

BODY CARE



A CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO SHOPPING & LIVING "GREEN"



Labeling Organic Body Care Products

Currently, we are seeing the word "organic" in reference to many products in the body care industry. How can a consumer know the difference between what is truly organic and what is not, and how does this relate to personal care products?

A personal care product may contain ingredients that have been certified organic. Generally, a company will offer a notation on their label that a product contains a certain percentage of organic ingredients.

While it may be true that the product is indeed created from some organic ingredients, the consumer cannot be sure that it is truly organic unless it displays the USDA logo used for organically produced items. When an item displays this logo, the consumer can be assured that a third party certification has taken place to ensure that the product meets certain qualifications.

On the other hand, there are body care products that may tout that they are organic, but if there is no USDA logo, there is no guarantee that the product has been checked and certified. This is not to say that if a product is not certified as being organic or partially organic that it is not safe or of high quality.

WHAT IS NATURAL BODY CARE?

At the Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op, we strive to offer safe body care products to our shoppers. While there may be controversy surrounding various ingredients, we take consideration each time a new product is presented to us to be sure that it meets our guidelines. We have been known to turn down products that are favorites in our industry because of our guidelines. There are certain ingredients that you will never see in our products. Some of these ingredients are:

Food Coloring

Since food coloring tends to be synthetic, we don't allow it in our food or body care products. If an item has color other than that which is naturally occurring, we are sure to check that it comes from a natural substance (i.e. beet root powder for pink or algae for green).

Aluminum

Because this substance collects in the body's tissues, there is concern that it may cause heavy metal poisoning. The National Institutes of Health states that "When researchers found traces of this metal in the brains of people with Alzheimer's disease, some thought it might play a role in causing the disease. However, many studies since then have not shown aluminum to be associated with Alzheimer's disease."

Dibutyl Phthalates (DBP)

This is a chemical found in many brands of nail polish, perfumes and hair spray. This substance has been known to endanger reproductive health (low sperm count, testicular cancer, and infertility).

PERSONAL CARE ITEMS

In the absence of government regulation of the word "organic" or "natural" in the personal care products industry, the safest way to consider a body care product ingredient is to weigh it as you would if you were to put it in your mouth. Remember, the skin is the largest organ in the body. When products are rubbed into the skin, they have the potential to be absorbed into the blood stream.

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The following is a reference list to help you make informed decisions about the ingredients that you use on your skin and body. Our staff is happy to help you find what you are looking for.

SYNTHETIC-FREE PRODUCTS

At the Co-op, you will find body care products that are completely synthetic-free. Others have minimal quantities of synthetic ingredients. Below are some of our favorite synthetic-free product lines:

- Dr. Hauschka
- Grateful Body
- Sensuous Beauty
- Dr. Bronner's
- Weleda

EMOLLIENTS

Emollients are liquid substances that help prevent drying of the skin or help maintain the smooth, soft pliable appearance of the skin.

Natural Oils & Waxes:

- Almond oil Beeswax
- Coconut oil Cocoa butter
- Joboba oil Shea butter
- Olive oil

Natural Oils to

Use with Caution:

- Cottonseed oil (often grown with pesticides)
- Peanut oil (may trigger an allergic reaction)
- Grapeseed oil (often extracted with chemical solvents)

Petroleum Based Emollients:

- Hydrogenated oils Butyl glycol
- Mineral oil Oleth 2
- Paraffin Stearic acid
- Petrolatum Octyl palmitate
- Monostearate Dimethicone
- Potassium stearate

PRESERVATIVES

Cosmetics are susceptible to contamination and degradation. Preservatives may be added to help prevent bacterial growth and oxidation and help maintain the stability of a product.

Natural Preservatives:

- Essential Oils
- Vinegar
- Grain Alcohol
- Honey
- Vitamins A, C and E
- Grapefruit Seed Extract (GSE)

Nature-Identical

Preservatives:

- Benzoic Acid, its Salts and Ethylester
- Salicylic Acid and its Salts
- Sorbic Acid and its Salts
- Benzyl Alcohol

Petroleum-Based

Preservatives:

- Butyl paraben Methyl paraben
- Ethyl paraben Propyl paraben
- Diazolidinyl urea

SOLVENTS

These are liquids capable of dissolving or diluting one or more substance.

Natural Solvents:

- Water
- Apple Cider Vinegar
- Grain Alcohol

Synthetic or Chemically Altered

- Acetone Propylene glycol
- Benzene Butylene glycol
- Hexane

FRAGRANCES

These can be derived from natural or synthetic sources. The highest quality of fragrances are from certified organic essential oils.

Seldomly Adulterated or Diluted Oils:

- Cedarwood Lemongrass
- Citronella Orange
- Eucalyptus Tea Tree
- Fennel

Synthetic Chemical Fragrances:

- Amyl acetate (banana scent)
- Benzophenone (rose scent)
- Coconut fragrance
- Cucumber fragrance
- Fruit fragrances

COLORANTS

The FDA approves coloring agents for both the food and personal care products that are from natural and synthetic origins. Most synthetic colors are derived from coal tar.

Natural Colors:

- Annatto Saffron
- Paprika Caramel
- Beets Turmeric

Synthetic Colors:

- FD&C (all)

Useful reference books available in our Wellness Department:

A Consumer's Dictionary of Cosmetic Ingredients

A Consumer's Dictionary of Food Additives

Online Resources:

www.organicanews.com,
www.kontrollierte-naturkosmetik.de/e/guideline_natural_cosmetics.htm