miessence® toxic ingredient directory

Dare to take the toxic test! Go to your bathroom now and check your product ingredients lists for these chemicals.

1,4-dioxane	A carcinogenic contaminant of ethoxylated cosmetic products. See Ethoxylated surfactants
2-bromo-2-nitropropane-1,3-diol (Bronopol)	Toxic, causes allergic contact dermatitis. See Nitrosating agents
Ammonium Laureth Sulfate (ALES)	See Anionic Surfactants See Sodium Laureth Sulfate See Nitrosating Agents
Ammonium Lauryl Sulfate (ALS)	See Anionic Surfactants See Sodium Laureth Sulfate See Nitrosating Agents
Anionic Surfactants	Anionic refers to the negative charge these surfactants have. They may be contaminated with nitrosamines, which are carcinogenic. Surfactants can pose serious health threats. They are used in car washes, as garage floor cleaners and engine degreasers - and in 90% of personal-care products that foam. Sodium Lauryl Sulfate (SLS) Sodium Laureth Sulfate (SLES) Ammonium Lauryl Sulfate (ALS) Ammonium Laureth Sulfate (ALES) Sodium Methyl Cocoyl Taurate Sodium Lauroyl Sarcosinate Sodium Cocoyl Sarcosinate Potassium Coco Hydrolysed Collagen TEA (Triethanolamine) Lauryl Sulfate TEA (Triethanolamine) Laureth Sulfate Lauryl or Cocoyl Sarcosine Disodium Oleamide Sulfosuccinate Disodium Laureth Sulfosuccinate Disodium Dioctyl Sulfosuccinate etc
Benzalkonium Chloride	Highly toxic, primary skin irritant. See Cationic surfactants From Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS): MATERIAL IS HIGHLY TOXIC VIA ORAL ROUTE. EFFECTS OF OVEREXPOSURE: MISTS CAN CAUSE IRRITATION TO THE SKIN, EYES, NOSE, THROAT AND MUCOUS MEMBRANES. AVOID DIRECT CONTACT. SYMPTOMS: MUSCULAR PARALYSIS, LOW BLOOD PRESSURE, CNS DEPRESSION AND WEAKNESS. EMERGENCY AND FIRST AID PROCEDURES EYES: CORROSIVE! IMMEDIATELY WASH EYES WITH PLENTY OF WATER.
Butylated Hudroxyanisole (BHA)	Causes allergic contact dermatitis.
Butylated Hydroxytoluene (BHT)	Causes allergic contact dermatitis. Contains toluene. See Toluene
Cationic surfactants	These chemicals have a positive electrical charge. They contain a quaternary ammonium group and are often called “quats”. These are used in hair conditioners, but originated from the paper and fabric industries as softeners and anti-static agents. In the long run they cause the hair to become dry and brittle. They are synthetic, irritating, allergenic and toxic, and oral intake of them can be lethal.
Cetalkonium chloride	See Cationic surfactants
Cetrimonium chloride	See Cationic surfactants
Chloromethylisothiazolinone	Causes contact dermatitis
Isothiazolinone	Causes contact dermatitis From Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS): EYE CONTACT: CORROSIVE TO THE EYES WITH POSSIBLE PERMANENT DAMAGE. SKIN CONTACT: CORROSIVE TO THE SKIN, POSSIBLY RESULTING IN THIRD DEGREE BURNS. CAN BE HARMFUL IF ABSORBED. CAN CAUSE ALLERGIC CONTACT DERMATITIS IN SUSCEPTIBLE INDIVIDUALS. INGESTION: CAN BE FATAL.
Cocoamidopropyl Betaine	Known human immune system toxicant. Concerns regarding nitrosamine contamination. See Nitrosating agents
Cocoyl Sarcosine	See Nitrosating agents
Cyclomethicone	See Silicone derived emollients
DEA (diethanolamine), MEA (Monoethanolamine), & TEA (triethanolamine)	Often used in cosmetics to adjust the pH, and used with many fatty acids to convert acid to salt (stearate), which then becomes the base for a cleanser. TEA causes allergic reactions including eye problems, dryness of hair and skin, and could be toxic if absorbed into the body over a long period of time. These chemicals are already restricted in Europe due to known carcinogenic effects. Dr. Samuel Epstein (Professor of Environmental Health at the University of Illinois) says that repeated skin applications . . . of DEA-based detergents resulted in a major increase in the incidence of liver and kidney cancer. See Nitrosating agents
Diazolidinyl urea	Established as a primary cause of contact dermatitis (American Academy of Dermatology). Contains formaldehyde, a carcinogenic chemical, is toxic by inhalation, a strong irritant, and causes contact dermatitis. See Formaldehyde
Dimethicone	See Silicone derived emollients
Dimethicone Copolyol	See Silicone derived emollients
Disodium Dioctyl Sulfosuccinate	See Anionic surfactants
Disodium Laureth Sulfosuccinate	See Anionic surfactants See Ethoxylated surfactants
Disodium Oleamide Sulfosuccinate	See Anionic Surfactants
DMDM Hydantoin	Releases formaldehyde. See Formaldehyde
Ethoxylated surfactants	Ethoxylated surfactants are widely used in cosmetics as foaming agents, emulsifiers and humectants. As part of the manufacturing process the toxic chemical 1,4-dioxane, a potent carcinogen, is generated. On the label, they are identified by the prefix “PEG”, “polyethylene”, “polyethylene glycol”, “polyoxyethylene”, “-eth-”, or “-oxynol-”. See 1,4-Dioxane
FD&C Colour Pigments	Synthetic colours made from coal tar. Contain heavy metal salts that deposit toxins onto the skin, causing skin sensitivity and irritation. Animal studies have shown almost all of them to be carcinogenic.
Formaldehyde	Formaldehyde is a known carcinogen (causes cancer). Causes allergic, irritant and contact dermatitis, headaches and chronic fatigue. The vapour is extremely irritating to the eyes, nose and throat (mucous membranes). See Nitrosating agents
Fragrance	Fragrance on a label can indicate the presence of up to four thousand separate ingredients, many toxic or carcinogenic. Symptoms reported to the USA FDA include headaches, dizziness, allergic rashes, skin discoloration, violent coughing and vomiting, and skin irritation. Clinical observation proves fragrances can affect the central nervous system, causing depression, hyperactivity, and irritability.
Hydrolysed Animal Protein	See Nitrosating agents
Imidazolidinyl urea	The trade name for this chemical is Germall 115. Releases formaldehyde, a carcinogenic chemical, into cosmetics at over 10C. Toxic. See Formaldehyde See Nitrosating agents

Lauryl dimonium hydrolysed collagen	See Cationic surfactants
Lauryl or Cocoyl Sarcosine	See Anionic Surfactants
Lauryl Sarcosine	See Nitrosating agents
Liquidum Paraffinum	Liquidum Paraffinum is an exotic sounding way to say mineral oil (!!) See Mineral Oil
MEA compounds	See Nitrosating agents
Methylisothiazolinone and Methylchloroisothiazolinone	Both cause cosmetic allergies
Mineral Oil	Petroleum by-product that coats the skin like plastic, clogging the pores. Interferes with skin's ability to eliminate toxins, promoting acne and other disorders. Slows down skin function and cell development, resulting in premature aging. Used in many products (baby oil is 100% mineral oil!) Any mineral oil derivative can be contaminated with cancer causing PAH's (Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons). Manufacturers use petrolatum because it is unbelievably cheap.
Nitrosating Agents	The following chemicals can cause nitrosamine contamination, which have been determined to form cancer in laboratory animals. There are wide and repeated concerns in the USA and Europe about the contamination of cosmetics products with nitrosamines. 2-bromo-2-nitropropane-1,3-diol Cocoyl Sarcosine DEA compounds Imidazolidinyl Urea Formaldehyde Hydrolysed Animal Protein Lauryl Sarcosine MEA compounds Quaternium-7, 15, 31, 60, etc Sodium Lauryl Sulfate Ammonium Lauryl Sulfate Sodium Laureth Sulfate Ammonium Laureth Sulfate Sodium Methyl Cocoyl Taurate TEA compounds
Paraben preservatives (methyl, propyl, butyl, and ethyl)	Parabens are known endocrine disruptors that influence the hormonal system, can affect foetal development, and are suspected to influence breast cancer.
Paraffin wax/oil	Paraffin Wax is mineral oil wax. See Mineral Oil
Polyethylene Glycol (PEG) compounds	Potentially carcinogenic petroleum ingredient that can alter and reduce the skin's natural moisture factor. This could increase the appearance of aging and leave you more vulnerable to bacteria. Used in cleansers to dissolve oil and grease. It adjusts the melting point and thickens products. Also used in caustic spray-on oven cleaners. See Ethoxylated surfactants
Potassium Coco Hydrolysed Collagen	See Anionic Surfactants
Propylene/Butylene Glycol	Propylene glycol (PG) is a petroleum derivative. It penetrates the skin and can weaken protein and cellular structure. Commonly used to make extracts from herbs. PG is strong enough to remove barnacles from boats! The EPA considers PG so toxic that it requires workers to wear protective gloves, clothing and goggles and to dispose of any PG solutions by burying them in the ground. Because PG penetrates the skin so quickly, the EPA warns against skin contact to prevent consequences such as brain, liver, and kidney abnormalities. But there isn't even a warning label on products such as stick deodorants, where the concentration is greater than in most industrial applications. From Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS): Health Hazard Acute And Chronic INHALATION: May cause respiratory and throat Irritation, central nervous system depression, blood and kidney disorders. May cause Nystagmus, Lymphocytosis. SKIN: Irritation and dermatitis, absorption. EYES: Irritation and conjunctivitis. INGESTION: Pulmonary oedema, brain damage, hypoglycaemia, intravascular hemolysis. Death may occur.
PVP/VA Copolymer	A petroleum-derived chemical used in hairsprays, wavesets and other cosmetics. It can be considered toxic, since particles may contribute to foreign bodies in the lungs of sensitive persons.
Quaternium-7, 15, 31, 60, etc	Toxic, causes skin rashes and allergic reactions. See Nitrosating agents From Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS): SKIN: PROLONGED OR REPEATED EXPOSURE MAY CAUSE SKIN IRRITATION. MAY CAUSE MORE SEVERE RESPONSE IF SKIN IS DAMP.
Rancid natural emollients	Natural oils used in cosmetics should be cold pressed. The refined vegetable oils found on supermarket shelves and many health food stores which lack colour, odour and taste are devoid of nutrients, essential fatty acids, vitamins and unsaponifiables - all valuable skin conditioning agents! They also contain poisonous "trans" fatty acids as a result of the refining process. Another important factor to consider with creams made from plant oil is the use-by date. The most beneficial plant oils (like rosehip, borage and evening primrose oils) are polyunsaturated, which means they oxidise and go rancid fairly quickly (about 6 months). Most off-the-shelf cosmetics have a shelf life of three years. Rancid oils are harmful, they form free-radicals, which damage and age your skin.
Silicone derived emollients	Silicone emollients are occlusive - that is they coat the skin, trapping anything beneath it, and do not allow the skin to breathe (much like plastic wrap would do.) Recent studies have indicated that prolonged exposure of the skin to sweat, by occlusion, causes skin irritation. Some synthetic emollients are known tumour promoters and accumulate in the liver and lymph nodes. They are also non-biodegradable, causing negative environmental impact.
Sodium Cocoyl Sarcosinate	See Anionic Surfactants
Sodium Laureth Sulfate (SLES) Ammonium Laureth Sulfate (ALES)	When combined with other chemicals, SLES and ALES can create nitrosamines, a potent class of carcinogens. It is frequently disguised in semi-natural cosmetics with the explanation "comes from coconut". See Anionic Surfactants See Ethoxylated surfactants See Nitrosating agents
Sodium Lauroyl Sarcosinate	See Anionic Surfactants
Sodium Lauryl Sulfate (SLS) / Ammonium Lauryl Sulfate (ALS)	Animals exposed to SLS and ALS experience eye damage, central nervous system depression, laboured breathing, diarrhoea, severe skin irritation, and even death. Young eyes may not develop properly if exposed to SLS and ALS because proteins are dissolved. SLS and ALS may also damage the skin's immune system by causing layers to separate and inflame. It is frequently disguised in semi-natural cosmetics with the explanation "comes from coconut". See Nitrosating agents See Anionic Surfactants
Sodium Methyl Cocoyl Taurate	See Nitrosating agents See Anionic Surfactants
Stearalkonium Chloride	A chemical used in hair conditioners and creams. Causes allergic reactions. Stearalkonium chloride was developed by the fabric industry as a fabric softener, and is a lot cheaper and easier to use in hair conditioning formulas than proteins or herbals, which do help hair health. Toxic. See Cationic surfactants
Talc	Scientific studies have shown that routine application of talcum powder in the genital area is associated with a three-to-fourfold increase in the development of ovarian cancer.
TEA (Triethanolamine) Laureth Sulfate	Synthetic emulsifier. Carcinogenic nitrosamine contamination concerns. See Anionic Surfactants See Nitrosating agents
TEA / Triethanolamine compounds	Carcinogenic nitrosamine contamination concerns. See Nitrosating agents
Toluene	HARMFUL IF INHALED OR ABSORBED THROUGH SKIN. MAY AFFECT LIVER, KIDNEYS, BLOOD SYSTEM, OR CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM. CAUSES IRRITATION TO SKIN, EYES AND RESPIRATORY TRACT. EXPOSURE TO TOLUENE MAY AFFECT THE DEVELOPING FOETUS.