

Parabens Fact Sheet

Parabens are widely used as preservatives in personal care products, such as cosmetics, lotions, shampoos, and conditioners. Parabens are also used as preservatives in some over-the-counter and prescription medications.

Parabens are found in

- Cosmetics and personal care products, including some:
 - Make-up, such as mascara, eye shadow, lipstick, and foundation.
 - Facial cleansers and scrubs.
 - Moisturizers, lotions, and sunscreens.
 - Shampoos, conditioners, and shaving creams.
- Baby products, such as some lotions, baby wipes, and diaper rash ointments.
- Some over-the-counter and prescription medications.
- Some household products, such as some stain removers and pet shampoos.

Possible health concerns

Scientists are still studying how parabens might affect people’s health. There is concern that some parabens:

- May interfere with the body’s natural hormones.
- May decrease fertility.

Possible ways to reduce exposure

- Consider choosing cosmetics, personal care products, and baby products that use natural preservatives, such as vitamin C (might have words like “ascorbate” or “ascorbic” on the label).
- Try natural oils for skin and hair, such as coconut oil, olive oil, and sunflower seed oil.
- For infants, consider using plain washcloths instead of baby wipes, and wash their skin with ordinary soap and water.
- Because parabens can be in dust, wash your hands often, especially before eating or preparing food, clean your floors regularly, and use a damp cloth to dust.