What should I know about cleaning products used at home or work?

- Some are full of harmful chemicals and have strong smells. Some may
  - burn your eyes, nose, or throat
  - give you trouble breathing
  - make you cough

- Some may have chemicals that could increase your risk of cancer and other health problems. Products that are most likely to be harmful include
  - drain cleaner
  - oven cleaner
  - toilet bowl cleaner

How can cleaning products affect my health?

- It depends on
  - how harmful they are
  - how long you have been near them
  - when in your life you have contact with them

- Some can disrupt your hormones:
  - Some may change the start of puberty in young teens.
  - Some may keep your body from making enough thyroid hormone.

- If you're a woman, disrupted hormones may
  - make it harder for you to get pregnant
  - change the pattern of your monthly period
  - increase your risk of having a miscarriage
  - make it harder for you to carry a baby to term
  - increase your risk of breast cancer
  - cause birth defects in baby boys (penis and scrotum)

- If you're a man, disrupted hormones may
  - lower your sperm count and make it harder to get a woman pregnant
  - increase your risk of cancer of the testicles

Green Choices information is also online: [www.plannedparenthood.org/greenchoices](http://www.plannedparenthood.org/greenchoices)
Cleaning Products

What are some safer ways to clean?

• Make your own cleaning products. You can use the following recipes:

  • Oven Cleaner
    Mix 5 tablespoons baking soda + 3 drops dish soap + 4 tablespoons white vinegar. Apply paste to walls of oven. Scrub, wipe clean, and rinse.

  • Drain Cleaner
    Pour ½ cup baking soda down the drain. Then pour ½ cup white vinegar down the drain. After the foam settles, rinse drain with boiling water.

  • Toilet Bowl Cleaner
    Sprinkle bowl with baking soda. Spray with white vinegar. Scrub with toilet brush.

  • Shower Mold and Mildew Remover
    Mix ½ cup 3 percent hydrogen peroxide + 1 cup water. Spray on area.

  • All-Purpose Cleaner
    Fill a spray bottle with 1 part vinegar and 1 part warm water. Shake, spray, and wipe with cloth. You can also add a few drops of essential oil to reduce the smell of vinegar.

• Read product labels.
  • Stay away from products with labels that say, “caution,” “warning,” or “danger.”
  • Never mix cleaning products.

• Keep cleaning products away from children and pets.
  Call the National Poison Center (1-800-222-1222) if anyone has an accident with one.

Where can I get more information about cleaning products?


• Women’s Voices for the Earth: www.womensvoices.org


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