

The Problem with Deodorant

Humans have a tendency to sweat, and this is frequently associated with unpleasant odour. Hence our love affair with personal care items that include deodorants, anti-perspirants and perfumes, to prevent and cover unwanted smells to keep ourselves nice. Unfortunately, the ingredients in these items are far from friendly and include possible links to Alzheimer's disease, birth defects and breast cancer. So what ingredients do we need to be worried about specifically?

Aluminium

Aluminium is a metal and is the most abundant metal in the earth's crust. It is mined for a variety of commercial and industrial uses and aluminium compounds such as aluminium chlorohydrate or aluminum zirconium, are used in most commercial brands of anti-perspirants. These compounds are readily absorbed by the body, and once there, the aluminium portion separates and becomes a free radical. Free radicals are known to cause cell damage, and this is concerning because the aluminium free radical freely crosses cell walls including brain cells. Aluminium has been found in high levels in the brain plaques that are associated with Alzheimer's disease, and also in breast cancer tissue.

Parabens

Parabens are synthetic chemicals used as preservatives. They are usually labelled at the bottom of an ingredient list and includes propylparaben, ethylparaben, butylparaben and methylparaben. Parabens are known to disrupt hormone function because they are xenoestrogens. This means they mimic the actions of estrogen, a female sex hormone. Parabens are just one type of xenoestrogen that women are exposed to and it is estimated that parabens can be found in over 13,000 cosmetics products and not just deodorants. What is clear, is the more estrogen (including xenoestrogens) a woman is exposed to in her lifetime, the greater risk she has of developing breast cancer.

There is however, no proven link between the use of parabens or aluminium in deodorants/anti-perspirants and the risk of developing breast cancer or Alzheimer's. However, aluminium can be absorbed by the body via other means too, such as from cookwear, aluminium foil and some cosmetics. Similarly, parabens are found in nearly all conventional personal care items regularly used on a daily basis. Given that these chemicals are not *only* in deodorants makes it hard to prove the link. What we do know for certain is that aluminium and intact parabens have been found in the upper outer quadrant of the breast, nearest the underarm in women with breast cancer.

Other chemicals in deodorants and anti-perspirants

BHT (butylated hydroxytoluene) is used as a preservative and believed to be a hormone disrupter and toxic to the nervous system.

Fragrance can be made up of hundreds or even thousands of synthetic chemicals potentially capable of a myriad of reactions such as skin irritation, depression, hyperactivity and breathing difficulties.

Propylene glycol helps the deodorant go on smoothly, however it is linked to skin irritation, nervous system and major organ damage. It is also used commercially as a paint remover, as antifreeze and to remove barnacles off boats.

Phthalates are used to soften plastics and are used to help the fragrance stay on the skin. They are known associations with phthalates and birth defects especially in male genitalia which may affect future reproductive ability.

What to do instead

Use deodorant instead of antiperspirant, since sweat is normal and blocking the pores is not. If you wish to reduce your exposure to the chemicals listed above then use no deodorant (if you dare!!), or use a natural deodorant. I recommend and use Miessence deodorant.



Available online from
www.kristine.miessence.com

Miessence deodorants

are 100% natural, with a very effective formula even for the most active people. There are no aluminium compounds or chemical antiperspirants. Instead, based on the traditional remedies of bicarbonate of soda to eliminate odours and aloe vera to soothe.

For a week or two you may experience increased odour due to the absence of aluminium compounds in the products. Aluminium compounds block your pores, preventing healthy elimination of toxins via perspiration. Normal deodorants prevent this from happening, and you get a backlog of toxins. When you start using Miessence deodorant, your body can then begin eliminating.

If you are still using a conventional deodorant or anti-perspirant then it's better to begin using the aroma free deodorant. The essential oils in the scented product can sometimes sting the armpits when going through the initial detox. While detoxing you may need to use the deodorant 2-3 times during the day to assist with odour control, which will only be a temporary experience