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**How To Minimise Your Exposure To Chemicals
And Reduce Risk Of Sensitisation**

Hazardous chemicals are everywhere, from the bedding and clothes we use, to the food we eat, the air we breathe and the cars we buy. It is impossible to create a totally safe haven, but you can minimise your exposure.

Cleaning

Most dish-washing liquids and detergents are made from petroleum; some contain alkylphenol ethoxylates, which are suspect hormone disruptors. If in doubt, buy natural products (such as Ecover), wash your hand with plain soap, and clean your windows with vinegar or lemon juice.

Children

Avoid most plastic feeding bottles, which can contain bisphenol A, a hormone disrupting chemical. Don't use old dummies and PVC toys that may contain now banned phthalates. If pregnant, avoid paint or using DIY products that emit fumes. Buy children's clothes and pyjamas without plastic logos or chemical treatments.

Air Fresheners

Aerosol propellants contain flammable and nerve damaging ingredients as well as tiny particles that can lodge in your lungs. Fragrances of all kinds can provoke allergic and asthmatic reactions. The solution? If the room smells, open a window.

Mites

Companies recommend you eradicate them with sprays, gels, powders and liquids, but most have very active chemical nasties. The solution

is to ventilate rooms, air your beds, vacuum all surfaces and mattresses and wash fabrics at high temperatures.

Living Rooms

Carpets and flooring materials may be treated with a wide array of chemicals that some people are allergic to. Use natural flooring such as cork tiles, or cotton rugs that can be washed at high temperatures.

DIY and Gardens

Avoid painting, paint stripping or using DIY products unless using eco-friendly brands. Don't occupy newly painted rooms, and avoid using pesticides indoors or in the garden. Use water-based varnishes and glues, paints, stain removers, sealants and adhesives; and buy paints made from plant oils.

Cars

That "new car smell" comes from the high levels of chemicals escaping from the plastic, upholstery, carpeting and other synthetic materials. Beware!

Food

Don't let food come into contact with PVC clingfilm. Buy organic fruit and vegetables Wash and peel food.