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
CONTENTS

1. The Good & Bad News
2. Plastics
3. Personal Care Products
4. Pesticides in Produce
5. Fats: Healthy & Unhealthy
6. Processed Food Additives
7. Meat, Dairy & Seafood
8. Anti-Inflammatory Foods
9. Healthy Food Preparation
10. Preventive Meals
11. Healthy Home Habits
12. Home & Travel Solutions
13. EMF & Cell Phone Safety
14. Your Role & Resources

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.

TRY TO AVOID

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

HEALTHY HABIT

- Neurotoxin: chemical that poisons the brain & nerves

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

-Ben Franklin
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

✓ 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- polyvinyl chloride (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

*PVC (vinyl) is VERY toxic- found in certain toys, shower curtains, building products, school supplies, clothing/shoes & furniture.
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.

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Check your products’ safety ratings at: [www.ewg.org/skindeep](http://www.ewg.org/skindeep)

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**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.
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 Peppers
8. Nectarines
9. Cucumbers
10. Potatoes
11. Ch. Tomatoes
12. Hot Peppers
13. Blueberries
14. Lettuce
15. Kale
16. Collards
17. Cherries
18. Pears

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
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.

**HEALTHY FATS:**
- **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.

**UNHEALTHY FATS:**
- 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**

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:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRESERVATIVES</th>
<th>OTHERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BHA, BHT</td>
<td>Artificial flavor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parabens (ex: butyl or propyl)</td>
<td>Azodicarbonamide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium benzoate</td>
<td>Potassium bromate or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium nitrate/nitrite (packaged meats)</td>
<td>Brominated flour or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBHQ</td>
<td>Brominated vegetable oil (certain breads/baked goods)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acesulfame potassium</th>
<th>Artificial flavor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aspartame (NutraSweet/Equal)</td>
<td>Azodicarbonamide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saccharin (Sweet’N Low)</td>
<td>Potassium bromate or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sucralose (Splenda)</td>
<td>Brominated flour or</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ARTIFICIAL COLORS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Caramel color (soft drinks)</th>
<th>Artificial flavor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FD&amp;C red, yellow, blue, etc.</td>
<td>Azodicarbonamide</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pesticides</th>
<th>Industrial products:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DDT*</td>
<td>Dioxins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlordane</td>
<td>PCBs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dieldrin</td>
<td>Furans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 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
- Flounder
- Shrimp
- Croaker
- Blue Crab (mid-Atlantic)

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

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

- Tuna
- Mahi-mahi
- King Mackerel
- Shark
- Swordfish
- Gulf Coast Oysters
- Largemouth & 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.
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.

**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)

**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**: genistein
- **Fermented Soy (tempeh, miso)**: genistein
- **Blueberries & Strawberries**: anthocyanins
- **Kiwi & other Tropical Fruits**: vitamin C
- **Grapes**: polyphenols- resveratrol
- **Ginger**: gingerol  
- **Beets**: diallyl sulfide, quercetin
- **Sprouts**: capsaicin  
- **Garlic, Onion**: hot peppers  
- **Hot Peppers**: capsaicin  
- **Turmeric**: curcumin, found in curry blends  
- **Cinnamon**:  
- **Herbs like Oregano, Basil, Cilantro, Parsley & Rosemary**
- **Honey**: caffeic acid  
- **Flax Seeds**: omega-3 EFAs
- **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.
We can serve the traditional foods we enjoy, but adjust our preparations & cooking methods to create meals with minimum toxin levels & maximum nutrient contents.

**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
- pitas/wraps
- smoothies
- salads
- sandwiches
- frozen fruit bars

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

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

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
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.
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):
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)