

#TOXINS

TWEET

140 Easy Tips
to **Reduce** Your Family's
Exposure to **Environmental Toxins**

LAUREL J. STANDLEY, PH.D.

BOOK 01

A THiNKaha® BOOK

#TOXINS **tweet** Book01

140 Easy Tips to Reduce Your Family's Exposure
to Environmental Toxins

Book Excerpt

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Section I: Toxins in Our Home and Outdoor Environments



Section I

Toxins in Our Home and Outdoor Environments

As a society, we have produced tens of thousands of chemicals over the last several decades, and that number doesn't include chemicals created as contaminants during combustion or other processes.¹ Not all of these are toxic, but we currently know very little about how the majority of these chemicals affect our health. In this section, I provide an overview of the toxic chemicals we are exposed to in our daily lives, and the challenges we face in reducing our exposure to them.

Section I: Toxins in Our Home and Outdoor Environments

1

How many synthetic chemicals are there? More than 80,000 chemicals have been produced in the US since World War II.²

2

More than 2,000 synthetic chemicals are produced in volumes exceeding a million pounds each year in the US.³

3

Most of these chemicals have NOT been tested to determine their toxicity, particularly for neurological or reproductive problems.⁴

4

Body burdens: hundreds of chemicals have been detected in adults, children, and umbilical cords, indicating toxic exposure before birth.^{5, 6}

5

Like the tip of an iceberg, that number doesn't include what we haven't measured yet or don't have the tools to measure.

6

Toxins we're exposed to include environmental pollutants, such as older pesticides, dioxins, PCBs, PAHs, and heavy metals.

7

We are also exposed to chemicals currently in use, such as newer pesticides, VOCs, formaldehyde, and gasoline.

8

There are many toxic chemicals present as pollutants in the air we breathe, water we drink, cook with, or swim in.

Section IV: Food and Water



Section IV

Food and Water

Food and water can carry toxins that are either used intentionally for pest and disease control or are accumulated inadvertently from the environment and during cooking. Since many of these products are life essentials, we cannot avoid all toxins in these sources. However, there are choices you can make, such as selecting organic foods or cooking with stainless steel, to reduce your toxic exposure. In this chapter, I explain where many of the toxins associated with food and water come from, and the choices you can make to select less contaminated products.

51

Because of biomagnification,
fat soluble toxins are
thousands to a million times
more concentrated in
animals than plants.

56

Tuna, a lunchtime favorite, and mercury: chunk light contains the least, white albacore has more, and ahi tuna has the most.⁴³

57

What about fish pills and flax oil instead of fish? Distilled fish oils are cleaner; flax oils are less beneficial than fats in fish.⁴⁴

60

Burning any food, just like burning tobacco, creates carcinogens called PAHs; to reduce exposure, lightly toast and cut away char.

61

Cook in stainless steel, glass, or iron pans instead of plastic or non-stick to reduce exposure to phthalates and fluorinated chemicals.

70

It is important to use filtered water when cooking as well to reduce exposures to toxins such as lead or disinfection byproducts.

71

Bottom line: avoid animal fats, eat more organic produce, cook or store food in glass, cast iron, or stainless steel.

Section V: Personal Care Products



Section V

Personal Care Products

Personal care products are not well regulated and may contain toxic ingredients or contaminants. Although not all ingredients of concern are listed on product labels, there are resources available to help you select safer products. In this section, I highlight several strategies you can use to reduce you and your family's exposure to toxic ingredients in hair and skin care products that you use each and every day.

74

Using safer personal care products is important because we use these products directly on our bodies, increasing our risk of exposure.

75

To check the safety of your personal care products, scan labels for ingredients of concern and safety ratings.

76

Finding safer alternatives:
check ratings for your
products on the Skin Deep
Database or Good Guide's
product website.

Section VI: Pregnancies and Small Children



Section VI

Pregnancies and Small Children

In the last decade, we have learned that fetuses are exposed to many if not all of the toxic exposures that are present in their mother's body.

We are also learning that the effects of toxic exposures can be passed down to future generations through a process called epigenetics.⁵¹ Small children, who are still developing their brains and reproductive systems, are also extremely vulnerable to toxic exposures.

Protecting women in their child-bearing years and young children from these exposures is therefore essential for reducing birth defects and future health problems in our offspring. In this section, I offer suggestions for limiting toxic exposures to protect the health of our young.

82

In-utero toxic exposures are of concern for health of developing babies; planning ahead for pregnancy may help reduce their risk.

83

While fat soluble toxins take years to clear, reducing exposure to phthalates, BPA, and newer pesticides can reduce Mom's toxic burden.

86

Use BPA-free labeled baby bottles and sippy cups; many U.S. manufacturers of baby bottles stopped using BPA in 2009.

89

Avoid soft plastic toys made from PVC (vinyl); they may contain hormonally-active plasticizers and the heavy metal lead.

90

Toys and children's jewelry may contain toxic metals like lead and cadmium; check consumer advisories and avoid cheap products.

About the Author



Dr. Laurel J. Standley, Principal of Clear Current LLC (<http://Clear-Current.com>), is an environmental consultant with over twenty years experience in environmental chemistry and policy. She received her B.S. in Chemistry from California Polytechnic State University, a Ph.D. in Chemical Oceanography from Oregon State University, and a M.A. in Urban Affairs and Public Policy from the University of Delaware.

Laurel has a deep personal interest in educating the public about reducing personal exposure to environmental toxins. She works with clients to achieve sustainable water use and transition toward green alternatives in product use and manufacturing. Her past projects have included presenting public workshops on reducing exposure to toxins, investigating the use of alternative products to reduce human exposure to endocrine disrupting chemicals, developing an innovative tool for New York City to protect their drinking water resources from contamination, and building a business strategy for a large nonprofit to engage corporations in protecting water resources in biodiversity hotspots.

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"Thomas Edison said 'The doctor of the future will...interest his patients in the...prevention of disease.' Well, the future is here! Dr. Laurel Standley offers us fresh, practical advice for taking control of protecting our health with short, easy to digest nuggets. Read them, share them, and live well!"

Dawn Suitor, Mom, Nutrition and Wellness Advocate

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Linda J. Brown, Linda Brown Coaching

"If the hype about toxins scares you, TOXINS tweet Book01 is here to put you on the right track. Laurel's comprehensive and easy-to-read presentation will show you what to look for and what to avoid. As a sustainable interior designer, TOXINS tweet Book01 is a resource I can reach for with confidence when designing healthy environments."

Donnalynn Polito, Lead Green Associate

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*Expert author **Laurel J. Standley** brings you the most credible nuggets of information on toxins so that you can make healthy choices for yourself and your family.*



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