

Natural Home Products Body

Chemicals to avoid

Palm Oil

The farming of palm oil is responsible for deforestation of rainforest in countries like Malaysia and Indonesia as land is cleared for palm oil plantations. The palm oil industry threatens native species and is now considered by scientists as the biggest threat to the orang-utan, which could be extinct in the wild within 12 years if deforestation continues at its current rate.

Sodium Laureth/Lauryl Sulfate (SLS)

SLS is the most common surfactant used in toiletries to make them foam and cleanse. It is widely used by manufacturers because it's cheap and effective but it can cause everyday skin complaints from dryness to red, tight itchy skin. It can also aggravate more serious conditions like eczema and dermatitis. This is because fundamentally SLS is a harsh detergent and can strip the skin and hair of its natural oils.

Petrochemicals

Ingredients such as petrolatum, paraffin liquidum, mineral oil and silicone are added to many toiletries as smoothing agents for a quick result i.e. instantly soft skin or smooth hair. However these types of products often sit heavily on your skin and hair causing blocked pores and residue build up and lank hair.

Parabens

Look on the back of most toiletries bottles and you'll find parabens lurking in there somewhere. They're generally included because they are aggressive in destroying most of the bacteria that form in toiletries, but it's this very same nastiness that makes them a common irritant responsible for many skin allergies. Although there's not yet any conclusive evidence linking the two, they are earning a bad reputation amongst those studying the causes of breast cancer.

Stockists:

Kingfisher toothpaste: Holland and Barrett, Unicorn
Naked Bodycare: Boots
Essential oils: www.naturallythinking.com,
Holland & Barrett
Vegetable glycerin: Ebay

• www.burtsbees.co.uk

• www.kingfishertoothpaste.com

• www.lush.co.uk

• www.nakedbodycare.co.uk

Alternative products

• Women's Environmental Network

• www.soorganic.com

• www.greenchoices.org

• kzmifage.blogspot.com

References/further info

Aromatherapy - the use of pure essential oils to enhance mind, body and spirit - is a simple concept from which anyone can benefit.

When diffused into the air, essential oils trigger emotional responses through the limbic system of the brain, and can be used for relaxing, stimulating or uplifting effects.

Although there are many so-called "aromatherapy" products on the market, only pure essential oils have therapeutic qualities - the synthetic fragrances can't fully duplicate the complex composition of pure essential oils.

You only need a few drops, they last for ages, have multiple uses and make you and your home smell great!

Warnings: Do not use essential oils neat on the skin. Although they are natural, allergies can develop. Do not take internally. Keep out of the reach of children.

Relaxing: sandalwood, lavender, chamomile.

Invigorating: lavender, rosemary, peppermint.

Uplifting: grapefruit, bergamot.

Refining body scrub

Ingredients:

Handful of oatmeal

Handful of coarse sea salt

4 drops grapefruit essential oil

4 drops lavender pure essential oil

Mix the oatmeal and sea salt together, add essential oils and mix. Rub all over body, then rinse off with warm water and pat dry.

Bath salts

Ingredients:

225g (7.5oz) sea salt

125g (4oz) baking soda

Combine, then add a few drops of essential oils as required.

Milk bath

Add drops of your favourite essential oils to powdered wholemilk, stir and soak in your bath for 15-20 mins.

Epsom salts

When magnesium sulfate is absorbed through the skin, such as in a bath, it draws toxins from the body, sedates the nervous system, reduces swelling, relaxes muscles, is a natural emollient, exfoliator, and much more.

Avocado and honey nourishing facial mask

Ingredients:

Half an avocado

2 teaspoons live greek yoghurt

1 teaspoon runny honey

2 drops jasmine or rose otto pure essential oil

Mash avocado then stir in rest of ingredients. Apply thickly to face leave 10mins at least. Wipe off with dry muslin cloth then rinse with warm water.

Refreshing toner

Ingredients:

100ml rosewater

1 drop pure essential oil

1 drop pure frankincense pure essential oil.

Mix by shaking in screw top jar. Apply with cotton wool lightly on face.

Simple Herbal Mouth Wash

Ingredients:

3 tablespoons witch hazel

3 tablespoons distilled water

4 teaspoons vegetable glycerin

5 drops fennel

10 drops peppermint

Mix all ingredients together and shake well.

Pour into a plastic bottle with flip top.

Shelf life of finished mouth wash

approx. 6 months. Shake before use.

Baby Wipes

Mix 4 tablespoons of baby or olive oil with half a pint of water and 4 tablespoons baby shampoo. Cut a roll of paper towels in half. Remove the cardboard centre. Place it in an old baby wipes container and pour the oil/soap mixture over the wipes. Use like regular wipes.

Citrus Cuticle Soak

Ingredients:

2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice

1 teaspoon honey

8 tablespoons warm water

Use to soak hard-working hands once a week, or when needed.

Natural Conditioner

Ingredients:

1 free range egg yolk

Half a tablespoon basic olive oil

180ml lukewarm water

Beat the egg yolk until it's thick and white. Add the oil and mix well. Then add the water into the egg mixture and mix well. Massage into clean, damp hair. Rinse with plenty of lukewarm - not hot - water after about 10 minutes.

Super Conditioner

Ingredients:

1 free range egg white

3 to 4 tablespoons of coconut oil

Juice from half a lemon

1 mashed banana

3 to 4 tablespoons of yogurt.

Mix all ingredients together in a bowl. After washing hair normally, apply conditioner mix to hair. Leave in for a minimum of fifteen minutes up to a half hour depending on level of conditioning you require. Rinse well with warm water.

The yogurt in this recipe works to control dry scalp and dandruff. The lemon adds shine. The banana and coconut oil helps restore moisture and add body and softness.

Herbal Vinegar Hair Rinse

Ingredients:

1 pint cider vinegar

2 oz lavender buds

1 tablespoon glycerin

10 drops rose geranium essential oil

Heat the vinegar to just below boiling point. Remove from heat and add the lavender buds. Pour the mixture into a jar and allow to age for a week. Strain the lavender out and add the glycerin and rose geranium. Store in the refrigerator.

Take 8 tablespoons of your lavender vinegar and add it to 2 pints of warm water. Use this as your hair rinse.

Natural Hair Conditioning and Build-Up Removal

Vinegar rinses can do wonders! The acidity from the vinegar helps take away build-up from silicones found in many shampoos and conditioners, and helps break down excess oils.

And yes, vinegar does stink! However, the smell of the vinegar fades as it dries - usually taking other bad odors with it. Sometimes adding just a few drops of essential oils can help. Try tea tree oil, it also helps with dandruff.