SHOPPING TIPS

1. **READ THE LABEL**: Opt for products that list ingredients (many don’t). Avoid those with hazard symbols.

2. **GO FRAGRANCE-FREE**: “Fragrance” is a mix of chemicals—some linked to cancer and neurotoxicity—that can trigger allergies, migraines, and asthma. Even “unscented” products may contain fragrance to mask chemical odors.

3. **WASH WITH PLAIN SOAP**: Antibacterial soaps often contain triclosan (see below).

4. **FRESHEN AIR NATURALLY**: Synthetic air fresheners mask odor with a mysterious mix of chemicals. Ventilate properly—open a window.

5. **SIMPLIFY**: Choose the smallest number of quality products.

SOME CHEMICALS TO AVOID

**ALKYLPHENOL ETHOXYLATES (APES)/NONYLPHENOL ETHOXYLATES (NPES)**
Found in liquid laundry detergents, stain removers, and all-purpose cleaners. Can mimic estrogen and have reproductive effects on aquatic organisms.

**MONOETHANOLAMINE (MEA)/DIETHANOLAMINE (DEA)/TRIETHANOLAMINE (TEA)**
Found in liquid laundry detergents, and all-purpose and floor cleaners. Can react with nitrites to form cancer-causing nitrosamines. MEA is also known to induce asthma. Harmful to fish and other wildlife.

**QUATERNARY AMMONIUM COMPOUNDS (QUATS)**
Found in bathroom cleaners and fabric softeners. Irritate and sensitize skin, cause allergies, and trigger asthma. Don’t readily degrade in the environment. Toxic to fish.

**SODIUM LAURETH SULFATE (SLES) + SODIUM LAURYL SULFATE (SLS)**
Found in dish soap with other ethoxylated alcohols (look for “eth” in the chemical name). Can be contaminated with 1,4-dioxane, which may cause cancer, and is persistent in the environment.

**TRICLOSAN**
Found in “antibacterial” products (e.g. soaps and disinfectants). May interfere with hormone function and contribute to antibiotic-resistant bacteria. Harmful to fish and other wildlife.

*This is not an exhaustive list of toxic chemicals found in household cleaners. Learn more at springbreakup.ca.