



## Sensory onslaught in the home

by **Rafaele Joudry**

**A**s an Informed Choice reader, you no doubt already have a high commitment to health, so your family's lifestyle is naturally healthier than most. However, chemical toxins are so insidious today that we have to be super vigilant to keep them out of our homes.

According to Hilda Clark, author of *The Cure to All Diseases*, there are two major causes of disease, parasites and pollutants. She explains how the two work together to produce disease. First, the pollutants weaken our system and this enables the critters to get into places where they shouldn't be - to cross the blood brain barrier and the gut wall and the placenta. Most 21<sup>st</sup> century diseases are a combination of viruses and toxic effects. Western doctors are valiantly hunting down viruses and bombarding them with chemicals but are sadly ignorant of the fact that it was toxic chemicals that rendered us susceptible to the viruses in the first place.

### What's staring you in the face?

Without our realizing it, many unsafe products are sitting on our bathroom shelves waiting to be rubbed on our skin or put into our mouths. Beware - anyone can use the words "organic" or "natural" on their packaging. They have no legal meaning. "Natural" may only mean that 10% of the ingredients are from a natural source. To be safe you need to be informed and learn the logos and brand names of ethical companies and certification bodies that have strict standards. It is useful to know which ingredients to avoid and convert your bathroom to safe products.

### What's getting up your nose?

Each of our sensory systems, designed to take in sustaining stimuli, also takes in harmful substances. Airborne toxins are some of the most dangerous. Air is our most urgent need since breath is a moment by moment necessity, so a toxic onslaught for the lungs is the fastest acting threat to our health.

This may explain why, although the mainstream medical position continues to deny the increase of many 21<sup>st</sup> century diseases, this is not so with asthma. However, their explanation for this increase is rather misguided. It is hard to pin a sudden, significant increase over 1-2 decades on genetics (to which most health issues are preferentially attributed today), so for once the environmental causes are given credence. But the rather spurious environmental theory put forward is that our homes are too clean and the lack of exposure to germs weakens our immunity. As soon as I heard this it was blatantly obvious to me, after my lifelong concern with chemical toxins, that the theorists had missed the mark, due of course to the apparent solidarity between medicine and pharmacy never to point the causal finger at pharmacological/chemical substances.

### When you clean over exuberantly you are doing two things:

1. Removing germs
2. Coating all surfaces and filling the air with a cocktail of chemicals with unknown health risks

Both these effects are likely to interfere with immunity. Cancer researcher and author Chris Woollams cites studies which show that women who don't go out to work but stay home and clean the house are significantly more likely to get cancer. Other disease contributors are poor diet, junk food additives and vaccination.

Some leading asthma researchers are certainly on the right track and the view that the cleanliness theory missed the mark is shared by Professor Charles Mackay, director of arthritis and asthma research at the Garvan Institute in Sydney. Mackay says there has been an unprecedented increase in asthma which is impossible to explain through a genetic basis and believes environmental factors play the key role. These include cigarette smoke, pollutants, toxins, allergens and dust mites. Evidence also points to gas heaters and a protein shed by cockroaches. Mackay believes the problem can be largely addressed through diet. In particular he is focussing on the replacement of "bad fats" with good essential fatty acids and other dietary issues.

Have you reached the point where you can't walk down the cleaning aisle in the supermarket without feeling woozy? If so, don't buy anything in that aisle! Your body is urgently warning you that it is on chemical overload. How much worse may be the chemical overload carried by your children who came a generation later and had to deal with a far greater onslaught much earlier in life? Clean with baking soda and vinegar or buy safe cleaning products from companies that stand behind a high commitment to a safer environment.

Not only bathroom and cleaning products but gases and additives to many building and household furnishings can contribute to chemical pollutants in the home.

One significant group of chemicals to avoid is plasticisers, found in plastic drink bottles (use glass instead), most plastic cosmetic bottles and plastic lining on processed foods such as the white lining inside tin cans. Plasticizers are oestrogen mimics (artificial oestrogen) responsible for hormone imbalances and dozens of associated illnesses. Using cling wrap leaves thousands of tiny plastic hooks in your food. Not such a good idea!

Toxic airborne chemicals are given off by new cars, furniture, mattresses and carpets, and the sprays used to protect these items against staining and moisture are particularly toxic. Chipboard furniture gases off formaldehyde for several years leading to chronic

fatigue and an array of health issues that has been dubbed "mobile home syndrome", due to the extensive use of chipboard in mobile homes.

Insect sprays or lotion are one of the worst health dangers as they are specifically designed as a toxin to the nervous system. Use protective clothing, eat more garlic or put a bit of pure lemon oil on your hair and clothes instead. (do not put it directly on your skin if you are going into the sun as it may cause pigmentation.)

### What's getting under your skin?

30 years ago they thought the skin was a barrier that kept things out. Now it is known to be our biggest organ of absorption. Cheap skin care products – and most expensive mainstream brands – are as big a risk to your family's health as air borne pollutants and food additives.

**The following substances have well known and proven health risks yet continue to be used in the huge majority of skin care.**

- SLS (sodium lauryl sulfate) is absorbed into tissue and reduces the ability of tissue (be it skin or the gut wall or other organ surfaces) to repel intruders by 40%. SLS is a derivative of coconut oil and sometimes misleadingly labelled as such.
- SLES (sodium laureth sulfate) and other common chemicals found in personal care products will bind to other chemicals to form carcinogens.

#### Also avoid:

- Aluminium
- Butane
- Fluoride
- Propane
- Propylene Glycol
- Salt
- Sodium fluoride
- Talc, linked to ovarian cancer
- Tallow or animal fat

So be a conscious shopper and read the labels! Most so called "natural" products still contain many of these ingredients. To avoid them you need to find a company committed to researching safe alternatives.

It is not my purpose here to recommend brands and companies, and space does not allow me to document all the effects of these chemicals but it is worthwhile to consult authoritative resources by those committed to informing the public about dangerous substances. Some excellent books which are reader friendly and thoroughly researched are *The Chemical Maze* by Bill Statham, *The Safe Shoppers Bible* by Dr Epstein, founder of the Cancer Prevention Society, and *Chemical Crisis* by Diana Crumpler.

### Ear ache?

At least 20% of children have their learning impeded in primary years due to middle ear infections. Inflammation of the middle ear membranes blocks the eustachian tube putting pressure on the ear drum and causing temporary hearing loss.

When a growing brain misses a week of sensory input this is as serious as when a university science student misses a term of study. Children who suffer repeated ear infections consistently



who suffer repeated ear infections consistently have poorer academic results.

Children's immune related health disorders seem to come in sets. Allergies, sinus and ear problems, urinary infections, digestive problems, sleep and behaviour disorders and learning difficulties are all highly correlated. Therefore any of these symptoms is likely a sign of general immune deficiency and sensory integration problems. To simply suppress the symptoms of earache with Panadol and Sudafed and not look any further is a risky choice because it may be a sign of a much more deep rooted systemic weakness. Today the implications are more serious than in your grandmother's time when the world was less polluted and rampant immune deficiency was not the norm.

A more fundamental preventative approach is to treat the ear with sound therapy, so the whole auditory system is stimulated and sensory integration is improved, while simultaneously addressing diet and chemical exposures. Sound therapy can be done at home on a portable tape player and need not involve clinic visits or high practitioner fees.

### Poor taste!

If only we could taste all the toxic chemicals in our foods we wouldn't eat them! Unfortunately they are mostly tasteless. Not only that but they render our food tasteless too. Lacking natural flavour, chemically forced and over processed food is spiced up with sugar, salt and artificial flavours which corrupt the taste buds, so many people and children in particular, don't recognize real food. But when you are used to fresh, organic fruit and vegetables with the natural herbs and spices that nature offers, you will have little tolerance for artificial substances. After eating organic produce for a few weeks you will notice how tasteless the chemically grown foods are when you switch back. It is easy now to get regular home delivery of organic produce in most cities. Growing your own is even more rewarding. Spend more on quality produce, less on processed food and your grocery bill will go down. Afford avocados and fresh berries instead of McCains and Sarah Lee.

For children who just won't eat vegetables, enriched food supplements are worth adding to your plan. Picky kids need foods that are super concentrated with a wide variety of nutrients such as aloe or noni juice, or green powdered products including spirulina and other green nutrients. This can take some of the stress off the family eating regime if at least you know they are supplementing meagre portions with enriched goodness. Minerals are very important too as today's environment acts in many ways to deplete our mineral reserves. Ten thousand years ago our bodies had 3-4 times more minerals than they do today so a liquid colloidal mineral is an essential addition to most families' diets today.

Added nutrients strengthen the liver and the immune system to enable them to deal with toxic chemicals more effectively, making this an important consideration in building a safe, healthy home environment.

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