

HARMFUL INGREDIENTS IN PROFESSIONAL SALON PRODUCTS

- Our investigation discovered that professional salon products still largely contain ingredients that have been documented as hazardous to salon workers for decades. **(See Table of Ingredients of Concern below).**
- It is unacceptable that decades later, products containing these chemicals are still available, and safer replacements have not been innovated.

Why are we concerned?

Salon workers are vulnerable to toxic exposures in the salon. They work with salon products daily, accumulating significantly more exposure than the average cosmetic user. Salon workers are predominately a workforce of low-income women and people of color – meaning the exposure to toxic chemicals in the salon is compounding the many other threats to their health they already face that are related to their gender, race, economic status, access to quality healthcare, and more. As a result, studies show that salon workers suffer from significantly higher rates of disease, such as asthma, skin conditions, pregnancy complications, and some types of cancer compared to other occupations. Urgent action is needed to prevent these health outcomes, many of which are avoidable – starting with ensuring that professional salon products are safe and healthy for salon workers to use.

What can I do if the products I use contain hazardous ingredients?

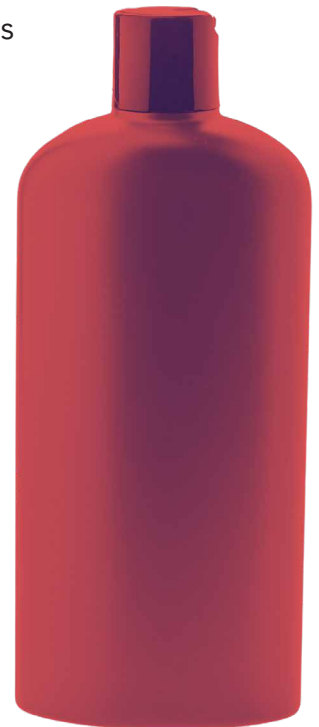
It is very likely that you will find these ingredients in your products, as we found very few alternatives available. Until there are available alternatives, here are a few things you can do:

Read product labels for ingredient listings – particularly for products you feel are affecting your health.

- If the product does not have any ingredients listed on the label, don't buy it. (You do not know what the manufacturer might be hiding.)
- If the product does have a list of ingredients – look for the ingredients on the list of harmful chemicals in the tables in this fact sheet.

Reduce your exposure to these products where you can.

- Opt not to offer certain services, or limit how often you perform them.
- Wear personal protective equipment (gloves, N95 masks, etc.) to help prevent breathing in powders, or absorbing chemicals through your skin. (Note: personal protective equipment should be supplied by salon owners.)
- Increase airflow in your salon by opening windows and doors.



Ask suppliers/manufacturers for products that do not contain these chemicals.

- Share this information with beauty supply store owners.
- Call the 1-800 numbers on product packages to ask manufacturers for alternatives.
- Join Women’s Voices for the Earth, the California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative, and Black Women for Wellness for more information and opportunities to advocate for the health and safety of salon workers.
- Your voice is crucial to changing the market! The customer is always right.

Innovation of safer chemical ingredients in this industry is well overdue. We must ensure that professional salon products no longer harm the health of salon workers. Together we can lead the way to safer and healthier products that will benefit salon workers and their clients alike.

Ingredients of concern commonly found in professional salon products:

(Note: This list of chemicals is not intended to be comprehensive of all salon products, but is compiled from our review of currently available products in several key salon product categories.)

PROFESSIONAL **HAIR** PRODUCTS

Hair Relaxer Chemical of Concern	Health Effects/Toxicity
Ammonium hydroxide	Corrosive to skin Severe eye damage Releases ammonia (gas) – strong lung irritant
Calcium hydroxide	Corrosive to skin Severe eye damage
Sodium hydroxide (Lye)	Corrosive to skin Severe eye damage
Thioglycolic acid	Skin Sensitizer Potential reproductive harm
Ammonium thioglycolate	Skin Sensitizer Potential reproductive harm

Hair Dye Ingredient of Concern	Health Effects/Toxicity
Toluene 2,5 diamine	Extreme skin sensitizer/allergen Genotoxicity Increased cancer in animal testing
Toluene 2,5 diamine sulfate	Skin sensitizer/allergen
p-aminophenol	Skin sensitizer/allergen
m-aminophenol	Skin sensitizer/allergen
P-phenylenediamene (PPD)	Extreme skin sensitizer/allergen Severe dermatitis Asthma, rhinitis Genotoxicity
P-phenylenediamene sulfate	Skin sensitizer/allergen
Resorcinol	Skin sensitizer/allergen Endocrine disruption
4-amino-2-hydroxytoluene	Skin sensitizer/allergen Genotoxicity
Ethoxydiglycol	Reproductive harm

Hair Bleach Ingredient of Concern	Health Effects/Toxicity
Ammonium persulfate	Strong skin irritant/sensitizer Strong lung irritant Linked to breathing problems in salon workers Chemical burns (scalp)
Potassium persulfate	Strong skin irritant/sensitizer Strong lung irritant Linked to breathing problems in salon workers Chemical burns (scalp)
Silica (nano)	Linked to lung disease

PROFESSIONAL **NAIL** PRODUCTS

Acrylic Nail/Gel Nail Ingredient of Concern	Health Effects/Toxicity
N,N-Dimethyl-p-toluidine (Dimethyltolylamine)	Cancer
Methyl methacrylate	Skin Sensitizer Lung irritant Asthma
Polyethylmethacrylate	Skin Sensitizer
Polymethylmethacrylate	Skin Sensitizer
2-hydroxyethyl methacrylate	Skin Sensitizer
2-hydroxypropyl methacrylate	Skin Sensitizer
Methyl ethyl ketone	Potential reproductive harm

Nail Polish Thinner Ingredient of Concern	Health Effects/Toxicity
N,N-Dimethyl-p-toluidine (Dimethyltolylamine)	Cancer
Methyl ethyl ketone	Potential reproductive harm

Nail Glue/Adhesive Ingredient of Concern	Health Effects/Toxicity
Ethyl cyanoacrylate	Skin Sensitizer
Methyl ethyl ketone	Potential reproductive harm

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTS OF CONCERN USED IN SALONS

Disinfectants Ingredient of Concern	Health Effects/Toxicity
O-phenylphenol	Cancer
Naphtha (petroleum)	Eye irritant Skin irritant Kidney damage
Quaternary Ammonium Compounds or "quats"	Asthma Skin Sensitizer Potential reproductive harm

As a client, you can also support the health and safety of your hair and nail care professional, and of yourself, through the following recommendations.

What clients can do:

- Talk to your stylist or nail salon technician about the products they use and the ingredients they contain.
- Share this report and accompanying fact sheets with your stylist or nail salon technician, and let them know you are concerned about their exposure.
- Refrain from judgment or blame of stylists because as this report shows, this is a manufacturer and government regulatory problem, not a salon worker problem.
- Support policies that better protect salon workers, address the issue of inadequate ingredient disclosure, and push for further research into safer substitutes.
- Visit salons that are able to use safer products. Keep in mind that some salons may not have the resources to make the change and many salon product ingredients don't currently have a safer alternative, so beware of greenwashing.
- Opt for less toxic salon services that may affect you or your stylist/manicurist's health.
- Tip your stylist or manicurist as generously as you are able.

