These chemicals are common ingredients found in conventional cleaning products that are proven to be hazardous to human health and the environment. These dangerous chemicals are not properly regulated – it’s up to you to know which cleaning ingredients to avoid!

**Phthalates**
- found in: fragranced household products such as air fresheners, dish soap, laundry detergent, surface cleaners, toilet paper; listed as just “fragrance” or “parfum”
- health risks: endocrine disruptor, carcinogen
- to avoid: choose fragrance-free products or all-natural scents like essential oils

**Ethanolamines (mono-, di-, tri-)**
- found in: surface cleaners, detergents
- health risks: asthmagen, skin/eye/respiratory irritant, nervous system toxin
- to avoid: look for all-natural cleaners or make your own with natural ingredients

**Quaternary ammonium compounds (quats)**
- found in: fabric softener, cleaners labeled “antibacterial”
- health risks: asthmagen, corrosive to skin and eyes, respiratory irritant, possible reproductive toxin, environmental toxin
- to avoid: try vinegar instead of commercial fabric softeners, and seek natural antibacterial disinfectants like tea tree oil

**Sodium hydroxide (bleach)**
- found in: many surface cleaners, laundry detergent, oven cleaner, drain opener, air freshener, stain remover
- health risks: extremely corrosive to skin and eyes, respiratory irritant, asthmagen
- to avoid: choose products without bleach, or with healthier oxygen bleach; try cleaning ovens and drains with baking soda and elbow grease

**Ammonium hydroxide (ammonia)**
- found in: glass cleaner, disinfectant spray, floor cleaner, bathroom cleaner
- Health risks: corrosive to skin and eyes, asthmagen, respiratory irritant, can be toxic to inhale, environmental toxin
- To avoid: try natural glass cleaners like vinegar, vodka, castile soap, or even cornstarch

**2-butoxyethanol**
- Found in: window cleaner, kitchen cleaner, multi-purpose cleaner
- Health risks: liver toxin, skin/eye/respiratory irritant, central nervous system depressant, can be contaminated with toxic or carcinogenic impurities
- To avoid: stick to natural ingredients like vinegar, baking soda, and essential oils

**Formaldehyde**
- Found in: dish liquid, laundry detergent, air freshener, artificial fragrance, some preservatives
- Health risks: carcinogen, toxin, asthmagen, corrodes skin and eyes, respiratory irritant
- To avoid: seek out all-natural detergents and fragrances

**Triclosan**
- Found in: dish soap, hand soap, products labeled “antibacterial”
- Health risks: endocrine disruptor, skin/eye irritant, very toxic to aquatic life, promotes increased bacterial resistance
- To avoid: use natural antibacterial substances like tea tree oil instead

**1,4-Dioxane**
- Found in: many cleaners and detergents; trace contaminant formed by other cleaning chemicals
- Health risks: carcinogen, skin/eye/respiratory irritant, liver toxin
- To avoid: choose products that do not contain ingredients distinguished by “PEG,” “-eth,” “polyethylene glycol,” “polyoxyethylene,” or “oxynol”

Visit [www.womenforahealthyenvironment.org](http://www.womenforahealthyenvironment.org) for green cleaning solutions and other ways to maintain a healthy home.