

Parabens Fact Sheet

Parabens are used as preservatives in many personal care products, and in some medications and foods. They are also used as antimicrobials in some paper products, like baby wipes, and some natural and synthetic fabrics.

Parabens are found in

- Personal care products, including some:
 - Cosmetics, 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 household products, such as some stain removers and pet shampoos.
- Some clothing and other textiles, such as some sportswear, bedding, and upholstery fabric.
- Some over-the-counter and prescription medications.
- Some food, such as some jams and jellies; sauces and syrups; and packaged tortillas, trail mix, and baked goods.

Possible health concerns

- Some parabens:
- May interfere with the body’s natural hormones.
 - Might decrease fertility.

Possible ways to reduce exposure

- Check labels on personal care products and other items, and avoid those with “paraben” in the ingredient names.
- Consider choosing cosmetics, personal care products, and baby products that use natural preservatives, such as vitamin C (label might list “ascorbate” or “ascorbic” ingredients).
- 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 come out of products and collect in dust:
 - Wash your and your child’s hands often, especially before preparing or eating food.
 - Clean your floors regularly, using a wet mop or HEPA vacuum if possible, and use a damp cloth to dust.