

WHY SCENT-FREE?

Scent free policies are becoming more common in our community. One aspect which people may not understand however, is that the concerns do not centre on the fact a product has a scent or fragrance, but rather on the potentially serious health effects that can be caused by the largely petroleum-based chemicals that are used to make that scent. By choosing scent-free personal care and cleaning products we can reduce our exposure to these chemicals.

Common chemicals found in fragrance products (based on EPA data) and some of their effects*:

Benzaldehyde, Ethanol, a-Pinene, Benzyl Acetate, Benzyl Alcohol, Ethyl Acetate, a-Terpinen, a-Terpinol

Irritability, muscle pain, mental vagueness, joint aches, asthma, bloating, sinus pain, fatigue, sore throat, eye irritation, laryngitis, headaches, dizziness, lost thoughts, coughing, swollen lymph nodes, spiked blood pressure, burning skin



Note: This includes **cleaning products** and **air fresheners**, as well as **perfume** and **personal care products**.

*"Fragrance" is considered a trade secret but it is known that most now contain hormone disrupting phthalates as well, with additional health effects.

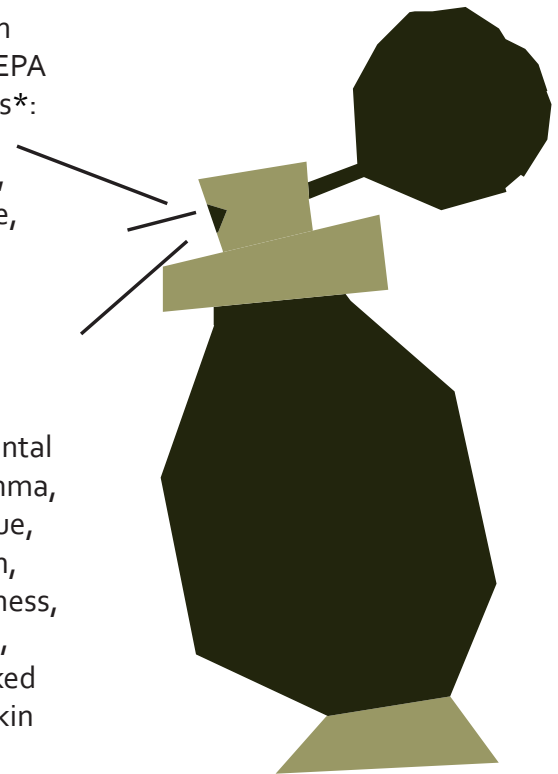
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FRAGRANCE FACTS

- Initially it was thought that only a certain segment of the population is affected by the chemicals used in fragrance products. However, the striking increase in the numbers of people with sensitivities and/or asthma tells another story. Research into conditions potentially linked to these chemicals (e.g. learning disabilities, neurological conditions, and developmental issues) is leading to a growing recognition that virtually anyone may develop health problems from exposures to fragrances.
- Remember natural does not always mean safe. Citrus oils (lemon or orange oil), pine oil, tea tree oil and eucalyptus oil should all be avoided. The natural sources of these essential oils are highly allergenic. Citrus oils contain d-limonene, a known carcinogen. Pine, tea tree oil and eucalyptus oil all contain terpenes which are recognized for their negative impacts on the immune and central nervous systems. **If commercial products are deemed necessary, then it is recommended only products which meet the EcoLogo certification be used:**



Some Companies with Fragrance-Free Cleaning Products

- Bebbington Industries*, Down East and Green Knight Brands (<http://www.bebbingtonindustries.com/>)
- Nature Clean* (<http://www.naturecleanliving.com/>)
- Seventh Generation* (<http://www.seventhgeneration.com/>)

Fragrance-Free Personal Care Options

- Soap:** *DownEast* Hand and Body Wash, *Guelph Soapworks* Pure & Natural, *Nature Clean* Natural Soap and *Kiss My Face* Olive Oil Soap all meet WMEHRC* criteria.
- Hand and Body Lotion:** Most brands now have a fragrance-free version. *Aura Cacia* Jojoba Oil, Sweet Almond Oil or Grapeseed Oil meets WMEHRC criteria.
- Shampoo/Conditioner:** *Jason* Fragrance Free shampoo and *@tmosphere* Fragrance Free shampoo meet WMEHRC criteria. *Down East* Hand & Body Wash works as a shampoo.
- Deodorant/Anti-perspirant:** *Tom's of Maine* Fragrance Free and *Jason* Natural Fragrance Free meet WMEHRC criteria; most other brands are available in unscented or sensitive skin.
- Laundry Detergent:** *Arm and Hammer* Washing Soda, *Down East*, *Nature Clean*, meet WMEHRC criteria; most brands are now available in Fragrance, Dye, and Phosphate Free versions.

*Wilena MacDougall Environmental Health Resource Centre, Charlottetown: wmehrc@gmail.com

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