Possible health effects

- **Carcinogenic, mutagenic, toxic to reproduction**
- Impaires fertility, harmful by inhalation, swallowing and skin contact, and for the unborn child
- Disrupts the hormone system, allergen
- Impaires fertility, harmful by inhalation, swallowing and skin contact, and for the unborn child
- Disrupts the hormone system
- Very toxic to aquatic life, disrupts the hormone system

General Tips

- Read product labels and research the chemicals listed on product labels, you will find useful links that will help you understand product labels on:
  - www.projectnesting.org/
- Avoid products with fragrances. A clean babyroom should not smell at all.
- Avoid disinfectants and products claiming anti-bacterial action. Disinfectants are only needed in hospitals and homes of patients with suppressed immune systems. Ordinary cleanliness is sufficient to eliminate hazardous bacteria. Disinfectants may also contain chemicals and residues that are toxic and allergic. Long-term exposure to to these chemicals may cause or aggravate allergies.
- Don’t trust manufacturers’ green claims. Use products that are certified by an independent third party you can trust and according to a publicly available environmental standard you can understand, e.g. labeled with EU eco-label (EU Flower), the German Blue Angel, the French NF Environment or the Nordic Ecolabel (Nordic Swan).
- With an all-purpose cleaner, a washing up liquid, a scrubbing milk and a citric acid based cleaner, you can clean the whole household.
- Detergents can’t be 100% environmentally friendly. Therefore use them as sparingly as possible and control the dosage especially for concentrates.
- Play it safe: avoid poisoning, store cleaning products out of children’s reach, don’t pour into other bottles, more at: childsafety.direct.gov.uk
- Avoid irritation and allergies: to this end try to avoid preservatives and fragrances and most notably isothiazolinones (CMIT, MIT, BIT, OIT), amyl cinnamal, hexyl cinnamaldehyde, linalool, benzyl alcohol, coumarin, benzyl benzoate, geraniol, eugenol, lilial, methylheptincarbonat, citronellol, limonene, citral, and geraniol.

- Avoid products with these symbols:  
  - Prefer products with these labels:  

Hazardous chemicals

- Formaldehyde
- Triclosan
- 1,2-dichlorobenzene
- 2-methylenedioxyethanol
- 2-ethanolamine
- 2-ethoxyethyl acetate
- 2-ethoxycetethyl acetate
- Phthalates
- Nitromusks, polycyclic musks
- Octamethylcyclotetrasiloxane
- Octylphenol (ethoxylates)
- Octyldihydrolinalool (ethoxylates)

Use less toxic chemicals for a healthier home. Protect children and the environment!

Contact us for more information

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WECF Worldwide  
WECF is campaigning for a toxic-free environment. Support our work, become a Friend of WECF! Friends join our campaigns, Friends follow us on Facebook, and when they can, Friends support us with at least 1 Euro per month. Join us as a Friend of WECF at friends@wecf.eu
All-purpose cleaners

There is a wide range of all-purpose cleaners. They may contain strong cleaning agents, which can cause kidney and liver damage, chlories, also known as bleach, and carcinogenic formaldimes. Very often they contain preservatives, perfumes and colorants includ- ing DDT, which can provide skin sensitization and respiratory distress.

Tips!

- Avoid specific products for window, grill, and upholste.
- Factory cleaners can remove dirt, grease and oil.
- Avoid fabric softeners, stain removers, disinfectant laundry additives, pre-washing products.
- Wash your clothes at low temperature to save energy.
- There is no need to use “disinfectant” or “antibacterial” products.
- Toilet bleaches and perfumed gels are often toxic and contain chemicals which can cause cancer.
- Avoid sprays. The droplets can be unhealthy and irritate the skin.

Dishes

Washing dishes by hand in the dish- washer can often contain certain organic solvents and preservatives and hormone disrupting phthalates as well as sensitizing fragrances.

Tips!

- Prevent deposits by cleaning with a cleaning agent.
- There is no need to use “disinfectant” or “antibacterial” products.
- Avoid fabric softeners, stain removers, disinfectant laundry additives, pre-washing products.
- Wash your clothes at low temperature to save energy.
- Try soap nuts; they are ecologically and skin friendly.

Do not hallucinate.

Laundry

They may contain blues, synthetic detergent, and sensitive perfumes and surfac- tants. Detergent residues on clothes can irritate the skin, and long contact is in general less harmful for the skin.

Tips!

- Avoid specific products for window, grill, and upholste.
- Detergents for doing the dishes by hand or in the dish- washer? A dishwasher usually gives better results with significantly lower water consumption and time. Machine dishwasher detergents often contain environmentally disruptive phthalates as well as sensitizing phthalates.

Bath and toilet

Many toilet bowl cleaners are often highly caustic and form toxic gases when mixed with water. They can contain 1,4-dichlorobenzine, a carcinogenic chemical which can cause liver damage, hydrochloric acid, whose vapors can cause coughing and breathing difculties, and chemicals which are severe eye, skin and respiratory irritants, and can form carcinogenic chromates.

Tips!

- Avoid fabric softeners, stain removers, disinfectant laundry additives, pre-washing products.
- Wash your clothes at low temperature to save energy.
- There is no need to use “disinfectant” or “antibacterial” products.
- Avoid sprays. The droplets can be unhealthy and irritate the skin.

Floor, carpet, furniture

Floor, carpet and furniture cleaning agents may contain cancerogenic organic solvents and preservatives and hormone disrupting phthalates as well as sensitizing fragrances.

Tips!

- Open the windows! Get out the bad air! It's better than any artificial product.

What is the problem?

Cleaning your home only increases the levels of chemicals in the indoor air, many times higher than the outdoor air in polluted cities. Many chemicals contained in household cleaning and care products are the same as those used in heavy industry, industrial cleaning agents. Micro scientists are now becoming concerned that long term low level exposure to a cocktail of chemicals like the ones found in household and dust may put our health at risk. Testing for human health effects is normally done on single chemicals. But in the real world, we are all exposed to a variety of chemicals every single day. You can decrease this risk by choosing safe products.

Air Freshener

Avoid spray products. The fumes will fill the room and can decrease the oxygen level. Ask yourself if your cleaning products are really worth it. Air fresheners may contain chemicals that are carcinogenic and cause respiratory reactions and kidney damage.

Tips!

- Avoid specific products for window, grill, and upholste.
- Factory cleaners can remove dirt, grease and oil.
- Avoid fabric softeners, stain removers, disinfectant laundry additives, pre-washing products.
- Wash your clothes at low temperature to save energy.
- Try soap nuts; they are ecologically and skin friendly.