

What You Should Know About...

Natural Personal Care Products



The natural personal care industry is growing five times faster than regular personal care products. Roughly 63 percent of people are more conscious of the natural ingredients that go into personal care products than five years ago. But while public interest in natural personal care products is growing stronger each day, research confirms consumers are still confused about what constitutes a “natural” product.

For example, a recent survey by Yankelovich, a leading consumer research company, showed that more than three of every four (78 percent) American women think natural personal care is currently regulated or don’t know if it is, while nearly all (97 percent) think it should be. In addition, two of every three American women think a personal care product labeled natural should contain at least 95 percent natural ingredients.

A New Standard in 'Natural'

The Natural Products Association took a huge stride toward ending this confusion when it launched its certification program last year, which would finally define the term natural and include an easily-identified seal. The association is proud to announce that today shoppers can find the seal on many products from manufacturers who are dedicated to high quality, truly natural personal health.

Between now and 2010, when the standard will officially be reviewed again, it will be open to contrary points of view and a “debate and review” procedure will be provided to ensure the best thinking is used in the evolution of the standard. Over time, the Natural Products Association Standard for Personal Care Products will harmonize with existing global natural and organic standards as appropriate to lessen industry and consumer confusion with differing standards.

Consume Intelligently

Not everyone is going to automatically agree on what we believe is natural. Therefore, we encourage consumers to do your own

research. To start with, we encourage you to keep in mind five important questions when purchasing products and compare the answers to the Natural Products Association’s standards given here:

On average, what percent natural is the product?

The Natural Products Association standard requires products to be 95 percent or more.

Does it include any of these ingredients:

Parabens, Sulfates, Chemical Sunscreens, Petro Chemicals, Glycols, Pthalates, PEGs or PPGs, DEA/TEA, Synthetic Polymers, Formaldehyde Donors or 1, 4-Dioxanes?

The Natural Products Association Standard for Personal Care Products does not allow these ingredients. In addition, natural alternatives are available. Natural products should contain only ingredients that come from a renewable/plentiful source found in nature—in other words, flora, fauna or mineral sources. Any synthetic ingredient must only be used in a natural personal care product only when there is no viable natural alternative ingredient available and only when there are absolutely no suspected human health risks.

Are any of these processes used:

Ethoxylation, Sulfination or Polymerization?

Truly natural products should not use any of these industrial processes. They have the potential to change the chemical make-up of ingredients that start out natural, so in the end, they aren’t natural ingredients at all. Instead, natural processes like distillation/condensation, extraction/steamed distillation/pressure cooking and hydrolysis, should be used to maximize the purity of natural ingredients.

On average, what percent PCR (post consumer recycled) is the packaging? Are they recyclable?

Our standard requires products labeled “natural” to use biodegradable ingredients and the most environmentally sensitive packaging.

Is the product tested on animals?

To meet our standard, an animal should never be tested on either at the ingredient-level or of the final product.

To learn more about the Natural Products Association’s standard for natural personal care products, including specific guidelines and a list of certified products, please visit www.theNaturalSeal.org.

Brought to you by



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and your local Natural Products
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