Deodorant Ingredients That Should Be Avoided

With the rise in concerns over the safety of antiperspirants, many are seeking natural deodorants as alternatives. Aluminium has had bad press lately in relation to cancer and neurological diseases. Add to that, the other toxic ingredients such as parabens, triclosan, and artificial fragrances, and a natural alternative seems an obvious choice.

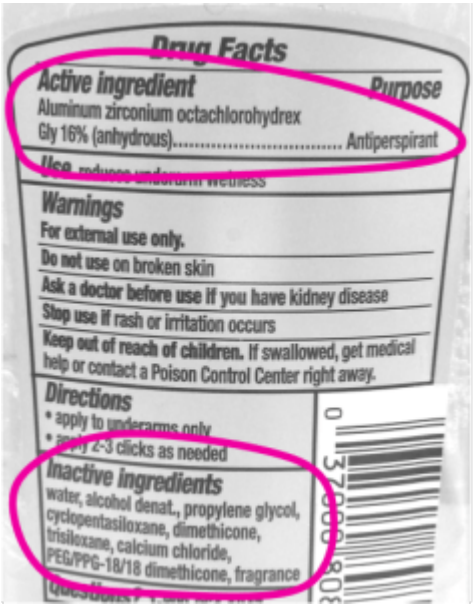
Aluminium

Antiperspirants work by placing a layer of aluminium under the skin. The aluminium swells when combined with perspiration creating a barrier within the skin that blocks sweat from getting through. There are real concerns over this process. Aluminium within the body has been linked to disease. Some research suggests that after aluminium is absorbed through the skin it has estrogen producing properties (1). Obviously, in close proximity to the breast area, this is a real concern for the development of breast cancer tumours.

There are also neurological diseases linked to aluminium within the body. Several studies have linked aluminium to Alzheimer's. Professor Exley of Keele University says in the journal Frontiers in Neurology, "… aluminium may cause a particular condition to be more aggressive and perhaps to have an earlier onset – such occurrences have already been shown in Alzheimer's disease related to environmental and occupational exposure to aluminium."(2)

Aside from the possible dangers of aluminium, blocking the skin's sweat ducts stops the release of perspiration and toxins from the body. Perspiring is a natural, healthy process.

Parabens



Parabens are synthetic preservatives found in many cosmetics including deodorants and antiperspirants. Parabens have also been found in breast cancer tumours and are reported to be hormone mimics. So is this another ingredient common in antiperspirants that we should be avoiding?

Parabens can mimic hormones in the body and disrupt endocrine system functions. The Silent Spring Institute summarising a paper studying parabens and breast cancer tissue (5) says, “The chemicals are considered estrogenic because they activate the same estrogen receptor as the natural hormone estradiol. Studies have linked exposure to estradiol and related estrogens with an increased risk of breast cancer, as well as reproductive problems. As a result, the use of parabens in consumer products increasingly has become a public health concern.”

Breast Cancer UK is campaigning for all parabens to be phased out from cosmetics due to associated health risks (3). With deodorants and antiperspirants being applied to the underarm area, switching to a paraben free deodorant would be a sensible first step towards eliminating parabens in your personal care products.

Triclosan

Triclosan is used in deodorants and soaps and a number of other products for its antifungal and antibacterial

properties. Like parabens, triclosan has been linked to hormone disruption and estrogen mimicking properties. Although the FDA approves triclosan as an ingredient, they also state that "…animal studies have shown that triclosan alters hormone regulation".

Triclosan has also been linked to decreased muscle function. A study on mice found that after one dose of exposure heart function was reduced by 25% and grip strength was reduced by 18% (6). Putting triclosan onto your underarms on a daily basis is surely best to be avoided.

Artificial Fragrance / Parfum

Artificial fragrance has serious health concerns. The Environmental Working Group reports artificial fragrance to be a known human immune system toxin and gives it a danger rating of 8/10 (4). Artificial fragrance, also known as parfum, is found in most conventional deodorants and antiperspirants and even in some deodorants that claim to be natural.

Always check the ingredients list. It's worth bearing in mind that some fragrances that sound natural are synthetically derived. Many natural deodorant manufacturers reject synthetic fragrances, choosing instead to use essential oils to scent their products.

The Alternative

Making the switch to a natural deodorant is a positive step for your health and wellbeing. Remember, natural deodorants are not antiperspirants. This means that your body will perspire. However, if your natural deodorant is working well, you will not notice any body odour. Sweating is a natural process with a genuine function, one that we all need to start getting a little more comfortable with.

If you don’t sweat much, you may find that coconut oil applied to the armpits daily works well as a simple, natural alternative to deodorant. You can also try rubbing a lemon under your arms in the mornings. If you perspire a little more heavily then you may need something a bit more hardcore to tackle body odour.

There are many types and forms of natural deodorants. It may and it can take some trial and error to find one that suits you. Be certain to check the ingredients to ensure that any scented products contain truly natural fragrances – whole essential oils. Also, be sure to check that your choice is an aluminium free deodorant, as aluminium can still be found in many natural deodorants.

Further Reading:

- *How to make your own Natural Deodorant at Home – Recipe*
- *Is Your Deodorant Drugging You Through The Armpits Daily With This Neurotoxin?*
- *Triclosan – Avoid This Antibacterial Chemical in Soaps and Hand SanitizersSources*
- *The Soap and Shampoo Conspiracy*
- *The Power of Our Hormones and How To Balance Them*
- *Detox Cheap and Easy Without Fasting – Recipes Included*

Sources:

1. *Underarm Cosmetics and Breast Cancer* – NCBI
2. *Why Industry Propaganda and Political Interference Cannot Disguise the Inevitable Role Played by Human Exposure to Aluminium in Neurodegenerative Diseases, including Alzheimer’s Disease* – Frontiers in Neurology
3. *EDC Free Europe* – Breast Cancer UK
4. *Fragrance* – EWC Skin Deep Database
5. *Parabens and Human Epidermal Growth Factor Receptor Ligands Cross-Talk in Breast Cancer Cells* –Environmental Health Perspectives

6. *Triclosan: The Soap Ingredient You Should Never Use – But 75% of Households do* – Mercola.com