

Food for Thought: What are you putting on your body?

By Leslee Jo Klinsky ©

Many consumers today spend a good deal of time researching and understanding the products they purchase, and the progress toward this direction shows great promise. Regrettably, though, more people than not still trust blindly that the products they buy to put on or in their bodies are safe and effective. Most trust that the shampoos, conditioners, body washes, soaps, moisturizers, makeup, and toothpastes they buy will produce the results they expect, and that the companies making these products will have their best interests at heart in all matters. They likewise trust products like detergents and other household cleaners without question. It is common knowledge that multitudes of products on the market are not good or safe for our bodies or our environment, but busy people often succumb to marketing ploys and convenience without thinking about it. Most of the dangerous products are purchased from large supermarket chains and convenience stores, but it is easy to find them at even the most proclaimed health conscious stores. It is clearly time for us to take a look at what we are putting on and in our bodies, and to examine the effects these products may have on the quality of our lives and the world at large.

Have you ever read the ingredient list on your chosen laundry detergent, household cleaner, dish detergent, shampoo, conditioner, makeup, sunscreen, deodorant, or toothpaste? If you have not done this lately, please read one or more of the products on your shelf now. If you shop in mainstream stores like supermarket chains, convenience shops, or superstores, you may be in for a shock. How could you not be amazed at what you see, the teeming explosion of multifarious chemicals before your eyes? Likely, you cannot pronounce the names of most of the ingredients you see unless you have a heavy background in chemical engineering, but you do know that these chemicals are manmade and that they take the place of natural ingredients in most everything you buy. Some of the ingredient lists take up most of the packaging, you find, even for a seemingly simple product. And all of these chemicals are going into your body through your skin.

The fact is that these chemicals have been proven to be mostly ineffective, but they are cheap to produce in a laboratory, tend to look good in bottles, and have a nearly unlimited shelf life. These last three points make them very attractive to company shareholders and others who profit from the sales of these products. Additionally, chemicals are patentable—unlike natural products—so chemical additives become a proprietary way in which a company further profits and monopolizes a market. What is ironic is that company profiteers warn us to contact a poison control center immediately if we ingest these products or get them in our eyes, but they encourage us to buy them so they can absorb into our bodies through our skin! The skin is a great absorber of anything it contacts, as evidenced by the popularity of dermal absorption prescriptions for birth control and smoking cessation. Is there a correlation between all these chemicals and the high incidence of cancer, hair falling out, gums receding, and lumps forming? I would bet my life on it.

When I did a state science fair project on the incidence of all types of cancer in the late 1970s, statistics showed that less than three in 500,000 people got cancer in any form; now, one out of two or three people are guaranteed to get it, and this figure is rising steadily. Skin cancer is rampant, as are receding gum lines, sensitive teeth, hair loss, and lumps of all kinds. We should be asking why these problems are suddenly so prevalent because they did not exist before; and then we can take action collectively. For instance, why has the incidence of skin cancer increased exponentially since the massive push to sell sunscreen products? Might the chemicals in the sunscreen be hurting more than helping? We know that the medical community and drug companies benefit from the sale of sunscreen, as well as the companies who sell them, but do we really benefit? Could the epidemic rise in breast cancer have anything to do with the increased use of aluminum and other chemicals in today's deodorant and skin products? What are the health risks associated with fluoride in our toothpaste and water supply? What are the unbiased, non-propagandistic numbers of FDA-approved drugs and chemicals that have turned out to be hazardous after all? Just one more question puts it all in perspective: If all these chemically laden products are so good for us, why is nearly everybody who uses them experiencing the same symptoms, none of which existed before products were chemically altered?

People are seeking medical attention in droves, more now than at any other time in history, so why are people getting sicker instead of healthier? It is clear that technology with a focus on profit and profitability has taken precedence over safety and wellbeing for at least a majority of the large product manufacturers, the medical community in general, and our government at large. Convenience has taken precedence over that which is healthy, and the big picture view has become constricted and lost. We, the consumers, suffer at the hands of profiteers unless we reclaim the knowledge of that which is good for us and spread the word so others follow suit.

I changed my lifestyle in its entirety one day, in a flash, when my instincts told me that the chemicals I was putting on my body were hurting me and those I loved. I knew at that moment I had to change, and I had the ability to do it. My skin was broken out, I had a constant assortment of lumps in my breasts and under my arms (which the medical community was happy to biopsy and remove as often as I wanted), I was sifting a drain-full of hair out of the shower every time I cleaned up, my teeth were ultra-sensitive, and my gums were receding. I began noticing similar motifs with others in my family, clients, and friends, as well. I saw the systemic pattern unfold.

So I switched to all-natural body and household products, organic wherever possible, and every problem magically disappeared. I bought products with all-natural ingredients that could be eaten and put on the body, which was possible at a variety of health-oriented establishments. I found great products for all skin, hair, and household needs, and every ingredient was wholly natural. My gums grew back within three weeks, my hair stopped falling out and became thicker with better luster, skin eruptions ceased to exist, and all lumps and their associated pain disappeared. Skin texture improved, as well.

A financial caveat exists that makes the transition to all natural products uncomfortable for many people. Using such products is far more expensive than using the chemical-laden counterparts, often two or more times more costly. Smaller companies that care about customers cannot compete with huge conglomerates and chemical manufacturers at the multi-national level for reasons too numerous to go into here. But the benefits of taking care of my family and self this way have been priceless and far outweigh the costs of future medical bills, body, skin, and hair challenges, and lost time.

I have one more point to make that will serve as final food for thought. Utterly impressed with the results of my switch to all-natural body and homecare products, I took the challenge of change a step farther. I began eating all organic and free-range foods with only minimal to no processing; and I stopped eating manmade oils and spreads. Life became much more of a miracle to me, almost instantly. I began sleeping great, where insomnia and night fears were commonplace before. I suddenly did not have all the latest “designer diseases”—acid reflux disease, IBS, chronic fatigue, and depression; I was diagnosed with those prior. Mood swings ceased to be, and digestion suddenly became effortless and natural. I had more energy than ever and felt great. My family felt likewise improved. This example makes real the following contention: The sudden influx of new “designer diseases” seems to coincide with the pandemic propagation of chemicals and over processing of the products that people use most.

It is my sincerest prayer that the big business mindset changes from the current one of greed, manipulation, non-caring, and profit motives, to one of love, caretaking, and compassion again, as in days long ago. Meanwhile, for your best interest and the highest good of all, please begin to question and research that which you buy for yourself and family. Take responsibility for those things you put on and in your bodies and the rewards will be innumerable. Resources abound regarding the harmful effects of fluoride in water and toothpastes, chemically treated tap water, and chemical laden products on the market. The time is now to become fully empowered.

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