Cashews**      **Pecans**

**Green Tea & other Herbal Teas:** flavonoids-EGCG      **Walnuts**

Bitter foods are anti-inflammatory. Colorful foods contain high levels of antioxidants. Strong smells indicate beneficial aromatic oils.

## NUTRIENTS THAT CLEAR TOXINS & PREVENT DISEASE

**Antioxidants** (fight free radicals): vitamin C & E, selenium  
**Alkaline minerals** (balance pH): potassium, calcium, magnesium  
**Chelators** (bind heavy metals): citric acid (in citrus fruits)

# HEALTHY FOOD PREPARATION <sup>9</sup>

We can serve the traditional foods we enjoy, but adjust our preparations & cooking methods to create meals with minimum toxin levels & maximum nutrient contents.

**Cooking methods ranked from most to least healthy:**

✓ sauté, steam, bake/roast, grill, smoke, fry, **char/burn** ⚠

## DO WHENEVER POSSIBLE:

Use fresh, whole ingredients. **Wash produce.** Serve raw fruits & vegetables. Freeze or can food in glass jars for later use- this preserves nutrients. **Use ceramic, glass, stone, stainless steel & cast iron for cooking & storing food.** When storing oils, protect from light & air. Choose oils by smoking temp.- Low heat (sauté): extra virgin olive oil; Med/high heat (frying): peanut, grape seed or coconut oil. **Filter tap water for drinking & cooking:** faucet-mount filters can remove chlorine, fluoride, metals, pesticides & pharmaceuticals; change old filters.

**Learn about your tap water:** [www.ewg.org/tap-water](http://www.ewg.org/tap-water)


## TRY TO AVOID:

Contacting hot food & beverages with plastic; **Non-stick pots, pans & utensils, especially for high-heat cooking or if scratched;** Heating oils above their smoking temp. (olive oil turns unhealthy if overheated) or using rancid oil; **Foods in metal cans with BPA linings;** Micro-waving plastic 'steamer' bags; Micro-waving items with non-stick chemical coatings such as popcorn bags, paper plates & fast food containers; Synthetic food colorings.

Although we cannot avoid every unhealthy aspect of our environments, we can choose to eat healthy food. **Meals that prevent disease can be prepared easily, quickly & very affordably at home.** Save extra servings for lunch.

**Locally-grown produce is fresher;** buy at farmer's markets or through CSA groups. Raw produce contains the highest levels of nutrients in nearly all cases. Exceptions: carrots, onions & garlic are more nutritious when lightly cooked. Crushing fresh garlic & herbs increases their level of beneficial nutrients. Combining multiple plant-based ingredients in one meal boosts the benefits of each individual ingredient (food synergy); add lemon juice & black pepper. Onion, garlic & lemon help neutralize the carcinogens created when cooking meat. **High heat & extended cooking time will lower the nutrient content of any meal.**

**Add herbs &/or spices to every dish possible:** this is the key to creating flavor & maximizing a meal's disease-fighting potential.

**Healthy ingredient swaps:** Avocado for mayonnaise. Honey or stevia for sugar. Almond/coconut milk for cow's milk. Kelp flakes (very high in beneficial iodine) for salt.  Whole grain flour for white flour. Butter (organic if possible) is healthier than margarine or shortening.


**Use foods from pg. 8 as ingredients in:**

stir fry	burritos	dips/spreads
curry	fajitas	snack plates
pizzas	soups/chili	baby food
pastas	pitawraps	smoothies
salads	sandwiches	frozen fruit bars

**Gluten is pro-inflammatory for some individuals.** If so, avoid foods containing *wheat, barley or rye.*


Of all environments, the one we spend the most time in & have the most control over is our household. Our homes can naturally prevent disease & promote healing.

## DO WHENEVER POSSIBLE:

- **Wash hands with natural soaps**- bubbles trap & remove dirt & microbes; dilute castile soap & water 1:1
- **Open windows**- outdoor air is less polluted than indoor air & can dilute & remove indoor toxins
- **Remove shoes at the door**- they bring toxins inside
- **Remove dust**- a major source of contaminants 
- **Remove air particulate**- use a vacuum with a HEPA filter; replace dirty air filters & clean HVAC vents
- **Air-out new products** with strong chemical odors
- **Choose 'VOC-free'** home improvement products
- **Check for lead paint** in old homes with test swabs
- **Wash clothing before use**; choose 'green' dry cleaning

Learn what's in your children's toys, jewelry, home products & vehicles: [www.healthystuff.org](http://www.healthystuff.org)

## TRY TO AVOID:

- 'Sterilizing' with harsh cleaners- this can select for resistant microbes; never mix bleach & ammonia
- Washing hands & dishes with antibacterial soaps
- Artificial air fresheners, chemical-based fabric deodorizers & paraffin (petroleum-based) candles 
- Stain-resistant treatments on carpets & furniture
- PVC (vinyl)-based building products; lead paint & asbestos in older homes; radon in basements
- Old &/or damaged foam items, like foam bedding

# HOME & TRAVEL SOLUTIONS <sup>12</sup>

✓ Non-toxic products are not always available, but there are simple & *very inexpensive* D-I-Y solutions for healthy living.

**Houseplants that remove toxins from indoor air: peace lily, aloe, ivy, snake plant, golden pothos, ficus tree, bamboo palm.**

Install showerheads with filters (chlorine is absorbed through skin & vaporizes at high water temps) & fill bathtub this way.

**D-I-Y Non-toxic Cleaners:** all purpose- 1:1 vinegar to water; scrub paste- baking soda & water; dish powder- 1:1 borax to washing soda; laundry powder- 2:2:1 borax to washing soda to grated bar soap; wood polish- 1:20 lemon oil to olive oil; air/fabric spray- 1:100 essential oil (lemon, rosemary) to water

**Lawn & Garden:** Grow your own herbs, vegetables & fruits if possible. Greenhouses allow for year-round growing. Compost food waste to create natural fertilizer. If using plastics (water hoses, irrigation pipes & plastic sheeting), choose PVC-free items. Avoid CCA pressure-treated lumber. Enrich soil & fight pests with beneficial organisms like earthworms & nematodes.

**D-I-Y Pesticides:** Dissolve ¼ tsp castile soap in 1 qt warm water & add 1 tsp Neem oil; shake & spray. Boil tomato plant leaves & spray water. Spray water containing diced hot peppers. For roaches: mix borax & sugar into piles- borax is taken to nests.

**D-I-Y Personal Care:** Use raw ingredients such as- Shea/cocoa butter, coconut oil, jojoba oil, clay, honey, aloe & essential oils.

*Search online for 'natural personal care product recipes.'*

**On the Road:** Fill small bottles with natural toiletry items for traveling. **Avoid inhaling exhaust fumes, esp. diesel: close windows in traffic & circulate cabin air, install cabin air filters, limit idling around pedestrians & in attached garages.** Choose biking/running routes away from heavy traffic. Motorcyclists- wear fabric over nose to trap exhaust & highway particulate.

# EMF & CELL PHONE SAFETY <sup>13</sup>

The health risks of electromagnetic fields (EMFs) are undefined; no long-term research has been performed with cellular & wireless technology. **Consistent, low-level exposure may promote headaches, fatigue, sleep disturbances, short-term memory loss, brain/head cancers & reduced sperm count.** *The skull does not fully harden until age five, leaving infants & young children much more vulnerable to EMFs than adults.*

**Common Sources of EMFs:** Electrical main breakers  
High voltage power lines Communications towers Microwaves  
Hair Dryers Wireless routers Cell phones Computers/tablets

## TO REDUCE EMF EXPOSURES:

### FROM CELL PHONES:

- Hold away from head when possible, use speaker mode
- Do not store near body, carry in clothing or sleep near
- Use only when signal is strong
- Avoid extended talking times
- Text if possible
- Disable GPS (location services) & cellular data if not needed
- **Never let an infant play with**

### FROM COMPUTERS:

- Avoid use when charging
- Use a surface instead of lap

### FROM OTHER ELECTRONICS:

- Do not stand near microwave when in use
- Hold hair dryer as far away as possible from head
- Unplug when not in use, especially microwaves
- Also saves electricity

✓ **Safe distance is key.** Use a Gauss-meter to measure field strength/size. **Recommended distances (feet) from sources:**  
Phones, computers: 1-2; routers, microwaves (in use): 4-6;  
main breakers: 6-10; high voltage power lines: 200-500

**Check your cell phone's Specific Absorption Rate (SAR):**  
<http://reviews.cnet.com/cell-phone-radiation-levels>

YOU play the most important role in your health & well-being. Do not wait for a disease to develop to address your lifestyle choices. Change is simplest when done in gradual stages. Healthy, non-toxic products will increase in availability & lower in cost as more people seek them out. With a lack of current chemical regulations, it is up to us to boycott toxic products as a way to promote industry changes. Be an informed & cautious consumer; inspire & empower others to do the same. Teach children by example so that future generations may thrive.

**Certain food & pharmaceutical-drug interactions can occur.** Discuss your diet, herbal supplements & other medications in detail with your healthcare professional.

**OTHER KEY STEPS:** **Exercise:** elevate heart rate for at least 20 minutes a day, walk. **Sleep in the dark:** light prevents melatonin release. **Go outside:** fresher air; sunlight stimulates Vitamin D levels (take supplements during winter). **Manage stress:** whole health is physical, mental & emotional balance- even if we avoid toxins & eat well, chronic stress can still promote disease.

## **ONLINE RESOURCES & ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

Search for peer-reviewed research articles: [www.pubmed.gov](http://www.pubmed.gov)  
Use terms in this guide as search keywords; example: lycopene

**Environmental Working Group:** [www.ewg.org](http://www.ewg.org)

**Safe Markets:**  
[www.safemarkets.org](http://www.safemarkets.org)

**The Organic Center:**  
[www.organic-center.org](http://www.organic-center.org)

**Healthy Child, Healthy World:**  
[www.healthychild.org](http://www.healthychild.org)

**The Ecology Center:**  
[www.healthystuff.org](http://www.healthystuff.org)

**Environmental Health Sciences:**  
[www.ehsciences.org](http://www.ehsciences.org)

**Center for Health, Environment & Justice:** [www.chej.org](http://www.chej.org)

**Center for Science in the Public Interest:** [www.cspinet.org](http://www.cspinet.org)