



## The Environmental Health Science FEST

### 191. The Dangers Behind The Label

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**Abstract:**

The average adult uses personal care products containing between 85 and 168 ingredients on their bodies every day. Many of these ingredients are also found in common household items such as cleaning products. It is safe to assume that most consumers do not know the majority of ingredients contained within these products, many of which are endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs). EDCs have the ability to disrupt hormonal signaling in the body and are associated with increased risk of some cancers, neurodevelopmental disorders, reproductive defects, and obesity. Recent studies have shown that changing product use can reduce exposure to EDCs. One of the most effective ways to avoid exposure to endocrine disruptors is by reading drug fact/ingredient labels, however many consumers don't know what to look for. By highlighting key ingredients to avoid such as triclosan, phthalates, and fragrance/parfum, consumers will be able to make informed decisions when buying products. In order to facilitate consumer understanding of product labels, we propose a poster-size version of a typical label, swapping out the information in the "ingredients", "directions", and "usages" panels with clear instructions on how to properly read and interpret the information. Ultimately, educating the public on making safer choices will empower them to live a healthier lifestyle by limiting their exposure to environmental hazards and increase awareness of how the environment affects health and well-being.

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