Detoxify Your Life

A Risk Assessment Tool for Eliminating Exposure to Everyday Chemicals

Chapter 1: How Toxic Are You?

What does being toxic actually mean? How can a person be "toxic"?

If you imagine a toxic person, do you picture something awful, like a green cloud following them around? Or even worse, maybe you picture a greenish-looking person, spreading some kind of nasty illness to others.

Of course, I am embellishing but human toxicity *is* a reality. Toxicity is often an obscure condition, sometimes mistaken for other illnesses. We do not become toxic instantaneously. Toxicity is a chronic condition that manifests over a long period of time. It is the result of repetitive exposure to substances that our bodies were not designed to process.

Bliss

When we were born, we entered the world in a pure state[1]. Our livers purified our blood as it flowed through our plaque-free arteries and veins. Our digestive systems were adequately populated with probiotic life forms that maintained the delicate balance of our immune systems. Our organs were functional, hormones and enzymes were secreted as designed and our waste elimination processes were effortless and spontaneous. Life was good, in our state of bliss, for those first few minutes here on earth.

But That Didn't Last Very Long…

Within minutes of our birth we were "welcomed" into the world with tests, vaccines and eyewashes. We were measured, sanitized, photographed, wrapped in synthetic fabrics and possibly some of us fed infant formula. From that day on our delicate bodies were bombarded with hundreds of toxins from sources such as "gentle" baby shampoo, plastic diapers, baby bottles and teething rings. As we grew up, sadly, things only got worse.

[1] Unfortunately, statistics now show that babies are being born with increasing amounts of toxins already stored in their tissues and organs. This is because pregnant women are exposed to toxins on a daily basis and these chemicals are able to cross the placenta to the unborn child. http://www.ewg.org/news/videos/10-americans

We were introduced to plastic toys, fire retardant fabrics, crayons, chalk, blue-colored drinks and an infinite array of child-oriented novelty foods like Fruit Loops, Spaghetti-O's and Jell-O. We were unknowingly assaulted with pesticide residues in our apple juice, which our diligent mothers probably diluted with chlorinated water in an attempt to decrease our sugar consumption. Our play surfaces were washed and sanitized with a number of harsh chemicals and fragrances, all of which were more toxic to us than the germs they were intended to protect us from. And thus, our journey into toxicity began.

The human body is not designed to process these dangerous chemicals, so it, instead, stores them away in our fat cells. These toxins then accumulate in our livers, line the walls of our arteries and are deposited into our joints. Many of these chemicals are even able to cross the blood-brain barrier and wreak havoc in our brains. Others mimic our body's natural hormones, causing imbalances. Stored toxins interfere with the normal function of our bodies causing inflammation and symptoms of disease. With no natural way for the body to eliminate these toxins, the only way to prevent disease is to ***stop allowing toxins to enter our bodies.***

How Do You Feel?

It is very possible that you are toxic and do not even know it. Do you have persistent, annoying, long term ailments that you have come to assume are normal? How often have we heard others complain that they have unexplained ailments that seem to have no cause? Sometimes people who have symptoms from toxicity go to an allopathic (conventional) doctor, only to be misdiagnosed and sent home with a prescription for a drug that will increase their level of toxicity! Instead of cleansing and supporting our body's normal detoxification processes, we are encouraged to dump more chemicals into the mix and left to wonder why we don't feel any better.

One group of people who especially benefit from reducing their toxic load are those already suffering from a major illness such as cancer, heart disease or diabetes. When we are ill, our bodies are focusing all of our available resources toward healing, and returning to our natural state of health. Lightening the load by limiting exposures to additional toxins can dramatically improve chances of recovery regardless of whether holistic or allopathic treatment is chosen. This is because our immune systems function better when we are not fighting additional chemical enemies as well.

My Story

My name is Donna and I am the founder of ChemConscious, Inc. As a chemical engineering consultant with over 33 years of chemical safety experience, I help industrial clients prevent accidents in their facilities. My work involves preventing leaks and spills of dangerous chemicals, as well as protecting workers and the community from potential exposures.

Due to what I have learned through my work, I have chosen to follow a chemical-free lifestyle. I have been on a quest to reduce my toxic load through detoxification for many years. I have discovered that there are layers of toxicity that have to be peeled away slowly, like the layers of an onion. If we tried to detoxify all at once we would most definitely experience some type of healing crisis because the toxins are just as harmful on their way out of the body as they are going in. Often, the toxins are leaving the body much faster and more concentrated than when they entered.

It's Only A Little Bit

We always say, "Oh, a little bit won't hurt" or "just this one time…" Yet those small amounts that go unnoticed at first tend to build up inside of us, slowly permeating our cells and assaulting our organs. For example, if one of the products we use contains a small amount of a toxic substance, there could be several products that we use in a day that contain the same toxin. After years and years of battling with these chemical assailants, our bodies become overloaded. Symptoms of toxicity begin to appear, we attribute them to the aging process, and then one day we wake up and say "What happened to me?"

Welcome To the Chemical-Free Lifestyle!

The chemical-free road to vitality is a three step process:

1. Stop putting toxins into your body
2. Detoxify your body
3. Maintain your new energy and vitality with healthy habits and periodic cleansing

This **Detoxify Your Life** program is designed to help you with step one only: ***stop putting toxins into your body.*** This is the easiest step of the process but also the most crucial because our bodies cannot heal if toxins are still being added. I encourage you to take this process slowly and make small changes to your lifestyle over a period of time that feels comfortable to

you. This program is designed to guide you effortlessly through the process of identifying, evaluating and addressing the everyday chemicals that are affecting your health and vitality. It is also designed to give you a place to start, by helping you identify the highest risk areas in your life, so that you can address those first.

What to Expect

Once you begin to reduce your toxic intake, you may notice that you feel better and have more energy, or you may not. Some ailments may disappear and some may seem to get worse. Please understand that detoxification is a very individual process, rarely the same for two people. This is because it depends on the amount of exposure that you have had, the amount of toxins that your body has stored, and your body's ability to remove those toxins. The condition of your immune system is also an enormous factor. Everyone responds in their own individual way and it is very common for members of the same family to respond completely differently to the same environmental change.

Regarding steps two and three (detoxify and periodic cleansing), I can offer some suggestions based on my own personal experience and the experiences of some of my clients. Once you get to the detoxification step, I *strongly* suggest that you seek the guidance of a healthcare professional who is experienced in helping people with detoxification. This is extremely important because, as mentioned above, the chemicals can be just as harmful on their way out of your body as they were on their way in. Also, since toxins may have been stored in your body, they could be released rapidly and may be more than your body can handle at one time. Experienced practitioners can help ensure that your body's elimination pathways are open and that you are supporting them properly. The reason I am discussing this now is because some people who begin eliminating their toxic exposures will experience detoxification symptoms without even engaging in cleansing activities. Sometimes the body is quite capable of detoxifying and will immediately begin to do so as soon as the load is lightened. Symptoms of detoxification include headache, nausea, skin rash, body aches, dizziness, insomnia, fatigue, brain fog and depression.

If this happens, don't panic. Definitely do not rationalize that the cause of these symptoms is the new organic, chemical-free food or product that you just started using. The best approach is to educate yourself about detoxification and to seek the help of a professional if your symptoms concern you (you may actually feel "ill"). When I first began my quest for the chemical-free lifestyle I was reading every label I could get my hands on and researching the health effects of every ingredient. I made many radical

changes in my life, all at the same time. I began to have rather violent symptoms which were similar to food poisoning. Fortunately, I had read about detoxification reactions (sometimes called a “healing crisis”) before, so I knew that I was okay. That being said, it was still scary and I had to slow down a bit by removing exposures one at a time.

Let’s Get Started

As you progress through this program, you will be guided to analyze your current practices and habits to identify potential sources of toxins. You will then learn how to determine your own personal risk level and to categorize your hazardous practices according to risk. The results of this will enable you to address your highest risks while also having the confidence to accept some of the lower risks. In order to do this, you must first learn a little bit about risk…

Chapter 2: What is Risk?

In industry, decisions are made based on risk. Money is spent to eliminate high risks, while low risks are tolerated. This is an effective way to conserve company resources. This concept can also be used to make decisions in our daily lives. With a basic understanding of risk assessment, anyone can apply these principles to everyday life choices to improve their health.

The following game is a fun way to think about risk and it shows how to use simple risk-based criteria to make good life choices.

Let's Play a Game

Imagine that you are on a bizarre TV game show. You are told that you can choose your prize from behind Door Number 1, 2, or 3. Behind one door is ten million dollars, while another hides a gourmet dinner. Behind the remaining door is a deadly bomb that will explode if you choose that door. You are given the choice to play the game or walk away. There is a 1 in 3 chance that you will die, and a 2 in 3 chance that you will survive, perhaps with a fabulous prize. What would you do? (Hint: Run!)

Now let's change the scenario just a little bit. Instead of three doors, there are now ten. There are still ten million dollars behind one door and a deadly bomb behind another. A gourmet dinner is behind each of the remaining eight doors. Now you have a 1 in 10 chance of death and a 9 in 10 chance of survival. The odds are getting better. What would you do? (Hint: Stop thinking about the money! Your odds of winning the big prize are the same as your odds of dying. Focus on your survival. Run!)

The stage is getting a bit crowded, because this time you have ten million doors from which to choose. There are still ten million dollars behind one door and a deadly bomb behind one other door, and a gourmet dinner behind the other 9,999,998 doors. Now your chance of death is one in ten million. Is that better? What would you do? (Hint: Enjoy your dinner!)

Risk = Likelihood & Conseqences

This game show scenario is an unusual way to illustrate that risk is a two part equation comprised of *likelihood* (often called frequency) and *consequences*. When a person is asked to consider the risk associated with a certain behavior, they will often consider the *consequences* of the action and pay little attention to the *likelihood* that those consequences will occur. For example, many people view air travel as more risky than automobile travel.

After all, a plane crash makes the evening news, and we hear endless details about the disastrous consequences. However, statistics show that air travel is much safer than driving. That's why the rare plane crash is such big news. There are far more passengers on the road than in the air, both in overall numbers and in number of times we individually assume the respective risk by entering a car or boarding a plane.

The game show example also helps to illustrate the concept of *consequences*. It highlights how easy it is to focus on the outrageous consequences, or outcomes, which in this example could have been either very positive (a fortune) or very negative (death). By considering just those consequences, we neglect to see that the outcome we really desire is survival. When the number of doors increases to a point where we feel comfortable that we will attain our preferred outcome (survival), we will be willing to participate in the game. This is the concept of *acceptable risk*. The tricky part is first to identify, and then focus on the real desired outcome. If winning the money was the most preferred outcome, you would have had a better chance of winning when there were only three doors!

We Are All Unique

Now let's vary the game a bit. The game show host presents the doors and their associated prizes first, and then keeps increasing the number of doors until someone from the audience agrees to participate. Do you think everyone will be willing to participate at the same time? No. There will be some "daredevils" who might volunteer as soon as there are 100 or 1,000 doors. Others would not even be willing to participate with ten million doors. That is because ***everyone perceives risk differently***. Therefore, when deciding whether or not to take a particular risk, you must determine how the risk will impact *you* based on *your* desired outcome.

Real life, however, is not a game show. Our choices are not so clearly presented to us. In fact, they are not presented to us at all. We need to do some research to determine what the choices are, and then assess them based on risk. You must first identify hazards and analyze the risk associated with them, and then take actions to reduce your highest risks. Based on your lifestyle, habits, and circumstances, you can easily learn to make choices that are right for you and your family. The strategy would be to ***replace your harmful behaviors with healthy behaviors by focusing on the things that you do most often.***

What Will You Accept?

ChemConscious, Inc. has created a tool to help you assess your risk and determine if you should make changes to your home or lifestyle. We call it the Risk Matrix and it is a tool often used in industry to assess and manage risk. You will learn to use it in the next chapter.

Each of us has our own unique tolerance for risk. TV commercials and print ads are designed to subliminally convince us that products are safe. Doctors and other distinguished and educated members of the community offer varied and sometimes opposing opinions. And well-meaning friends, in-laws, and the Internet, all provide us with significant justification for both sides of every decision. But it all boils down to what makes sense *for you*.

The most logical risk-based approach is to consider both likelihood and consequences when eliminating hazards. You will first identify the consequences that you wish to avoid (illness, allergies, accidents, etc.), and then evaluate the things that you do *most often* that could result in those consequences. You can then address the behaviors that have the highest risk. Once you have investigated and evaluated your risk, you will know what feels right for you and your family.

Our Daily Habits Are the Key

Overall, my advice is this: Take stock of the things you do regularly that could be hazardous (by using the checklist that follows as a guide but keeping in mind that you may need to add additional items to your list). Evaluate each one to see how risky it is and then do the following:

1. Eliminate the high-risk hazards
2. Reduce the medium-risk hazards
3. Tolerate the low-risk hazards

The risk matrix, combined with the checklists in this program will aid you in evaluating risk. It is used to determine the risk rank associated with a behavior that can be used to compare it to other behaviors. When you have completed the checklists in this program, you will have a list of items with their own risk rankings. You can then sort the items by risk rank and begin working on the items that are the most risky. Once you begin using this tool, you will want to use it to evaluate all of the risks in your day.

On a personal note, I cannot overemphasize the value of risk assessment for addressing hazards in your life. Besides the obvious health benefits, there is

even more value in the peace of mind that comes with knowing that you are doing what is right *for you*. I get a special feeling of certainty when I have effectively used my available resources to make a good decision. I hear the advice of well-meaning friends, and allow them their own freedom of choice. But I stand committed to my own decisions because I know they are based on a solid, deliberate foundation of research and personal evaluation.

Chapter 3: How Chemicals Enter the Body

Before you begin analyzing and removing the sources of chemicals, it is important to understand how chemicals get into the body. There are four pathways (referred to as routes of exposure) in which chemicals can enter the body. These are:

Inhalation – we breathe chemicals into our lungs through this pathway. We inhale airborne chemicals in the form of vapor, liquid droplets, or solids (dust). These chemicals are then absorbed into our bloodstream and then can be deposited into our organs.

Ingestion – using this pathway we swallow chemicals usually as ingredients in our food. We can also ingest chemicals by direct contact between contaminated objects and our mouths (i.e. toys, pens, nail-biting, etc.). Objects can become contaminated when located near chemically cleaned surfaces, airborne contamination or other sources of chemicals.

Absorption – this pathway allows chemicals to be absorbed through our skin. The skin is the largest organ in the body; therefore there is plenty of opportunity to absorb chemicals from personal care or cleaning products.

Injection – vaccines are the most common way that chemicals enter the body by injection.

The checklist that follows includes questions regarding all four of these routes of exposure. For this reason you may see a hazard appear in several questions. This is because some substances can enter the body through more than one pathway. Don't worry about questions that seem to be duplicates, this checklist has been engineered to uncover as many potential exposures as possible.

Chapter 4: Risk Matrix

Use of a risk matrix is not a new concept. This method has been used for decades in the chemical industry to analyze and address risk. Many of our industrial clients have developed a company-specific risk matrix that ensures that all departments within the organization are identifying and addressing risk in a manner that is consistent with company policies. You will not need to develop your own risk matrix, because we have already done that for you. If ours doesn't quite resonate with you, you can certainly create one that works better for you.

A risk matrix is a tool for comparing relative risks of various behaviors. It is not an exact science but is merely a guide to help you decide which hazards to address first.

Instructions

The risk matrix is shown below. You will use the risk matrix for each of the questions in the checklist. First, determine the consequences of the hazard from the consequence level list. It is recommended that you determine the worst case consequences. Then write down the number that corresponds to those consequences. In the checklists that are part of this program we have filled in the consequence ratings for you. If you want to use the risk matrix to evaluate behaviors that are not listed in this checklist, then you will have to do some research to find out what the worst case consequences would be.

Next for each item in the checklist, determine how often you engage in the behavior described in the checklist. (This is the likelihood). Assign a number from the likelihood level list that corresponds to your likelihood and write it in the space provided. For example if the questions asks you if you burn candles indoors, choose a likelihood level that corresponds to how frequently you burn candles indoors.

Then locate both numbers in the risk matrix to find the risk rank of A, B, C or D. Finally, read the suggested actions that correspond to your risk rank. In summary, the instructions for completing the checklist are:

1. Fill in a likelihood (from the risk matrix) that most closely matches with how often you have the exposure
2. We have already completed the consequences column for you based on our knowledge of the hazard and what we believe would be the worst case consequences. Of course, if you disagree with our chosen

consequence level, you may change it to a level that agrees with your particular situation.

3. Use the risk matrix to determine your risk (A, B, C, or D) and fill in the Risk Column.

Time to Take Action

Once you have completed the checklist, you should then go through it and highlight any "A" ranked questions. These are the ones you should focus on first because they represent the highest risk. The checklist has suggestions for reducing the risk for each of the questions. You will then need to do some research on your own to determine what the best solution is for you based on your available budget and other resources. Once you have evaluated the "A" ranked items, you would then work on the "B" ranked items and then the "C" ranked items until you reach a point where you are comfortable with your risk.

No Wrong Answers

When completing the checklist remember that there are no wrong answers. Everyone will do this differently. Some will be concerned with every A, B or C ranked item. Others will work only on the A items and be willing to accept the rest. Either way is okay because this process is designed to get you to a level of risk that is acceptable to YOU. We have identified *potential* hazards that may be present in your life but only you know the extent to which they are *actually* present.

Also do not be alarmed if the consequence levels that we have identified seem a little harsh. We are rating each consequence according to what is the worst that can happen as a result of each exposure. This approach is known as "Worst Case Analysis" where we evaluate and address the worst practical scenarios. Then we can be comfortable knowing that if we have the rare worst case covered, we therefore have all of the other more likely scenarios covered. The beauty of this approach becomes evident when you then add a likelihood number that specifically applies to your life. This is why we say that this method will guide you to identification of ***your*** specific risk.

Risk Ranking Matrix

Consequence Codes (How bad is it?)

1 Toxic - fatal in high doses
Known or suspected to cause cancer (Carcinogen)
Radioactive

2 Can cause irreversible damage
Mutagen, Teratogen, Neurotoxin, Hormone Disruptor Causes noticeable symptoms to YOU

3 Acute (Immediate) effects such as corrosive, flammable, allergens, dust, mold

4 Irritating - no significant damage or harm

Frequency Codes (How often do we do it?)

1 One or more times per day

2 One to three times per month

3 Occasionally, maybe one to three times per year

4 One to three times in 10 years, or never

Risk Rank

Likelihood \ Consequence Level	1	2	3	4
1	I	I	II	III
2	I	II	III	IV
3	II	III	III	IV
4	II	III	IV	IV

Suggested Actions

I	INTOLERABLE: Take action immediately to find an alternative.
II	VERY HIGH RISK: Take action soon to find an alternative or reduce exposure
III	CONDITIONALLY ACCEPTABLE: Evaluate ways to find an alternative, reduce exposure, or use protective measures during your infrequent exposures.
IV	ACCEPTABLE: No action is necessary unless you have noticeable symptoms or have reason to believe you are sensitive to exposures

Detoxify Your Life
Risk Evaluation Checklist

Date Completed: _____		C	L	Risk	Risk Reduction Suggestions
Air					
A1	**Combustion Products**: Do you live or work in a building with a forced air heating system fueled with natural gas, propane or oil and you do NOT have a fresh air HEPA filtering/ventilation system?	3			1. Open windows often 2. Install a fresh air HEPA filtering/ventilation system.
A2	**Carbon Monoxide:** Do you live or work in a building with a forced air heating system fueled with natural gas, propane or oil and you do NOT have a carbon monoxide alarm?	1			1. Install a carbon monoxide alarm. These are inexpensive and could save your life.
A3	**Carbon Monoxide and Combustion Products:** Do you use open flame (Kerosene, propane, diesel fuel) space heaters indoors? (Exclude heaters that are vented to the outside of the house such as fireplace inserts.)	1			1. Look for alternative heating appliances that do not have an open flame or are vented to the outside. 2. Open windows often 3. Install a fresh air HEPA filtering/ventilation system. 4. Install a carbon monoxide alarm.

Detoxify Your Life
Risk Evaluation Checklist

Date Completed: _____		C	L	Risk	Risk Reduction Suggestions
A4	**Carbon monoxide and sulfur:** Do you work in an indoor environment where there are vehicle or generator exhaust gases?	2			1. Open windows often 2. Install a fresh air HEPA filtering/ventilation system. 3. Install a carbon monoxide alarm. 4. Consider respiratory protection when exhaust gases are present.
A5	**Dust**: Do you live or work in a dusty environment? (Visible dust in the air)	3			1. Implement local ventilation at the source of the dust. 2. Consider respiratory protection when dust is present.
A6	**Pollen**: Do you work outside, exposed to pollen?	3			1. If you are symptomatic, consider respiratory protection. 2. Implement strategies to support immune system. 3. Install a fresh air HEPA filtering/ventilation system in your home to reduce pollen exposures when you come indoors.

Detoxify Your Life
Risk Evaluation Checklist

Date Completed: _____		C	L	Risk	Risk Reduction Suggestions
A7	**Radon:** Do you live in an area designated as a high radon area and you do NOT have a radon abatement system in place? (In the US you can check this at http://www.epa.gov/radon/zonemap.html)	1			1. Test the air in your home for radon and install abatement system if results are high. 2. Open windows often
A8	**Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC's)**: Do you use plug-in scented oil air fresheners?	2			1. Eliminate the use of scented oil air fresheners. 2. Consider essential oil diffusers if you want your house to smell nice and be therapeutic. You can get essential oils HERE.
A9	**Volatile organic compounds (VOC's):** Do you work in a high VOC environment such as nail salon, print/copy center, painter or anywhere that solvents are used?	2			1. Open windows often 2. Install a fresh air HEPA filtering/ventilation system or local ventilation. 3. Consider respiratory protection

Detoxify Your Life
Risk Evaluation Checklist

Date Completed: _____		C	L	Risk	Risk Reduction Suggestions
A9	**Volatile organic compounds (VOC's):** Are you exposed to vapors from heavy duty cleaning products such as paint thinners or degreasers?	2			1. Consider alternative cleaning products. 2. Open windows often 3. Install a fresh air HEPA filtering/ventilation system or local ventilation. 4. Consider respiratory protection. 5. Wear gloves when contacting heavy duty cleaners.
A10	**Volatile organic compounds (VOC's) and Smoke:** Do you burn scented candles indoors?	2			1. Eliminate the use of scented candles. 2. Consider essential oil diffusers if you want your house to smell nice and be therapeutic. You can get essential oils HERE.
A11	**Smoke**: Are you exposed to "second hand" smoke particles from cigarettes, cigars or pipes? (or are you a smoker?)	1			1. Eliminate the source of smoke 2. Open windows often 3. Install a fresh air HEPA filtering/ventilation system or local ventilation. 4. Consider respiratory protection.

Detoxify Your Life
Risk Evaluation Checklist

Date Completed: _____		C	L	Risk	Risk Reduction Suggestions
A12	**Smoke**: Are you exposed to smoke particles from cooking, space heaters, candles, oil lamps, incense or other sources of smoke?	2			1. Eliminate the source of smoke 2. Open windows often 3. Install a fresh air HEPA filtering/ventilation system or local ventilation.
A13	**Fire retardant chemicals:** Have you recently (last 3 years) purchased a new car, new carpet or new furniture? (If yes enter 1 for likelihood.)	2			1. Open windows often 2. Install a fresh air HEPA filtering/ventilation system or local ventilation.
A14	**PTFE (Teflon)**: Do you use Teflon-lined cookware on high heat? (Teflon contains fluoride and other toxins.)	2			1. Eliminate the use of Teflon-lined cookware. Choose ceramic-lined, stainless steel or glass. Use cast iron cookware only if you are sure that your blood iron levels are not high. 2. If you must use Teflon-lined cookware, use only on very low heat and open windows often. Install a strong kitchen hood/fan and run it on high setting while cooking.

Detoxify Your Life
Risk Evaluation Checklist

Date Completed: _____		C	L	Risk	Risk Reduction Suggestions
A15	**Perchloroethylene**: Do you bring conventionally dry-cleaned clothing into the house and hang it in the closet, without airing it out?	2			1. Choose an organic dry cleaner 2. If you use conventional dry cleaners, hang the recently cleaned clothing outdoors or in a well-ventilated area for at least a day to reduce the potential for exposure.
A16	**Perchloroethylene**: Do you live or work in the same building as a conventional dry cleaner?	1			1. Consider moving to a new home or job (seriously, this is a huge hazard). 2. If you have access to the building HVAC system, consider installing a HEPA filtration/ventilation system. 3. Implement strategies to support immune system.

Detoxify Your Life
Risk Evaluation Checklist

Date Completed: _____		C	L	Risk	Risk Reduction Suggestions
A17	**Pesticides, Herbicides, Petroleum Products and more:** Do you walk around your house in the same shoes that you wear when you go out?	3			1. Create a "shoe space" near the entrance to your home and require all shoes to be left at the door. Designate a comfy pair of shoes as "house shoes" for each member of the household.
A18	**Heavy Metals:** Do you spend any time in a conventional dentist's office either because you work there, there is one in the same building where you work or you go there as a patient or accompanying a patient. (The exception is a "biological dentist" where the mercury levels in the office are controlled. Listen to an interview with a biological dentist HERE.)	2			1. If you live or work in a building where there is a conventional dentist office, consider having your mercury levels checked. 2. If you have a lot of accumulated mercury in your body, consider moving because this can be a serious source of mercury exposure. 3. If your exposure is only when you go to the dentist, consider finding a biological dentist. Click here to find a biological dentist.

Detoxify Your Life
Risk Evaluation Checklist

Date Completed: _____		C	L	Risk	Risk Reduction Suggestions
A19	**Heavy Metals:** Do you have amalgam dental fillings in your mouth? (If yes, enter 1 for likelihood.)	2			1. Consider finding a biological dentist to remove your amalgam dental fillings. Click here to find a biological dentist. 2. Once your fillings are removed, seek advice from a Health Care Practitioner who is skilled in mercury detoxification to help you remove the mercury that has accumulated in your body.
Water					
W1	**Chlorine**: Do you drink public water that contains chlorine? [2]The Brita® Pitcher Filter Systems and the Brita® Faucet Filter are water filtration products offering different filtering techniques. Both products reduce lead and chlorine (taste and odor). The Brita® Pitcher Systems also reduce copper and mercury — which the Brita® Faucet Filter can't do. But unlike the pitcher, the Faucet Filter removes the microbes, Cryptosporidium and Giardia, and reduces the chemicals Atrazine, Lindane, Benzene, Trichloroethylene and Asbestos.	1			1. Install a water purification system in your home. 2. If you rent your home and cannot install a water purification system, you can purchase a countertop distillation system. 3. If cost is a concern, use a Brita[2] filter (pitcher or faucet mount). These will remove chlorine but may not be as effective.

Detoxify Your Life
Risk Evaluation Checklist

Date Completed: _____		C	L	Risk	Risk Reduction Suggestions
W2	**Chlorine**: Do you swim in a chlorinated pool?	1			1. If you have a choice, choose a salt or UV disinfection system for your pool. 2. If you are a competitive swimmer or otherwise feel that you have no choice, eliminate all other sources of chlorine from your life, shower in non-chlorinated water immediately after swimming and implement immune system support strategies.
W3	**Fluoride**: Do you drink fluoridated public water? (In the US, you can find out if your water is fluoridated by clicking HERE.)	2			1. Install a water purification system in your home. 2. If you rent your home and cannot install a water purification system, you can purchase a countertop distillation system. 3. A Brita filter will not remove fluoride.

Detoxify Your Life
Risk Evaluation Checklist

Date Completed: _____		C	L	Risk	Risk Reduction Suggestions
W4	**Bacteria / mold / fungi:** Do you have a well and have not had your water tested for bacteria/mold/fungi content?	3			1. Have your water tested for bacteria, mold and fungi. (The local department of health can do this) 2. Install a filter or purification system that is designed to remove whatever impurities that are present in your drinking water. Ultraviolet (UV) systems work very well for killing bacteria.
W5	**Nitrates:** Do you have a private well in an agricultural area and you drink the water without a purification or filtration system?	1			1. Have your water tested for nitrates and, if high in nitrates, install a reverse osmosis or distillation system on your drinking water to remove nitrates from the water. Do this especially if you have very young children or elderly persons in the home.

Detoxify Your Life
Risk Evaluation Checklist

Date Completed: _____		C	L	Risk	Risk Reduction Suggestions
W6	**Radon:** Do you live in an area designated as a high radon area and you have a private well?	1			1. Ventilate the bathroom when you are showering. 2. Test the water (or the air in the bathroom) for radon and install a shower filter if results are high. 3. Open windows often
W7	**Acid / alkaline:** Is your water too acidic or too alkaline, as determined with pH paper or by having it tested?	3			1. Install a neutralizer system that addresses your particular issue. (These are usually installed as part of a larger water purification system but can be installed alone) 2. If you have copper or lead piping in your home and you discover that your water is acidic (pH less than 7), then have your water tested for lead content. (See next question)

Detoxify Your Life
Risk Evaluation Checklist

Date Completed: _____		C	L	Risk	Risk Reduction Suggestions
W8	**Lead:** Do you live in a building that was built prior to 1978 that has copper pipes? (Prior to 1978, lead solder was used for residential water piping.)	2			1. Have your water tested for lead. 2. If high amounts of lead are identified (greater than 15 parts per billion, ppb), consider having the pipes replaced by a professional company qualified to remove lead-soldered piping. 3. Install a filter/purification system capable of removing lead. 4. In the interim, take the following precautions: a. Never take drinking water or cooking water from the hot water tap. b. Flush the pipes by running the water for at least 10 minutes before using for cooking or drinking. (Flushing times can vary and this is not always effective.) 5.

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Risk Evaluation Checklist

Date Completed: _____		C	L	Risk	Risk Reduction Suggestions
	Food				
F1	**Preservatives**: Are you eating foods that contain harmful preservatives such as BHA, TBHQ, BHT, Sodium Benzoate, Potassium Benzoate or Potassium Sorbate?	1			1. Read the labels on the foods you eat and find replacement products for those that contain any of these listed preservatives.
F2	**Vitamins:** Do you take vitamins that contain harmful ingredients such as magnesium stearate, maltodextrin (made from GMO corn), Hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils, artificial colors, dyes, sodium selenite and selenite or titanium dioxide.	2			1. Read the labels on your vitamin bottles and research any ingredients that you do not understand. 2. Replace with brands that do not contain these ingredients. (Rule of thumb: Tablets usually contain more hazardous ingredients than capsules, and liquid vitamins often contain less.)

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Risk Evaluation Checklist

Date Completed: _____		C	L	Risk	Risk Reduction Suggestions
F3	**Fluoride**: Do you have a private well and take fluoride tablets to strengthen your teeth?	2			1. Temporarily stop taking fluoride tablets (especially children) and review the research. Based on the research, make an informed decision regarding the use of fluoride supplementation.
F4	**Fluoride:** Do you drink a lot of tea? (Tea leaves naturally absorb fluoride from the soil. This is sodium fluoride, which is not as toxic as the waste product used to fluoridate public water, but it still can cause tooth and/or bone fluorosis.)	2			1. Green and black teas have the most fluoride. Switch to herbal teas or Yerbe Matte, which have lower levels. 2. Instant teas should be avoided as they seem to have even more fluoride, possibly because it is concentrated when the tea is processed.
F5	**Dyes**: Do you eat foods that contain synthetic dyes? (These are listed on the labels as Blue #1, Blue #2, Citrus Red #2, Green #3, Red #3, Red #40, Yellow #5 or Yellow #6.)	1			1. Review the labels on the products you use. Find alternatives for those that contain these dyes.

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F6	**Pesticides, Herbicides and GMO:** Do you eat produce that is not organic? Note: Organic produce has a PLU code that begins with a 9. If labeling of GMO's is ever required, these produce items will have a PLU code that begins with an 8.)	2			1. Choose organic produce. 2. To offset the higher cost of organic produce download the "Dirty Dozen" list from Environmental Working Group www.ewg.org and purchase only these items organically. 3. It is ok to purchase items from the "Clean 15" list that are not organic, however eventually you may want to purchase 100% organic.
F7	**Pesticides, Herbicides, Hormones, Antibiotics**: Do you eat butter or other dairy products that are not labeled organic? (Exception is purchasing butter from local farmers who tell you that the animals are grass fed and are not given hormones or antibiotics)	2			1. Purchase organic butter or purchase butter from local farmers who raise grass-fed cattle and do not use hormones or antibiotics. 2. See below resources for raw dairy and grass fed organic dairy.

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F8	**Pesticides, Herbicides, Hormones, Antibiotics:** Do you eat meats that are purchased in a grocery store or butcher shop that are not labeled organic? (Exception is buying local meats from farmers who tell you that the animals are grass fed and are not given hormones or antibiotics.)	2			1. Research sources of grass fed organic meat and dairy or find local farmers who raise grass-fed cattle and do not use hormones or antibiotics. a. **Weston Price Foundation** b. **FoodRoutes** c. **Local Harvest** d. **Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture** e. **Eat Well Guide: Wholesome Food from Healthy Animals** f. **Farmers' Markets** 2. Offset the higher cost of this meat by preparing meals that contain smaller amounts of meat with larger amounts of organic vegetables.

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Risk Evaluation Checklist

Date Completed: _____		C	L	Risk	Risk Reduction Suggestions
F9	**Bis-phenyl-A (BPA)**: Do you eat food that is sold in plastic lined cans? (These cans have a white lining.)	2			1. Choose foods sold in glass jars primarily. 2. If you must buy canned foods, make sure that the cans are ceramic-lined, especially canned tomatoes because the acid in the tomatoes increases your exposure to BPA.
F10	**Bis-phenyl-A (BPA)**: Do you drink water from a plastic reusable bottle?	2			1. Drink water from glass containers 2. Second best option is stainless steel 3. Third best option is BPA-free plastic but be careful because some of the new BPA substitutes are just as hazardous.
F11	**Artificial Sweeteners:** Do you consume artificial sweeteners such as sucralose, saccharin or aspartame?	2			1. Switch to natural sweeteners such as Stevia. 2. Consider erythritol and xylitol. (Some people are allergic.) 3. Sugar is bad, but not as bad as these artificial sweeteners.

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Date Completed: _____		C	L	Risk	Risk Reduction Suggestions
	Personal Care				
P1	**Oxybenzone, retinyl palmitate, PABA:** Do you use sunscreen that contains these or other harmful ingredients?	2			1. Check the safety of your sunscreen at www.ewg.org and switch to a brand that has a good safety rating.
P2	**Fluoride:** Do you use toothpaste or other oral care products that contain fluoride?	2			1. Purchase brands that do not contain fluoride. 2. Consider making your own toothpaste.
P3	**Triclosan, alcohol and fragrance:** Do you use antibacterial soap or hand sanitizer?	2			1. Stop the use of all products that contain triclosan. 2. Minimize or discontinue the use of products that contain alcohol and fragrance. 3. Again we recommend essential oils for removing bacteria, viruses and germs. 4. Proper immune system support will eliminate the need to use antibacterial products.

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Risk Evaluation Checklist

Date Completed: _____		C	L	Risk	Risk Reduction Suggestions
P4	**Sodium Lauryl Sulfate, Sodium Laureth Sulfate, Hydantoin, Tetrasodium EDTA:** Do you use shampoo that contains these and other harmful ingredients?	2			1. Check the safety of your shampoo and other hair care products at www.ewg.org and switch to a brand that has a good safety rating.
P5	**Pesticides**: Do you use flea collars, flea/tick sprays, powders and dips for your pets?	1			1. Discontinue the use of flea collars, flea/tick sprays, powders and dips for your pets. These are harmful to you, your family and your pets. 2. Brewers Yeast and garlic have been found to control fleas 3. Certain essential oils and extracts, such as neem oil, oregano oil, cinnamon oil, and others have been found to control fleas and ticks. (And you can make your pet smell nice too!)

Detoxify Your Life
Risk Evaluation Checklist

	Date Completed: _____	C	L	Risk	Risk Reduction Suggestions
	Cleaning				
C1	**Chlorine**: Do you clean with chlorine bleach or use chlorine containing cleaners?	1			1. Eliminate the use of chlorine-containing cleaning products. 2. Research safe cleaning products at www.ewg.org and choose products that have received a safe rating. 3. Consider making your own cleaning products with ingredients such as baking soda, vinegar and lemon juice.
C2	**Solvents**: Do you clean with products that have a "flammable" warning or a warning that says to use the product with proper ventilation? This also includes products labeled as "Industrial Strength" or "Heavy Duty".	2			1. Eliminate the use of cleaning products that contain these warnings. 2. Research safe cleaning products at www.ewg.org and choose products that have received a safe rating. 3. Consider making your own cleaning products with ingredients such as baking soda, vinegar and lemon juice.