



What's in a Cleaner?

Avoid labels with the following messages:

- Danger or poison means that ingesting even just a few drops of the product can be life threatening.
- Warning or caution means that ingesting a teaspoon of the product can be life threatening.
- Flammable or combustible means the product most likely contains volatile organic compounds (VOC's), which are especially harmful to children.

For more information about asthma, visit www.famallies.org or call (414) 390-2179.

WHAT'S IN A CLEANER?

Chemical cleaners

Chemical name	Health effects	Found in
Alkanol amines	Carcinogen precursors (toxins that have a role in causing cancer)	All-purpose cleaners
Alkyl phenoxy ethanols	Hormone disruptors	Laundry detergents and all-purpose cleaners
Amyl acetate	Neurotoxin (a toxin that affects the brain and nervous system)	Furniture polish
Butyl cellosolve	Liver/kidney neurotoxin	All-purpose cleaners, window cleaners, spray cleaners and scouring powders
Sodium hypochlorite (chlorine bleach)	Severe irritant, carcinogen precursor	Bleaches, scouring powders, toilet bowl cleaners, disinfectants
Cresol	Liver/kidney neurotoxin	Disinfectant products
Crystalline silica	Carcinogen	All-purpose cleaners and scouring powders
Dichloroisocyanurate	Reproductive, developmental and immune system disruptor	Tub and tile cleaners, scouring powders and dishwasher detergents
Diethanolamines	Create carcinogenic nitrosamines (toxins that can cause cancer)	Detergents, dish liquids and all-purpose cleaners
Dioxane	Immunosuppressant, carcinogen	Window cleaners, laundry liquids and dish liquids
Ethylene glycol	Neurotoxin	All-purpose cleaners
Formaldehyde	Carcinogen	Deodorizers, disinfectants and germicides
Glycol ethers	Reproductive toxin, liver/kidney neurotoxin	All-purpose cleaners, window cleaners, spray cleaners and scouring powders
Methylene chloride	Carcinogen, liver/kidney neurotoxin, cardiac trigger	Degreasers
Morpholine	Liver/kidney toxin	All-purpose cleaners, waxes and polishes
Naphthalene	Kidney toxin, cataract trigger, carcinogen	Toilet cleaners, carpet cleaners and deodorizers
Nitrobenzene	Blood poison	Polishes
P-dichlorobenzene	Neurotoxin, hormone disruptor, carcinogen	Deodorizers and mothballs
Phosphoric acid	Corrosive skin toxicant (can eat away skin)	Tub and tile cleaners and toilet cleaners
Phenol	Highly toxic general poison	Polishes, mold and mildew cleaners
Stoddard solvent	Neurotoxin	Degreasers and spot removers
Xylene	Reproductive and developmental toxin, neurotoxin, kidney toxin	Degreasers

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Natural cleaners

Ingredient	Purpose
Baking soda	Deodorizer, non-abrasive scouring powder, environmentally harmless, combats grease and acids
Beeswax	Floor and furniture wax
Borax	Deodorizer, non-abrasive scouring powder, all-purpose cleaner, mold inhibitor and rust stain remover
Carnauba wax	Wood floor and furniture wax
Citrus fruit (orange, lemon, lime)	Grease cutter, deodorizer and flea repellent
Eucalyptus oil	Insect repellent
Essential oils	Air freshening, scenting
Hydrogen peroxide	Bleaching agent and antibacterial. Sanitizer.
Joboba oil	Wood polisher
Lavender oil	Disinfectant, deodorizer
Lemon juice	Antibacterial. Antiseptic (prevents growth of micro-organisms). Scenting.
Vegetable-based liquid soap	General detergent product substitute
Neem tree oil	Insect repellent
Olive oil	Wood polisher
Washing soda	Grease and grime cutter, wax remover and deodorizer
White distilled vinegar	Dissolves hard water mineral scale and greasy build-up, removes tarnish, cleans wood and glass. Harmless to humans and the environment. Acts as a disinfectant (kills bacteria and fungi). Fights stains.
Tea tree oil	Antibacterial, antifungal and antiviral agent, deodorizer

References

Hollendar, J., Davis, G., Hollendar, M., & Doyle, R. (2005). Naturally Clean: The seventh generation guide to safe & healthy, non-toxic cleaning. British Columbia, Canada: New Society Publishers.