

# The Self-Sufficiency

# Shoppe Newsletter

Issue 31

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The Amazing Attributes of:

## Vinegar!



*There is nothing quite as amazing as vinegar. It's many uses extend far beyond that of any commercial product. It features as an alternative in almost every aspect of the home. Vinegar is very 'planet-friendly'. It's chemical free, cheap and safe! Perfect in every way!*

It's so good in fact that it is 'commercially unviable'. The more products available commercially for individual use the more money can be made from consumer sales. But with vinegar its uses are so vast that it out-strips the necessity for many similar commercial products – and, of course undermines commercial profits. "What's the point of that!" (tongue in cheek!).

One important point: There are different types of vinegar. Use cheaper (home-brand) white vinegar for cleaning and similar jobs. Use better quality vinegar – such as cider vinegar – for personal care jobs.

So what can we use vinegar for? Here's the list:

**Cleaning:** The mild acidity of vinegar cleans and helps strip dirt and grease. Spray dirty surfaces with vinegar to help remove grime and grease.

More information: Booklet No. 23 'Green Cleaning'



**Disinfecting:** Vinegar is a mild acidic anti-bacterial agent that kills organisms - ideal as a disinfectant. Use to disinfect and clean toilet basin, drains, bathroom basin and bath, tiles etc. More information: Booklet No. 23 'Green Cleaning'

**Skin Care:** (Cider vinegar). Ideal as a skin astringent for balancing oiliness, restoring acidity (particularly after using alkali based soaps). It's a natural & safe anti-bacterial agent for dealing with acne and mild skin infections. Not suited to sensitive skin. Dilute: 7 parts water to 1 part vinegar. Apply with cotton wool ball to face(after cleansing) or add one cup vinegar to bath water. More Information Booklet No. 30 'Natural Skin Care'.

**Deodorising:** Ask Grandma – she'll tell you the best way to eradicate odours from the kitchen is to dampen a tea-towel with vinegar and swirl it around the air! A more modern technique is to pour equal parts vinegar and water in a spray bottle. Spray as necessary to 'clear the air'. As the acid odour of the vinegar dissipates it take with

it all other odours. Add a little fragrance – such as a few drops lavender oil to enhance the odour. More Information Booklet No. 22 ‘Home-made Air-fresheners’.

**Hair-care:** An ‘after shampoo’ hair rinse of one part cider vinegar to 3 parts water will condition and leave hair shiny. (Leave rinse in the hair – do not wash out). From No. 14 ‘Natural Hair Care’.

**Personal Deodorant:** The mild deodorising and anti-bacterial properties of vinegar make it an ideal deodorant. Make up a spray solution of one part cider vinegar to eight parts water. Add scents as desired. From Information booklet No. 2 ‘Homemade Deodorants’.



**Foot Care:** Bath feet in a vinegar-water solution to deal with smelly feet and tinea. Booklet No. 27 ‘Fantastic Feet’.

**Insect Repellent:** Rub vinegar onto the skin to make it ‘unpalatable’ to insects. Booklet No. 20 ‘Homemade Insect Repellents’.



**Culinary:** In the kitchen, besides preserving food, it can be used for such jobs as souring milk or cream, stiffen egg whites, prolong shelf-life of cheese, whiten potatoes, and more. Booklet No. 33 ‘Versatile Vinegar’.

**Handyman:** Use vinegar to clean paint brushes, loosen rusty nails or screws, rejuvenate leather and moisten dried glue. From Booklet No. 55 ‘Handyman Hints’

**Fabric Softener:** Vinegar will soften and deodorise clothes. It will help whiten whites and brighten dyed colours.

**Pesticide Removal:** Soak and wash store purchased fruit and vegetables in vinegar to remove chemical residue from commercial sprays and pesticides. Dilute one part vinegar to three parts water.

Recipes:

**Homemade Disinfectant:**



Half fill a recycled plastic bottle (an old vinegar bottle is ideal) with cheap (white) vinegar. Fill the remainder of the bottle with water. Add a four drops eucalyptus oil and 2 drops green food colouring. Apply lid and shake. For Lavender disinfectant use lavender oil and pink/purple colouring.

(From Booklet No. 33 Versatile Vinegar)

**Easy Herbal Vinegar:** Place sprigs of your favourite fresh herb or flower into a bottle of vinegar. Leave to infuse on week before using.

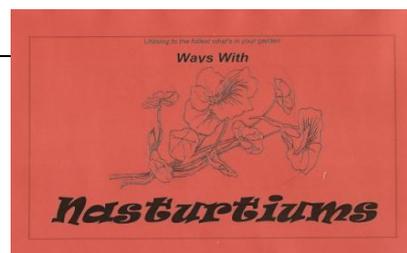


## ‘Ways With’ Booklet Set

*Utilizing what’s in your garden to the absolute fullest!*

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**ALL \$12.00 each or FULL SET (all 10 titles): \$96.00 download from [www.theshoppe.com.au](http://www.theshoppe.com.au)**



Ways With Booklet:

### Nasturtiums

*Many people do not realise that the simple nasturtium plant has innumerable uses. The plant originated from the jungles of Peru and Brazil and was brought to Europe in the 1500’s by the Spanish. The Peruvian Indians used the leaves as a tea to treat coughs, colds and flu. Being high in vitamin C and sulphur nasturtiums are a natural preventative antibiotic and were often used as a poultice for minor cuts and scratches. As an infusion it can be used as an anti-bacterial skin astringent. The seed, when dried, is similar to pepper in taste – and was even used to replace peppercorns during World War 2 due to short supply.*

**‘Ways With: Nasturtiums’**

**Price:** \$12.00 (see page 4 for ordering information)



In the Press:

## Chemicals in Skin-Care Products

It seems a huge contradiction in terms to use toxic products in an effort to achieve healthy, ageless & beautiful skin! I found this very interesting newspaper item (below) recently – its a real eye-opener! Not surprisingly my 'Natural Skin Care Workshop' is the most popular of the 18 different workshops on offer. The basic philosophy behind the workshop is that effective skin-care can be achieved by using just five basic ingredients: 1. Oatmeal 2. Cider Vinegar (or Lemon juice) 3. Almond Oil 4. Herbs (rosemary, thyme & sage, etc.) 5. Honey/Beeswax. All not toxic, effective and not tested on animals! No need for any other commercially purchased products or chemicals.

For more information refer to the 'Natural Skin Care Booklet Set' (it will tell you all that you need to know about safe, natural and cheap skin care techniques):



### Natural Skin Care Booklet Set

5 booklets - No. 30 Natural Skin Care, No. 13 Making Simple Salves and Creams, No. 26 Beautiful Hands, No. 58 Old-time Oatmeal, No. 37 Beautiful Baths

Price: \$39.00 (Download from [www.theshoppe.com.au](http://www.theshoppe.com.au))

# Chemical cocktail

## Report reveals 515 substances women put on daily

LIZ WALSH

WOMEN and their cosmetics: it's an obsession that has stood the test of time. But it seems that new red lipstick or familiar scent of a favourite perfume could be doing more harm than good.

New research shows the average woman applies more than 500 different chemicals to her body every day via a cocktail of products – from shampoos to body lotions, to foundations and eye shadows. And those chemicals, many of which purport to contain anti-ageing properties, could, in some cases, be doing the reverse or causing illness.

A survey by UK-based company Biosense – which produces natural deodorants – found the average woman's daily grooming routine involves plastering 515 synthetic chemicals on her body.

It found moisturisers can contain up to 30 chemicals, and perfumes up to 400.

Murdoch University nutritional and environmental toxicologist Professor Peter Dingle, who co-authored book *Dangerous Beauty*, said society had gone too far in its use of chemicals.

"Our skin isn't this rubber outer layer of our body," he said. "It's a living, breathing, integral part of our health and wellbeing, and if you start to play with it, then you end up with problems."

He pointed to chemicals like sodium lauryl sulphate, found in shampoos, and polyethylene glycol found in body lotions, which are linked to skin irritations.

Prof Dingle said it was often hard to prove a beauty product was responsible for a health issue because humans put multiple chemicals on their skin every day.

He said while regulatory authorities closely monitored cosmetics, they didn't know the cumulative effect of them.

"How can they regulate if

#### SHAMPOO

**AVERAGE NUMBER OF CHEMICALS:** 15  
**MOST WORRYING:** Sodium lauryl sulphate; tetrasodium and propylene glycol.  
**POSSIBLE SIDE-EFFECTS:** Irritation; possible eye damage.

#### EYESHADOW

**CHEMICALS:** 26  
**MOST WORRYING:** Polyethylene terephthalate.  
**POSSIBLE SIDE-EFFECTS:** Linked to cancer, infertility; hormonal disruptions and damage to the body's organs.

#### NAIL VARNISH

**CHEMICALS:** 31  
**MOST WORRYING:** Phthalates.  
**POSSIBLE SIDE-EFFECTS:** Linked to fertility issues and problems in developing babies.

#### DEODORANT

**CHEMICALS:** 15  
**MOST WORRYING:** Isopropyl myristate, 'parfum'.  
**POSSIBLE SIDE-EFFECTS:** Irritation of skin, eyes and lungs; headaches; dizziness; respiratory problems.

#### PERFUME

**CHEMICALS:** 250  
**MOST WORRYING:** Benzaldehyde.  
**POSSIBLE SIDE-EFFECTS:** Irritation to mouth, throat and eyes; nausea; linked to kidney damage.

#### FAKE TAN

**CHEMICALS:** 22  
**MOST WORRYING:** Ethylparaben, methylparaben, propylparaben.  
**POSSIBLE SIDE-EFFECTS:** Rashes; irritation; hormonal disruption.

#### HAIRSPRAY

**AVERAGE NUMBER OF CHEMICALS:** 11  
**MOST WORRYING:** Octinoxate, Isophthalates.  
**POSSIBLE SIDE-EFFECTS:** Allergies; Irritation to eyes, nose and throat; hormone disruption, linked to changes in cell structure.

#### BLUSHER

**CHEMICALS:** 16  
**MOST WORRYING:** Ethylparabens, methylparaben, propylparaben.  
**POSSIBLE SIDE-EFFECTS:** Rashes; Irritation; hormonal disruptions.

#### FOUNDATION

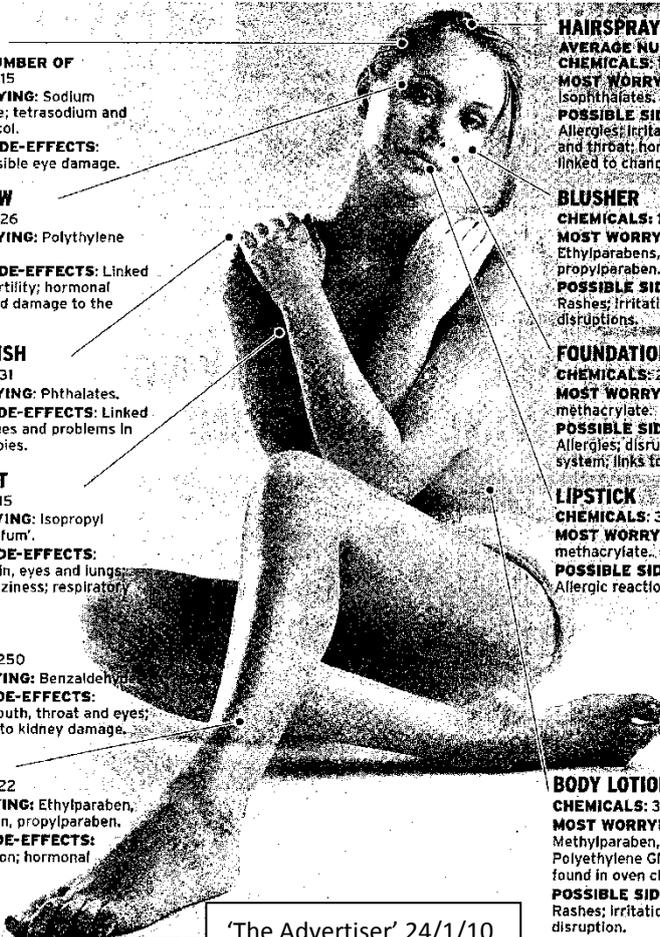
**CHEMICALS:** 24  
**MOST WORRYING:** Polymethyl methacrylate.  
**POSSIBLE SIDE-EFFECTS:** Allergies; disrupts immune system; links to cancer.

#### LIPSTICK

**CHEMICALS:** 33  
**MOST WORRYING:** Polymethyl methacrylate.  
**POSSIBLE SIDE-EFFECTS:** Allergic reactions; links to cancer.

#### BODY LOTION

**CHEMICALS:** 32  
**MOST WORRYING:** Methylparaben, Propylparaben, Polyethylene Glycol, which is also found in oven cleaners.  
**POSSIBLE SIDE-EFFECTS:** Rashes; Irritation; hormonal disruption.



'The Advertiser' 24/1/10



## New Shoppe Website

If you have not yet browsed through the new 'Shoppe' website please do so. It's a very comprehensive site covering all the topics presented via The Shoppe and the Workshops with useful recipes, down-loads, money-saving and environmentally friendly ideas. [www.theshoppe.com.au](http://www.theshoppe.com.au)



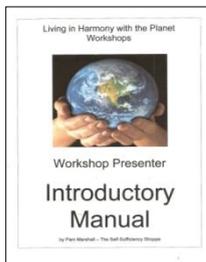
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# Your Questions & Comments

Thanks Pam,

Great newsletter! Regarding your Christmas ideas: I use old rolls of leftover wallpaper as gift wrapping paper. I find them at garage sales. I tell people to wet it after unwrapping their gifts and use to line drawers! I will try your shampoo recipe some time. I have a very itchy scalp and found that, for me, one particular brand of shampoo (Matrix - expensive!) is best - plus washing hair at least every two days is best. Amanda

Hi Amanda,

**The main comment I receive from people looking for a more 'natural' shampoo is the cost factor. The simple soap-based recipe in the last Shoppe Newsletter is very cheap and effective. I encourage people to try that first – you never know it may work! – and then progress to more expensive brands if necessary.** Pam

Hi Pam – Great newsletter as always - just a quick question. The last couple of times I made my soap jelly it has not worked very well, becoming slimy and gooey instead of solidifying into a jelly consistency. What are your thoughts? It is really hard to use when it is runny as I mostly use it for the washing machine. Heidi

Hi Heidi,

**The soap-jelly needs more grated soap or washing soda or less water. All soaps are different - some are quite 'weak' with additives so do not form a thick jelly as they should. I prefer to make my soap jelly with more (extra) soap so that it is really thick and hard and then water it down as needed.** Pam

Hi Pam,

I'm looking for a recipe for making homemade shaving cream or gel. Do you have any? Also, do you know where I could find: shaving brush, old-fashioned razor/straight blade and sharpening stone? I want to get away from buying disposable items, unnecessary packaging plus make my own every-day use products. Cheers, Eric

Hi Eric,

**I've copied below a recipe from Booklet No. 50 'Recycling Soap' for making a rich soap jelly that can be used as a shaving cream – it has the added advantage of being used for all other washing tasks: shampoo, clothes washing, dish washing soap, etc. I've also listed a couple of specific recipes for shaving soap or cream. To my knowledge the old fashioned shaving equipment you speak of is near impossible to find new as it is no longer being manufactured - disposable shavers now 'dominate' the market. It's a pity in terms of resourcefulness and recycling! Maybe check-out op-shops or second-hand markets - by chance you might find what you want.** Pam

**Rich Soap Jelly Mix:** For a thicker, velvety soap mixture – more suited to a base for making personal care products use the following recipe:

Grate one bar of soap (unscented soap is best) into a saucepan - add 600 mls water (or for smaller proportion use 3 tablespoons grated soap to 300 mls water). Gently heat the mixture to dissolve soap and blend. Turn off heat and leave to cool to a thick opaque jelly. Note: The mixture may be runny at first, but will thicken as it cools.

(If you add a tablespoon of water softener such as washing soda or bicarb soda to the mix it will froth even more).



**Shaving Cream:** Grate approximately 500g grated soap or soap pieces into a jar. Add 500mls methylated spirits. Dissolve by shaking or stirring. It will take a day or so to completely dissolve the soap. Add a few drops essential oil (i.e. eucalyptus, lavender) or after-shave for added scent.

**Shaving Soap:** Mix 2 cups soap flakes or loosely grated soap with 1 cup boiling water. Add 1-2 tbsp olive oil and a little essential oil or after-shave. Whip to form a smooth cream – store in screw-top jar.

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Hi Pam,

Thank you for your wonderfully informative web site. I have found it really inspirational, as have others I have referred to your site. I would like to know how soap was made before caustic soda became available. I have heard that wood ash was used. I presume it is the fine white ash that we use to clean the glass front of our wood burning free standing fire place.

Christie

Hi Christie,

Many thanks for your interest and positive comments. Issue No. 26 of 'The Shoppe' Newsletter contains an article about soap-making (as a child I watched my Grandmother make 'bush soap' from wood ash). You'll find back issues of the newsletter in the 'Newsletter' section of the website. I've also copied below an section from an earlier newsletter that may offer some further information. Hopefully this will be of help. Booklets No. 3 & 25 contain specific information about soap-making. From my understanding the name of the 'chemical' in wood ash that has cleaning component is 'Sodium Carbonate' ('soda ash' or also called washing soda - available in laundry sections of supermarkets - used as water-softener and bath relaxant). I do not have (or know of) a soap-making recipe that uses sodium carbonate as the base in place of caustic soda. Hope this helps.

Pam



## **Making Bush Soap**

*During a recent soap-making workshop we discussed the use of caustic soda in making soap. I explained that even though caustic soda is a strong chemical – it has its origins in the natural minerals produced by the earth. It is said that the Romans invented soap by 'accidentally' combining volcanic ash with fat or oil. Anyway to prove the point I have found an old pioneering recipe explaining how to make soap using 'wood ash' – which is, quite simply, what remains after burning wood in a fire. It doesn't give specific ingredients, but at least gives some idea of how originally soap was made:*

**In a container place some ashes from a gum tree log fire. Cover the ashes with water and boil for awhile. When the mixture has cooled pour the water off into another container and discard the ashes. Add some fat to the water and boil until the mixture has thickened into a 'soft soap'. The degree of softness depends on the amount of ash and water in the mixture. If pure caustic soda is used then a harder soap can be made. It is also said that the ashes remaining from wattle leaves make a good soap – just as they are (without boiling or adding fat).**

Booklet No. 3 '**Simple Soap-Making**' (\$12.00) outlines a simple procedure for making soap. No. 25 '**More Soap-Making Recipes**' (\$12.00) contains additional soap recipes as well as information on 'Grandma's' method for making 'bush soap'.

**'Soap-Making Booklet Set'** - Includes: No. 3 - Simple Soap-Making, No. 25 - More Soap-Making Recipes, No. 50 - Recycling Soap and No. 47 - Making the Most of your Soap-Saver. Package. Price: \$33.00 (download from [www.theshoppe.com.au](http://www.theshoppe.com.au))



*Your letters, recipes, comments are always welcome. So please keep them coming!*

*Send to: The Self-Sufficiency Shoppe: P.O. Box 390 Park Holme 5043 or email:*

[pam@theshoppe.com.au](mailto:pam@theshoppe.com.au)