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# Limiting Toxins While Cooking & Cleaning

## Do You Know What You're Consuming?

Even if you prioritize organic foods and maintain a healthy lifestyle, you might still be exposing yourself to toxins you don't realize are dangerous. If you want to make sure your household activities are as safe and chemical-free as possible, take a look at a few of our recommendations for natural methods of cooking and cleaning.

## Eliminate Plastics

Eating healthy food is important, but paying attention to your food's packaging is also valuable to your wellness. Think of your refrigerator and your pantry. Do you use plastic wrap to cover open containers? Do you have granola bars in plastic wrappers? Are your leftovers stored in plastic dishes that contain BPA?

Plastic is so common that sometimes we forget it can be dangerous. BPA, BPS, and other endocrine-disrupting or carcinogenic chemicals are found in many plastics.<sup>1</sup> Eliminating these items from your kitchen can help you prioritize wellness for your whole family. Try some of these alternatives:

### Glass Storage Containers

When you put plastic containers in the microwave or dishwasher, they can release dangerous toxins. It's almost impossible to know what is in the plastic you purchase, which is why it makes sense to replace your plastic storage containers with glass ones. Glass dishware is more resistant to heat and won't leach chemicals, so it's safer to use in your kitchen.

### Beeswax Wraps

Choosing an eco-friendly alternative to plastic wrap will prevent potentially harmful chemicals from coming into contact with your food. Plus, since they're reusable, you'll get better use out of

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them than you would plastic wrap. All you have to do is rinse them and wipe them down. When cared for properly, beeswax wraps can last up to an entire year.<sup>2</sup>

### **Reusable Stainless Steel Bottles**

Leaving plastic water bottles in your car or the sun can release harmful toxins. Additionally, it can get expensive to continually purchase bottled water. Instead, consider investing in a reusable water bottle. Stainless steel bottles are more durable than glass ones, which means you can take them with you on-the-go and not worry about damaging them if you drop them.

## **Use Non-Toxic Cleaning Products**

Disinfectants are common staples in any household, but they might be doing more harm than good. Do you know the ingredients in your cleaning products? The American Lung Association recommends purchasing items that either do not contain or have reduced amounts of VOCs, fragrances, irritants, and flammable ingredients.<sup>3</sup> Antibacterial hand soaps, sanitizers, and cleaners often have quaternary ammonium compounds, which can also be dangerous.<sup>4</sup>

If you can make your own natural cleaner, you can control the ingredients that you use and prevent exposure to harmful toxins. Try warm water and soap for your at-home cleaning needs. If you're dealing with a particularly tough stain, baking soda is useful for scrubbing. For disinfectant alternatives, some people recommend incorporating essential oils, like tea tree and lemon, into cleaning solutions. Others use low-concentrate hydrogen peroxide on its own.

As you're searching for safe cleaning products to limit the number of chemicals in your household, don't be afraid to ask for help. A simple search on the internet can offer great suggestions on recommended products. For example, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has a list of items that meet its "Safer Choice" standards, which can help you ensure you're buying the best products for your family.<sup>5</sup>

## **Avoid Fragrances**

Anything that comes with an artificial aroma may contain hundreds of chemicals. Phthalates and allergens are commonly linked to scented items, and manufacturing companies do not have to disclose these contents.<sup>6</sup> In fact, even natural scents, such as citrus, can ultimately produce harmful pollutants. In general, it is safer to avoid anything that has fragrance, including air fresheners, laundry detergents, and household cleaners.

If you want to clear the air in your house, use natural methods to reduce odors. For example, boiling spices or herbs on the stove will release refreshing smells. Since spices like cinnamon, vanilla, and rosemary are commonly ingested, their scents are harmless. You can also put a box of baking soda in your refrigerator to limit food-related odors. Finally, for household tasks, try purchasing fragrance-free laundry detergent and fabric softener. The lower amount of chemicals in these products is also easier on your skin, so you won't have to worry as much about allergic reactions.

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## Conclusion

Your home should be a refuge. It is the place where you should feel your best. Complete mental, emotional, and physical wellness starts with your daily life and habits, which means the products you use are foundational to establishing your home as a safe space.

If you want to inspire others to take control of their wellness in both their homes and their lives, reach out to us. Our enrollment specialists would love to talk to you about becoming a **Certified Natural Health Professional**, which will allow you to incorporate natural health principles into every aspect of your life and equip others to do the same. Call us today at 800-428-0408, option 2.

### REFERENCES

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