



## Paraben Fact Sheet

### According to the Environmental Protection Agency:

- Parabens are a family of chemical preservatives which include the commonly used methyl, propyl, butyl and ethyl preservatives.
- Paraben chemicals display estrogenic activity<sup>1</sup>, mimicking the body's own estrogen and producing endocrine-disrupting action (the hypothalamus, ovaries and thyroid) when rubbed into the skin or washed down the drain into drinking water.
- Continual introduction of Parabens into sewage treatment systems and recreational waters leads to health risk for aquatic organisms. Fish absorb these chemicals and humans eat these fish.

### According to Dr. Elizabeth Smith:<sup>2</sup>

- It is a known medical fact that estrogen stimulates breast cancer.
- Anything absorbed through the skin may be as high as ten-times the concentration of an oral dose (think about how nicotine and birth control/hormone patches work-the chemicals are quickly absorbed directly through the skin).
- In one study, Parabens were injected under the skin of participants and were found to have an estrogenic response on uterine tissues.
- Scientists observing the harmful effects of Parabens on the uterus remarked, 'it is suggested that the safety of using these chemicals should be reassessed'.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Breast Cancer Fund has a well documented paper on the hazards of Parabens which sites 12 studies connecting Parabens to estrogenic activity. This study can be found at <http://www.breastcancerfund.org/site/pp.asp?c=kwKXLdPaE&b=1203361>

<sup>2</sup> Elizabeth Smith made these statements in a review of a source study by John (JP) Sumpter, Institute for the Environment, Brunel University, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 3PH, United Kingdom. The complete paper can be viewed at <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-77276631.html>. John Sumpter is an active member of the Society for Endocrinology and other related groups- more information on Mr. Sumpter can be found at <http://www.brunel.ac.uk/about/acad/ife/staff/JohnSumpter>