

What Are Parabens And Why Should You Avoid Them.

You may have heard about how you should avoid parabens in the products you buy, but you might be wondering why you should do so. After doing a bunch of research a couple of years ago, my wife and I decided to no longer purchase any products that have parabens in them. First, let's look at where you might find parabens and what products they are normally in.

Parabens can be found in shampoos, commercial moisturizers, shaving gels, cleansing gels, personal lubricants, topical pharmaceuticals and toothpaste.

They are also used as food additives in some products. Basically, a huge percentage of the products you buy for everyday use contain some form of paraben, so it can be difficult to find products that do not use them.

Now, before anyone says anything, I know that there have been studies on both sides of the argument...parabens are bad and parabens are ok. But since there have been studies that say that it is not healthy, we have chosen to take the precautionary route and not use products containing them. Whether or not they are as bad as some say they are, I would rather err on the side of safety. Now, on to what parabens *could* be doing to your body.

For starters, Parabens can mimic the hormone estrogen, which is known to play a role in the development of breast cancers. Do you really want to take the chance that they might do so? I know my wife doesn't. In the July 2002 issue of the Archives of Toxicology, Dr. S. Oishi of the Department of Toxicology, Tokyo Metropolitan Research Laboratory of Public Health reported that exposure of newborn male mammals to butylparaben "adversely affects the secretion of testosterone and the function of the male reproductive system." If that is not enough to avoid a product that can easily be avoided, I don't know what is! There are a lot of other reports available all over the internet, but most of them are all related to reproductive health in some way or another. Not really something to mess with, huh?

The jury is still out on how and why parabens might affect development and growth of both babies and adults. But we have decided to get rid of any products that have it and replace them with products that don't. There is no harm being careful with this kind of stuff...remember, things that were deemed safe in the past then came back to bite us all when we were told that they actually caused all sorts of diseases. And when they are safe alternatives available, I would rather not take the chance that my children develop strange reproductive problems or that my wife gets breast cancer from using a product that was avoidable in the first place.