

# SHOPPING STRATEGIES SHIFT CHEMICAL EXPOSURES AMONG BLACK WOMEN AND LATINAS



We asked South Los Angeles women about their personal care product shopping behaviors.



We collected urine samples to measure levels of **28** commonly used personal care product chemicals in the body. Many of these chemicals act like our bodies' hormones.



## Main Findings



Fragrance, parabens (a preservative), and bisphenol A (a common ingredient in plastics) were the most common ingredients that women avoided in products while shopping.



Black women who avoided products with fragrance as an ingredient had significantly lower levels of diethyl phthalate (DEP), a common ingredient in fragranced products, in their bodies.



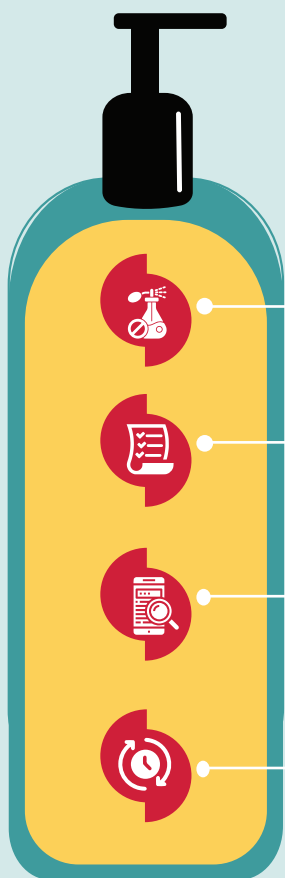
Latinas who avoided products with oxybenzone (BP-3), a common sunscreen ingredient, had significantly lower levels of BP-3 in their bodies.



Women who avoided products listing parabens as an ingredient had 2x lower levels in their bodies.

## Recommendations

Do what you can - even small actions matter



**Avoid fragrances:** skip products that have “fragrance” or “parfum” as an ingredient.

**Less might be better:** choose products with shorter ingredient lists – which means fewer chemicals used.

**Check resources:** use apps to help you understand what’s in your products.

**Reevaluate your routine:** ask yourself if this is a must-have in your routine or if you can get rid of it.

## Our Results in Context



Reading your labels to avoid products with harmful chemicals can be one strategy to use to reduce your exposure to chemicals.



However, not all communities have equal access to less toxic products since these products are often more expensive and not available in all neighborhoods.



Robust chemical policies that regulate or ban toxic chemicals from being used in personal care products are the most equitable solution that helps protect everyone.

# Background

## Study Goal



We explored how women shop for personal care products. We also looked at whether shopping behaviors affect levels of harmful ingredients in the body.



## Exposure Inequities



Social and economic factors influence personal care product use and choices.



Discrimination and racist beauty standards may drive Black women and Latinas to use more personal care products, increasing their risk of health inequities from chemicals.

Our analyses included  
**35 Black women**  
and **35 Latinas**



## Study Population

South  
Los Angeles

About **one-third of Black women** had a professional degree or higher



About **one-third of Latinas** reported attending **some college**



**43%** of Latinas completed the study in **Spanish**



## Why South Los Angeles?

South Los Angeles is an environmental justice neighborhood



Over **90%** of residents identify as **Black, Hispanic/Latinx, Asian, or a race other than White**



About **75%** of the residents **live** below **200% of the poverty line**



The top **10%** most **disproportionately environmentally burdened** in the state