

O·P·I

OPI Nail Products: Nasty Nail Polish



THE TOXIC TOUCH: Nail Product Chemicals and Your Health

One of the nicest things many women do for themselves is to get a manicure or pedicure. It's relaxing and a way to feel pampered and beautiful. Unfortunately, because nail products and cosmetics are virtually unregulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), getting your nails done may also expose you and your nail care professional to a host of toxic and untested chemicals.

Many of these chemicals, such as phthalates (*pronounced tha-lates*), formaldehyde, and toluene have been linked to birth defects, cancer and other health concerns, yet they are still being used in some nail polishes, nail polish removers and many other products we use on our bodies every day.

While the chemicals in any one product are unlikely to cause harm, repeated exposures to man-made chemicals from many different sources (including cosmetics and other consumer products) may be adding up to cause harm over time, interact with each other and build up in our bodies. Many of these chemicals can even be passed on to our children. Recent peer-reviewed science has shown that this daily chemical cocktail can have impacts on our health and even harm the development of babies in the womb.

One of the most toxic and frequently used brands of nail polish is OPI.



OPI PRODUCTS, INC.: A Small Company with a Large Reach

Getting your nails done may expose you and your nail care professional to a host of toxic and untested chemicals.



OPI Products, Inc. is the largest manufacturer of nail polish and nail treatment products worldwide.

Headquartered in California, its distribution spans over 70 countries including the United States and countries throughout Europe and Asia. Its products are sold primarily in nail salons, beauty supply stores and specialty spa salons. Known for their long-lasting qualities, OPI products are popular with a wide variety of women who patronize nail salons, including some of Hollywood's most famous celebrities such as Kate Hudson, Charlize Theron and Jennifer Lopez.

So What's The Big Deal with OPI Products and Hazardous Chemicals?

Although OPI Products, Inc. claims to be the "leader in professional nail care," it lags behind other major manufacturers of nail polish and nail treatment products in eliminating hazardous chemicals in its products.

According to the Environmental Working Group's report *Skin Deep*, the world's largest database of chemicals in cosmetics, two of the highest concern products are nail treatments and nail polishes.

One of the most hazardous nail products in *Skin Deep*: OPI Natural Nail Strengthener.

OPI nail polish and nail treatments contain three of the top 10 ingredients of concern in Skin Deep:

- TOLUENE (possible human reproductive or developmental toxin)
- FORMALDEHYDE (a known human carcinogen)
- DIBUTYL PHTHALATE (DBP) (possible human reproductive or developmental toxin)



All 3 chemicals are on the California Proposition 65 list of chemicals known to the state to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity. While everyday exposure to the chemicals in cosmetics within the general population is of concern, levels of exposure to women working in beauty and nail salons is of

even greater concern given that these women are working with these chemicals for long periods of time and often in poorly ventilated spaces.

Do Americans deserve less protection than Europeans?

The European Union has banned dibutyl phthalate (DBP) from cosmetics because the chemical is linked to birth defects. Most large companies have agreed to remove DBP from nail polish they sell in the United States. However, OPI refuses to reformulate its US products. So OPI now makes phthalate-free nail polish for Europe but still sells the phthalate-containing products to nail salons in the US.

Why can companies like OPI Products Inc. manufacture and sell products containing these hazardous chemicals in the United States but not in Europe?

Major loopholes in federal law prevent the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or any other government agency from approving the safety of cosmetics before they can be sold. While the European Union now bans more than 1,000 chemicals from personal care products because they can cause cancer, birth defects or reproductive problems, only nine cosmetics ingredients have been banned in the United States.

What is the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics asking OPI to do?

The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics is demanding that cosmetics and personal care companies such as OPI Products, Inc. phase out chemicals banned in Europe in all of its products sold world-wide, not just those sold in Europe. The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics has also asked OPI Products, Inc. to sign the Compact for Safe Cosmetics, a pledge to phase out toxic chemicals from its products and replace them with safer alternatives. Already, more than 300 companies have signed this pledge and are actively moving toward making safer products available for their customers.



Number of chemicals banned in the European Union:
More than 1000

Number of Chemicals banned in the United States:
9

What can I do?

1. Give OPI a safety makeover!

Please contact OPI Products today and urge the company to sign the Compact for Safe Cosmetics and remove DBP, toluene, formaldehyde and other toxic chemicals from the products it sells.

CALL:
1-800-341-9999

WRITE:
OPI Products, Inc.
13034 Saticoy Street
N. Hollywood, CA 91605

2. Talk with your favorite salon.

Ask your salon to provide you with other brands of nail products that do not contain these chemicals until OPI has reformulated its products or *BYOP* (Bring Your Own safer Polish with you when you get a manicure or pedicure).

Here is a sampling of brands that have signed the Compact and don't use DBP, formaldehyde, and toluene:

Anise Cosmetics
Honeybee Gardens
Peace Keeper

3. Learn more and choose safer products now.

Visit the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics website at www.SafeCosmetics.org today to learn more about chemicals in cosmetics and take action. You can also access the *Skin Deep* report, the world's largest searchable database of ingredients in cosmetics. Find out if your favorite products contain hazardous chemicals and find safer alternatives.

Also, be a savvy shopper and avoid products that contain DBP, formaldehyde and toluene when shopping for cosmetics and personal care products.

4. Spread the word.

Tell your friends, co-workers, and family about hazardous chemicals in cosmetics and how they can learn more and take action. Make photocopies of this fact sheet or download more materials from our website: www.SafeCosmetics.org.

The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics

www.SafeCosmetics.org

