

SPECIAL 30TH
ANNIVERSARY
EDITION



EWG's Year of Healthy Living

12 MONTHS OF TIPS

- ✓ Avoid Toxic Chemicals
- ✓ Protect Your Health
- ✓ Save Money



CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF HEALTHY LIVING

EWG's fans and followers are always asking us for tips that will help them create a healthier lifestyle, one that's good for their family and the planet.

And at EWG we're committed to helping you give your family the best possible environment—one free from toxic chemicals and wasteful material.

So to celebrate EWG's 30th anniversary, we created this booklet as a way to help you take one simple step each month to protect you, your family and your home.

With this guide, EWG is bringing it back to the basics.

Thank you for celebrating three decades of work by following our smart solutions to healthier living every day!

- **January:** Filter Your Tap Water
- **February:** Pick Safer Cosmetics
- **March:** Clean Green
- **April:** Avoid Pesticides
- **May:** Protect Yourself From PFAS Chemicals
- **June:** Choose a Safer Sunscreen
- **July:** Eat More Sustainable Proteins
- **August:** Reduce Your Exposure to Toxic BPA and Its Regrettable Substitutes
- **September:** Create a Healthier Home
- **October:** Stay Nourished and Save Money
- **November:** Cook With Safer Utensils
- **December:** Take a Sustainable Approach to Holidays

January

FILTER YOUR TAP WATER

Drinking plenty of clean water is important for your health.

That's why EWG researchers have come up with two easy steps to help you stay hydrated while reducing your exposures to common drinking water pollutants.

1. Decide what you need in a filter. Consider:



Want a decent filter at a decent price?

Get a carbon filter. Pitchers, faucet mounts and large dispensers are popular types.



Need to remove as many contaminants as possible?

Use reverse osmosis combined with a carbon filter.



Is water hardness the issue?

Use an ion exchange filter to soften your water.

2. Take a look at what style water filter best suits your needs. Some options:

STYLE:

Pitcher or large dispenser

PROS: Inexpensive. No installation required. Various sizes and styles.

CONS: Filters must be changed regularly. Some contaminants are not reduced. Filtering is slow.



STYLE:

Faucet mounted

PROS: Relatively inexpensive. Easy to install. Allows user to switch between filtered and unfiltered water. Filtration is fast enough to fill cooking pots.

CONS: Does not work with all faucet styles. May slow faucet flow rate. Some contaminants are not reduced.



STYLE:

On counter

PROS: May allow user to switch between filtered and unfiltered water. Typically requires few filter changes. Ideal for filtering drinking and cooking water.

CONS: Requires installation and possibly plumbing modification.



STYLE:

Whole house

PROS: Filters all water, including for tooth-brushing, showering and other uses.

CONS: Most people don't need this type of system. It removes residual levels of chlorine from the entire plumbing system in the house. With no disinfectant in the water, bacteria may grow in the household pipes between the filter and the tap.



For more information, check out EWG's Tap Water Database: ewg.org/tapwater

February

PICK SAFER COSMETICS

Have you ever counted how many cosmetics and personal care products you use every day? Chances are it's nearly 10. And most people believe the government is policing the safety of those products. But it isn't.

Some types of products have major safety concerns—so make February the month you become a label reader and skip those likely to contain dangerous chemicals.

What to watch out for:

Hair dye and chemical straightener

Many contain chemicals linked to cancer, allergies, skin and scalp irritation, hair damage and hair loss.



Loose powder

This may pose an inhalation risk.



Perfume and fragrance

Many have ingredients with allergy concerns.



Skin lighteners

Many have ingredients that can cause skin irritation and damage. Some may have ingredients linked to neurotoxicity and organ damage.



"Fragrance," a common ingredient with safety concerns

This catch-all term refers to a mix of any number of the thousands of unnamed substances used in the personal care products industry, some of which can trigger allergic reactions. Skip products with "fragrance" on the ingredients list; instead choose those that list each fragrance ingredient individually.

Ingredients with harmful contaminants

Many common ingredients can contain impurities linked to cancer and other health concerns.

WHENEVER POSSIBLE, AVOID THESE COMMON INGREDIENTS:

- × DMDM hydantoin
- × Diazolidinyl urea
- × Imidazolidinyl urea
- × Cetareth
- × Polyethylene glycol, or PEG
- × Talc

For a complete list of ingredients or to see how a product rates, consult EWG's Skin Deep® cosmetics database: [ewg.org/skindeep](https://www.ewg.org/skindeep)

FEBRUARY: PICK SAFER COSMETICS

March

CLEAN GREEN

The dirt on cleaners—what the bottle doesn't tell us.

It would be easier to shop smarter if all ingredients in cleaning products were listed on the label, as is more commonly found with food and cosmetics. But the federal government doesn't require full disclosure. **So check labels for warnings and ingredients, not marketing claims.**

Skip products that contain:

✘ Glycols, glycol ethers
and esters

✘ Sodium hypochlorite,
found in chlorine bleach

✘ Quaternary ammonium compounds, like benzalkonium chloride
and other chemicals with names that end in “-onium chloride”

✘ Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS—often
hidden by vague terms, including “fluorosurfactant”



✗ Propane, butane and isobutane propellants used in aerosol products

✗ Isothiazolinone and formaldehyde-releasing preservatives

✗ Phthalates and synthetic musks, often hidden by the umbrella term “fragrance.”



You don't need disinfectants for everyday, routine cleaning. But sometimes nothing else will do. When you choose one, look for EPA-registered products with these safer active ingredients, which are lower in toxicity, compared to conventional actives.

Some examples:

✓ Hydrogen peroxide

✓ Ethyl alcohol, ethanol

✓ Citric acid



✓ L-lactic acid

✓ Caprylic acid, or octanoic acid

For more information on safe cleaning, and to look up your products, check out EWG's Guide to Healthy Cleaning:

[ewg.org/guides/cleaners](https://www.ewg.org/guides/cleaners)

April

AVOID PESTICIDES

People prefer their food free from pesticides and toxic chemicals, which are increasingly linked to serious health problems—especially in children, whose developing bodies are more vulnerable to chemical exposures than those of adults.

We'd like to believe our government ensures reliable oversight of our food safety, but it doesn't. EWG advice is to limit your family's exposure to pesticides.

Eat your fruits and veggies! Fresh fruits and vegetables are key to any healthy diet, so EWG encourages everyone to eat plenty of nutrient-rich produce—organic or conventional.

What's a pesticide?

Pesticides are chemicals designed to kill living organisms that are considered pests, including insects, weeds and mold.



Why should I care?

Pesticides are applied directly to foods you eat, and they remain even after food is washed, cooked and, in some cases, even after it's peeled. EWG's analysis of Department of Agriculture data found that two-thirds of conventionally grown produce has detectable pesticide residues.



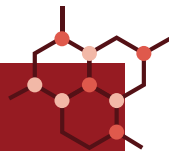
Research shows some pesticides are linked to:

Cancer

Hormone disruption

Cognitive problems

Behavioral problems



We're all at risk, but some are more than others:

Children and pregnant women are especially at risk from pesticides in food.

People living near and working on farms are also at risk.

Anyone whose diet includes foods with higher levels of pesticide residues is at risk.



To avoid pesticides on your food:



Buy organic when you can.



When you can't buy organic, buy less contaminated conventional foods. EWG's Shopper's Guide to Pesticides in Produce™ ranks different types of produce based on the amount of pesticide residue found on them. Use EWG's Dirty Dozen™ list to find out when to go organic and our Clean Fifteen™ list to find out when you can feel OK buying conventional.



Don't use pesticides on food you grow yourself.

For more information, visit: [ewg.org/foodnews](https://www.ewg.org/foodnews)

APRIL: AVOID PESTICIDES

May

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM PFAS CHEMICALS, TOXIC "FOREVER CHEMICALS" YOU DON'T WANT NEAR YOUR FAMILY

What are PFAS chemicals?

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS, are a family of thousands of chemicals used to make water-, grease- and stain-repellent coatings. They are present in a wide range of consumer products and commercial applications. Decades of heavy use have resulted in contamination of water, soil, food, people and wildlife. PFAS build up in our bodies and never break down in the environment.

What are the health risks of PFAS exposure?

Many studies link these chemicals to a variety of health harms, including:

Testicular, kidney, liver
and pancreatic cancer

Reproductive
problems

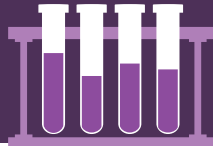
Weakened
immunity in
children and adults



Low birth weight

Endocrine
disruption

Increased
cholesterol









Weight gain in children
and dieting adults



Where do PFAS come from?



How can I avoid PFAS exposure?

-  If PFAS are detected in your water, install a water filter that can remove them.
-  Avoid packaged food and takeout containers lined with waterproof or greaseproof coatings.
-  Wet-mop floors and use a vacuum with a HEPA filter to remove household dust that may contain PFAS.
-  Choose stainless steel or cast-iron cookware over nonstick.
-  Avoid fabrics treated with nonstick chemicals.
-  Check for PFAS in personal care products—read the ingredients lists and choose products that don't contain PFAS.

For more information, please visit [ewg.org/pfaschemicals](https://www.ewg.org/pfaschemicals)

MAY: PROTECT YOURSELF FROM PFAS CHEMICALS

June

CHOOSE A SAFER SUNSCREEN

Sunscreen remains a crucial way to help prevent lasting skin damage and skin cancer caused by sun exposure. But it can be a challenge to find sunscreens that are effective and free from chemicals of concern. That's why EWG's Guide to Sunscreens rates the safety and efficacy of sunscreens and other products with SPF. We recommend products that provide long-lasting, broad-spectrum protection using ingredients that pose fewer health concerns.

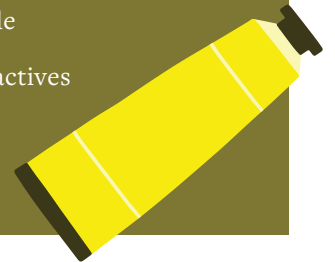
Ingredients

Avoid:

- × Oxybenzone
- × Vitamin A, also called retinyl palmitate
- × Added insect repellent

Look for:

- ✓ Zinc oxide
- ✓ Mineral actives



Products

Avoid:

- × Sprays
- × Powders
- × SPF above 50 and below 15



Look for:

- ✓ Cream
- ✓ Broad-spectrum protection
- ✓ Water resistance
- ✓ SPF to suit your needs—between 15 and 50

Other ways to protect yourself

Sunscreen is just one part of sun protection. Also consider:

Wear clothes

Shirts, hats, shorts and pants shield your skin from the sun's UV rays, reducing burn risk.



Plan around the sun

Go outdoors in the early morning or late afternoon, when the sun is lower.

Find shade— or make it

Picnic under a tree or take a canopy to the beach. Keep infants in the shade.



Don't get burned

Red, sore, blistered skin means you've gotten far too much sun.

Sunglasses are essential

Not just a fashion accessory, sunglasses protect your eyes from UV radiation.



Check the UV Index

The UV Index provides important information to help you plan your outdoor activities in ways that prevent sun overexposure.

And don't forget to reapply often! Sunscreen chemicals sometimes degrade in the sun, wash off or rub off on towels and clothing.

For more information, please visit [ewg.org/sunscreen](https://www.ewg.org/sunscreen)

JUNE: CHOOSE A SAFER SUNSCREEN

July

EAT MORE SUSTAINABLE PROTEINS

Reduce your impact. Improve your health.

This month we challenge you to explore your protein options, then pick a day to go meatless!

And everyday, whether you choose meat, seafood or other types of protein, it's important to know what you're buying and buy the best for your family and your health.

Eat less meat and dairy

Make meatless and cheeseless days a part of your life. On other days, try using meat as a flavor or a topping instead of the main dish.

Eat more sustainably raised meat and seafood.

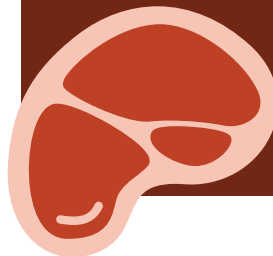
Read the labels and look for:

Grass-fed or pasture-raised meat

This type of meat is higher in heart-healthy omega-3s and lower in saturated fat. Pastured livestock live and graze in their natural environment under more humane conditions.

Lean cuts

Cancer-causing chemicals accumulate in animal fat. Leaner options lead to fewer cancer-causing chemicals in your body.



No antibiotics or hormones

Reducing unnecessary antibiotic use in animals helps keep human medicines effective.



Certified organic

Keeps the most toxic pesticides and chemical fertilizers off the land, out of the water and out of our bodies.

Certified humane

This means no growth hormones or antibiotics were used and ensures animals were raised with enough space and no cages or crates.



Unprocessed, nitrite free and low sodium

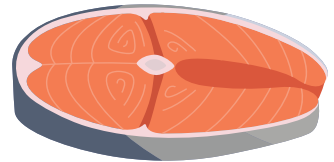
Avoid lunch meats, hot dogs, prepackaged smoked meats and chicken nuggets, which can have high levels of sodium and cancer-causing additives.



Eat sustainable seafood

Avoid air-freighted fish and farmed salmon; use EWG's Seafood Calculator to get a customized list of seafood high in omega-3 fats, low in mercury, from sustainable sources:

[ewg.org/research/ewg-s-consumer-guide-seafood/seafood-calculator](https://www.ewg.org/research/ewg-s-consumer-guide-seafood/seafood-calculator)



For more tips about shopping for meat and dairy, visit: [ewg.org/research/labeldecoder](https://www.ewg.org/research/labeldecoder)

JULY: EAT MORE SUSTAINABLE PROTEINS

August

REDUCE YOUR EXPOSURE TO TOXIC BPA AND ITS REGRETTABLE SUBSTITUTES

You may find this month's goal more challenging, because of the widespread use of BPA and harmful alternatives, such as BPS. But EWG has some simple steps you can take to limit your exposure.

What is BPA, and where is it found?

Bisphenol A, also called BPA, is a synthetic estrogen and a key component in hard, polycarbonate plastic, thermal receipt paper and epoxy resins – the protective lining of food and beverage containers, industrial equipment and piping. It's also found in sealants used in everything from construction to dentistry. This chemical has been found in the bodies of 93 percent of Americans tested by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

How is BPA exposure harmful?

Brain, behavioral, learning and memory impairment

Cardiovascular abnormalities

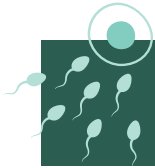


Diabetes, obesity and metabolic harm

Breast and prostate cancer

Thyroid and sex hormone disruption

Early puberty



Changes to egg and sperm development and fertility

Genetic alterations that can be passed onto future generations

Childhood wheezing

Impaired immune function.

How to limit or avoid exposure to BPA and hazardous replacement chemicals

SUBSTITUTE fresh, frozen or dried food for canned.



AVOID polycarbonate, or hard, clear plastics – marked with the recycling code #7 or the letters “PC.”



LIMIT the amount of packaged and processed foods you eat. BPA may be used in the lids of glass jars and bottles and in tins and aerosol cans.

WHEN POSSIBLE, say no to paper receipts at stores, gas pumps, ATMs and other locations. Take advantage of technology that emails or texts purchase records, whenever possible.



If you've handled a receipt, **WASH HANDS** before preparing food or eating.

For more information about BPA and its replacement chemicals, please visit:

ewg.org/key-issues/toxics/bpa

AUGUST: REDUCE YOUR EXPOSURE TO TOXIC BPA

September

CREATE A HEALTHIER HOME

Wondering about the chemicals and contaminants you're exposed to at home? Look around for products that contain or emit toxic chemicals and choose safer alternatives with this simple checklist.

Kitchen

NONSTICK COOKWARE.

Use cast-iron, stainless steel or glass instead, if possible.

PLASTIC FOOD CONTAINERS. Choose

glass or stainless steel over plastic and never microwave food in plastic containers.

TAP WATER.

Filter your drinking water to remove contaminants (and change it according to directions).

BOTTLED WATER.

Use filtered water in a reusable stainless steel or glass water bottle instead.



CANNED FOOD.

Cook with fresh, frozen or dried ingredients whenever possible.

Bathroom

AIR FRESHENER. Avoid the most toxic formulations—many contain chemicals of concern. Consider cleaning up or removing sources of odor instead of simply masking them. Open a window or run a fan.

"FRAGRANCE" LISTED ON PRODUCT INGREDIENT LABELS. We often don't know what's in "fragrance," so choose either fragrance-free products or those that disclose their fragrance ingredients.



SHOWER CURTAIN.

Avoid vinyl or PVC shower curtains.

Laundry and cleaning closet

CLEANERS. Look for the **EWG VERIFIED®** mark on product labels and company websites, and search for healthier options in our Guide to Healthy Cleaning or use our Healthy Living App on the go.

PRODUCT LABELS. Most don't list all their ingredients, but they should. Support companies that disclose all ingredients.

OVERALL NEED FOR PRODUCTS. Skip laundry products you can make do without, like dryer sheets and fabric softener.

Around the house

HOMES BUILT BEFORE 1978.

If this describes your home, it probably contains lead paint. If you repaint, use a wet sanding technique to reduce dust, choose Green Seal-certified and low VOC paint, and always paint with the windows open for good ventilation.



FOAM FURNITURE.

Choose furniture without chemical flame retardants. If you have older pieces, you can swap out the foam. Don't "protect" your fabrics and carpets with chemical stain guard treatments.

COMPACT FLUORESCENT LIGHT BULBS, ALSO CALLED CFLS.

They contain mercury and should be handled and disposed of with care.

PESTICIDES AND INSECTICIDES.

Try nontoxic alternatives first.

WOOD DECK, PICNIC TABLE OR PLAYGROUND SET.

If it was made before 2005, your outdoor pieces likely contains arsenic. Replace with safer wood or reduce exposure by sealing it.

HOUSEHOLD DUST. Try to dust as much as possible, because chemicals from products lurk in household dust.

For more tips, please visit:

[ewg.org/healthyhomeguide](https://www.ewg.org/healthyhomeguide)

October

STAY NOURISHED AND SAVE MONEY

We've all heard the saying an apple a day keeps the doctor away—but which other foods pack in a lot of nutrients at a good price? Here are our best EWG-approved suggestions.

✓ Fast, fresh and clean

A pear a day—
it's even better than you-know-what (more fiber, potassium and folate than an apple).



Avocado for breakfast?

Yes, please! Try avocado on toast or add a couple slices to your plate of eggs. Avocados contain more potassium than bananas, with more fiber and less sugar—all for about the same cost as a tangerine.



Eat your garnish

Parsley packs a punch as potent as kale for a quarter of the cost.

Not a carrot lover?

Sweet potatoes contain twice the fiber, potassium and vitamin A that carrots do.



Mix up your meat choices

Try goat, which costs the same as ground beef, with more iron and less saturated fat.

Get your protein cheap and clean

A serving of lentils or pinto beans is a quarter of the cost of turkey—one of the cheapest animal sources of protein—but produces one-tenth the greenhouse gas emissions.



✕ **Bad price, bad nutrition**

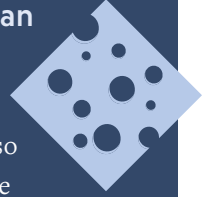
Some of the worst choices you can make:

Fruit cocktail in heavy syrup

It's twice the cost of a banana and double the sugar.

Processed American or Swiss cheese

Try soft cheeses like cottage cheese or queso blanco instead. They're easier on the planet, your heart and your wallet.



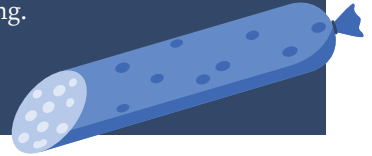
Sour cream

Try plain yogurt instead for a calcium boost and 20 percent savings.



Sausage and bologna

Home-roasted turkey tends to be made with fewer chemicals of concern and costs half the price per serving.



For more information, please visit: ewg.org/goodfood

November

COOK WITH SAFER UTENSILS

Skip the nonstick, so you don't breathe toxic fumes while cooking on high heat. Replace plastic tongs and spatulas with safer alternatives, like bamboo utensils, and ditch plastic storage containers.

This is the month to pair your healthy eating with healthy cooking—cooking utensils, that is.

Easy tips:

Using plastic to store sauces?

Try glass jars. They wash easily and are very durable.



Using plastic tongs or spatula?

Try using bamboo, wood or stainless steel instead.



Using plastic storage for leftovers?

Try temperature-resistant glass containers.

BONUS: They can go straight from the fridge to the oven.



Skipping the nonstick is worth it. Did you know the chemicals used in some nonstick coatings can emit vapors that can kill your pet bird?

Nonstick cookware is in most American kitchens. Is it in yours? If so, you have a few options. but it's worth the effort. Did you know the chemicals used in some nonstick coatings can emit vapors that can kill your pet bird?

Choose safer cookware

We suggest cast iron, stainless steel, carbon steel and oven-safe glass. Yes, there are many new products on the market, but we don't know enough about them to know whether they're safe. Even if the products are advertised as "green" or "not nonstick," we can't know for sure, because manufacturers do not have to release their safety data to the public.

Use your nonstick cookware more safely

if you can't get new pots and pans. Never use it at high heat or in an oven hotter than 500 degrees, and make sure to turn on the exhaust fan over the stove, if you have one.



For more information about healthy kitchens, visit: [ewg.org/healthyhometips](https://www.ewg.org/healthyhometips)

December

TAKE A MORE SUSTAINABLE APPROACH TO THE HOLIDAYS

With all of the cooking and shopping you probably do during the holiday season, it's easy to forget to celebrate sustainably.

This year, why not make the festive season a celebration of healthy living?! Challenge yourself to carry out at least one of the tips below—you may inspire your friends and family to follow your lead. **Try to:**

Carry items in a reusable bag

BONUS: A sleek grocery bag makes a nice gift for the host.



BYOC. Bring your own cup

—like Klean Kanteen's stainless steel pint cups—so you can avoid single-use party cups.

Bring a seasonal dish for your holiday potlucks

Even if some farmers' markets are closed for the winter, you don't need to skip on veggies for dinner. There are many flavorful, fresh winter fruits and vegetables, and some can be enjoyed year-round. We've included a recipe we think will be a hit with your friends and family.

Butternut, white bean and chard soup

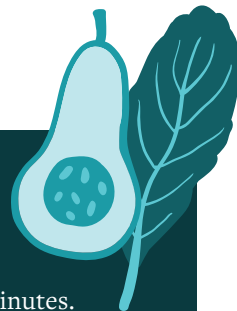
Embrace the best of cold-weather produce with this hearty, satisfying soup. **Here's what Organic evangelist and pioneer Myra Goodman says about her recipe:**

At Earthbound Farm in Carmel Valley, Calif., we're adrift in a sea of hard squashes and pumpkins from September to December, and we put our autumn bounty to good use all through the cold months with creations like this delicious soup. It's full of flavor, and the combination of squash, white beans and chard is simply scrumptious.

Although the recipe specifies butternut, other hard squash—like hubbard or carnival—would work just as well. Enjoy and happy cooking!

Ingredients

- 1½ tablespoons canola oil
 - 1½ tablespoons olive oil
 - 1½ cups yellow onion, diced
 - 2 ribs celery, diced
 - 3 pounds butternut squash, peeled, seeded and cut into ½-inch cubes, about 4 cups
 - 8 cups vegetable or chicken stock or store-bought low-sodium vegetable or chicken broth
 - 1 bunch Swiss chard, ribs discarded, leaves chopped into ½-inch pieces—about 4 cups, lightly packed
 - 2 cups cooked white beans, such as navy or cannellini; rinse if using canned beans
 - 1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves, chopped
- Salt and freshly ground pepper



Directions

Heat the canola and olive oils in a soup pot or a large saucepan over medium heat. Add the onion and celery and cook, stirring frequently, until the vegetables are soft but not browned, 5 to 8 minutes.

Add the squash and the stock, and bring to a simmer. Reduce the heat to medium low, cover and simmer until the squash is tender, 30 to 40 minutes.

Add the chard, beans and thyme, and simmer until the chard wilts and the beans are heated through, 5 to 10 minutes. Season the soup with salt and pepper to taste and serve hot.

From "The Earthbound Cook: 250 Recipes for Delicious Food and a Healthy Planet,"
by Myra Goodman

DECEMBER: TAKE A SUSTAINABLE APPROACH TO THE HOLIDAYS

