#BeautyInsideOut

Cosmetics & Personal Care Products: Women and Children’s Health

A Community Briefing brought to you by:

Columbia Center for Children’s Environmental Health

Center for Environmental Health in Northern Manhattan

WE ACT for Environmental Justice

Wednesday, January 16, 2019 | 5:30-8:00pm
The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture
515 Malcolm X Blvd.
New York, New York 10037
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<tr>
<td>5:30 - 5:50</td>
<td>Registration &amp; light refreshments</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:50 - 6:00</td>
<td><strong>Welcome</strong> -</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Peggy Shepard, Executive Director, WE ACT for Environmental Justice</td>
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<td>• Dr. Diana Hernández, Director, Community Engagement Core, Center for Environmental Health in Northern Manhattan</td>
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<td>• Dr. Frederica Perera, Director, Columbia Center for Children’s Environmental Health</td>
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<td>6:00 - 6:10</td>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong> - Milagros de Hoz, WE ACT's Environmental Health Manager</td>
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<td>6:10 - 6:25</td>
<td><strong>The Environmental Injustice of Beauty: Underestimating the links between beauty products and health among women of color</strong></td>
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<td>Dr. Ami Zota, The George Washington University School of Public Health</td>
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<td>6:25 - 6:40</td>
<td><strong>Hair Product Use and the Age at Menarche</strong></td>
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<td>Dr. Jasmine McDonald, Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health</td>
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<td>6:40 - 6:55</td>
<td><strong>Exposure X 2: Use and Safety of Personal Care Products During Pregnancy</strong></td>
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<td>Dr. Miranda Spratlen, Columbia University</td>
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<td>6:55 - 7:10</td>
<td><strong>A Public Health Approach to Addressing Metals in Cosmetic and Personal Care Products</strong></td>
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<td>Dr. Paromita Hore, NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene</td>
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<td>7:10 - 7:45</td>
<td><strong>Audience Q &amp; A</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Closing Remarks</strong> - Cecil Corbin-Mark, WE ACT Deputy Director/ Director of Policy Initiatives</td>
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Speaker Profiles

Ami Zota, ScD, MS

Ami Zota, ScD, MS is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health at the George Washington University Milken School of Public Health. Dr. Zota’s work seeks to secure environmental justice and improve health equity through advancements in science, policy, and clinical practice. Her research identifies novel pathways linking social disparities, environmental exposures, and reproductive and children’s health. Dr. Zota received a career development award from the National Institutes of Health and was recently recognized as a Pioneer under 40 in Environmental Public Health. Her research has been featured in high-impact national and international media and has helped shape health and safety standards for toxic chemicals. She received her masters and doctorate in environmental health at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

Cecil Corbin-Mark

Cecil Corbin-Mark is WE ACT’s Deputy Director and Director of Policy Initiatives. He holds a BA from Hunter College in Political Science and a M. Phil. in International Relations from Oxford University in England. He currently serves on the following boards: Center for Environmental Health, Clean and Healthy New York, the Louis E. Burnham Fund, the West Harlem Development Corporation, and Friends of the Earth USA. He has worked on chemical policy reform at the city, state and national level. At the city level he was responsible for getting two laws about toxic pesticides passed, at the state level he helped develop the first national ban on bisphenol-A in children’s products, and at the national level he has worked with Safer Chemicals Healthy Families to reform the federal Toxic Substance Control Act.
Diana Hernández, PhD
Dr. Diana Hernández is an Assistant Professor of Sociomedical Sciences at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health and serves as the Director of the Community Core at the Center for Environmental Health in Northern Manhattan. A sociologist by training, her scholarly interests include the social determinants of health and the impact of policy and structural interventions on health and socioeconomic well-being of vulnerable populations. Drawing largely on qualitative and mixed-methods, she has worked on a variety of research projects pertaining to household and building-level interventions intended to improve housing conditions and health, with household energy as a central facet of inquiry. Beyond research, she actively engages in a variety of translational activities through consulting, board service and social entrepreneurship in real estate in her native South Bronx neighborhood.

Frederica P. Perera, DrPH, PhD
Dr. Frederica Perera is a professor of Environmental Health Sciences at Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health and serves as Director of the Columbia Center for Children's Environmental Health. Dr. Perera is internationally recognized for pioneering the field of molecular epidemiology, utilizing biomarkers to understand links between environmental exposures and disease. Currently, she and her colleagues are applying advanced molecular and imaging techniques within longitudinal cohort studies of pregnant women and their children, with the goal of identifying preventable environmental risk factors for developmental disorders, asthma, obesity and cancer in childhood. These include toxic chemicals and air pollution, with particular focus on adverse effects of prenatal and early childhood exposures. A focus is the multiple impacts on children’s health and development of fossil fuel combustion--both from the toxic pollutants emitted and climate change related to CO2 emissions- and the health and economic benefits of action to address these threats. She is the author of over 300 peer-reviewed articles and has received numerous honors. She received her DrPH and PhD from Columbia University.
Jasmine A. McDonald, PhD

Dr. Jasmine McDonald received her PhD in Biological Sciences in Public Health in 2009 from Harvard University and her B.S. in Biochemistry/Molecular Biology from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County in 2003. Dr. McDonald is an Assistant Professor of Epidemiology at the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University. Dr. McDonald’s research portfolio focuses on key windows across the lifecourse where the breast tissue may be more vulnerable to environmental exposures; such as during the pubertal and postpartum periods of breast development. She has funding from the National Cancer Institute (NCI) to examine the role of childhood infections on pubertal timing in girls. She has also examined the role of environmental exposures, such as hair product use, on the age at menarche in girls. She is also funded through NCI to examine changes in the breast in women following pregnancy. Given Dr. McDonald’s training in basic sciences and cancer epidemiology, her research examines the biological causes and mechanisms of breast cancer prevention in young women.

Lubna Ahmed, MPH

Lubna Ahmed is the Director of Environmental Health at WE ACT for Environmental Justice. She has a strong dedication to social justice as it relates climate change and public health. She holds a BA in Psychology from Miami University and a MPH in Environmental Health Science & Policy from The George Washington University. Lubna served as an Environmental Educator for the Peace Corps in Nicaragua where she developed fluency in Spanish. She is passionate about working at the community level to build capacity and advance the sustainable well-being of underserved populations.
Milagros de Hoz, MS

As WE ACT for Environmental Justice's Environmental Health Programs Manager, Milagros de Hoz works with communities in Northern Manhattan, research partners, and advocacy coalitions to improve environmental health and well-being of communities of color. She previously engaged in global advocacy with Together 2030, following the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and with CUNY Urban Food Policy Institute, evaluating the impact of food and nutrition programs across NYC. Milagros has an MS in Environmental Policy and Sustainability Management from The New School, and a BA/MS in Biology from Buenos Aires University, Argentina.

Miranda Spratlen, MPH, PhD

Dr. Miranda Spratlen is currently a Postdoctoral Research Scientist at Columbia University where she is utilizing two contemporaneous birth cohorts based in New York City to investigate health outcomes resulting from prenatal chemical and psychosocial exposures. Dr. Spratlen conducted her doctoral work at Johns Hopkins University where she explored the intricate relationships between arsenic exposure and arsenic metabolism, carbon metabolism and diabetes related outcomes in American Indians. Leading up to her doctoral degree, Miranda worked for several years in environmental health-based positions outside academia. Dr. Spratlen worked in the Occupational Medicine, Epidemiology and Prevention Department at Northwell Health System, analyzing data from employee health programs and writing and managing environmental and occupational health grants. Dr. Spratlen also worked at the New York City Department of Environmental Protection where she managed their waterborne disease risk assessment program.
Paromita Hore, PhD, MPH

Dr. Paromita Hore is the Deputy Director of the Environmental Risk Assessment Unit within the Bureau of Environmental Disease and Injury Prevention, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. She has been with the Department for over 10 years and provides technical assistance on issues related to environmental exposures.

Peggy Shepard

Peggy Shepard is Co-Founder and Executive Director of WE ACT for Environmental Justice and has a long history of organizing and engaging Northern Manhattan residents in community-based planning and campaigns to address environmental protection and environmental health policy locally and nationally. She has successfully combined grassroots organizing, environmental advocacy, and environmental health community-based participatory research to become a national leader in advancing environmental policy and the perspective of environmental justice in urban communities — to ensure that the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment extends to all. Her work has received broad recognition: the Jane Jacobs Medal from the Rockefeller Foundation for Lifetime Achievement, the 10th Annual Heinz Award For the Environment, the Dean’s Distinguished Service Award from the Columbia Mailman School of Public Health, and Honorary Doctorates from Smith College and Lawrence University.
The 411 on Toxicity and Personal Care Products

Key Terms

Toxicity: The degree to which a chemical substance or mixture of substances can damage an individual, often depending on the dose.

Exposure: Measured by the amount and frequency with which a substance comes into contact with a person through one or more of the exposure routes.

What are the routes of exposure?

Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA): A law passed in 1976 that regulates the introduction of new or already existing chemicals used in the United States.

TSCA has a list of over 82,000 chemicals that are currently in use, but have not been proven safe to stay on the market.

Only 200 of those chemicals have been reviewed for toxicity by the Environmental Protection Agency and, of those, only five have been banned.
The Environmental INjustice of Beauty

Cosmetics marketed to women, and particularly women of color, contain some of the most toxic chemicals used by the beauty industry.

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<th>Vulnerable populations</th>
<th>Product use</th>
<th>Chemical exposures</th>
<th>Potential adverse outcomes</th>
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<td>Colorism</td>
<td>Dark skinned women (globally)</td>
<td>Skin-lightening creams</td>
<td>Mercury</td>
<td>Mercury poisoning, neurotoxicity, kidney damage</td>
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<td>Hair texture preferences</td>
<td>African American women</td>
<td>Hair relaxers and other</td>
<td>Parabens and estrogenic</td>
<td>Uterine fibroid tumors, premature puberty, and endocrine</td>
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<td>Odor discrimination</td>
<td>African American women</td>
<td>Vaginal douches and other</td>
<td>Phthalates and talc</td>
<td>Gynecologic cancers and endocrine disruption</td>
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- Beauty standards push women to expose themselves to harmful products
- Marketing strategies target women of color
- Workers in the beauty industry are predominantly women of color and immigrant women
What Can You Do to Improve Your Health?

Beware of “Greenwashing.” Products labeled "safe," "non-toxic" and "green" can contain hazardous ingredients. There should be a law against bogus claims, but there isn't. Some companies are willing to bend the truth - because they can.

The Dirty Dozen - AKA Ingredients You Should Try to Avoid:

- BHA & BHT
- Coal tar dyes
- DEA-related ingredients
- Dibutyl phthalate
- Formaldehyde
- Parabens
- Parfum (a.k.a. fragrance)
- PEG compounds
- Petrolatum
- Siloxanes
- Sodium Laureth Sulfate
- Triclosan

See if the products you use are safe and find safer alternatives!

Several phone apps have been developed to make checking for these harmful ingredients easy. We've listed a few here →
Popular Personal Care Apps

GoodGuide: Use the GoodGuide app to search, scan, and browse products that are healthy.

Think Dirty: Learn ingredients, compare and shop the safest beauty products.

Nature's Nurture: Explore tips for a healthy diet, non-toxic home, and more.

EWG Healthy Living: Access a database of 128,000 items, scan, browse, and learn about healthy living.

Detox Me: Find all natural products for children, home, and personal care.

Natural Goddess DIY: Discover all natural products for wellness, cleaning, and beauty.
About

WE ACT for Environmental Justice

WE ACT for Environmental Justice (WE ACT) is a non-profit membership organization based in Harlem with a federal policy office in Washington DC. With over 30 years of experience developing civic and grassroots environmental justice advocacy campaigns, WE ACT builds healthy communities by ensuring that people of color and/or low income participate meaningfully in the creation of sound and fair environmental health and protection policies and practices.

WE ACT has worked with the Columbia Children’s Environmental Health Center and the NIEHS Center for Environmental Health in Northern Manhattan for the past 20 years to translate research into policy that benefits communities. WE ACT has worked to investigate the presence of hormone disrupting chemicals in food and beverages as well as the materials in which they are contained or served. It has worked with other partners such as Women’s Voice for the Earth in testing feminine hygiene products, many of which contain chemicals that have known negative effects on women’s reproductive health. WE ACT is initiating a campaign to highlight the toxicity of skin lightening creams and other cosmetics that are marketed to women of color and perpetuate a racially biased standard of beauty.
WE ACT for Environmental Justice (continued)

Whether developing educational materials or conducting workshops with community members to enhance their understanding of consumer product toxicity, WE ACT’s objective is to inform the public how to avoid such chemicals and where to find safer alternatives. While consumers can build on their knowledge about product safety, our government should prioritize protecting the health of its citizens and should pass laws and ensure the enforcement of the safe manufacturing of all products. As a result, WE ACT continues to engage in chemical policy reform at the city, state and federal level. It has contributed to the passage of state legislation for the disclosure of toxic chemicals present in children’s toys and to legislation that mandates the disclosure of ingredients in household cleaning products.
About

Columbia Center for Children’s Environmental Health

Founded in 1998, the Columbia Center for Children’s Environmental Health (CCCEH) carries out community-based research in Northern Manhattan, the South Bronx and internationally to identify the harmful effects of early life exposure to environmental pollutants on children’s health and communicate the benefits of preventing those exposures to the community and policymakers.

The Center’s mission is to create a world in which every child has a healthy start. Basing its work in extensive research and partnerships with community organizations, it lays the groundwork for preventive measures to protect children from toxic exposures that harm developing brains and contribute to asthma and other serious illnesses in children.

The Center is are currently collecting information on women’s use of personal care products during pregnancy and how it may affect the health of their developing infant.
About

Center for Environmental Health in Northern Manhattan

The NIEHS Center for Environmental Health in Northern Manhattan brings together scientists and researchers who are interested in studying environmental causes of poor health, with the overall goal to improve the health of people in our community and prevent environmental causes of disease, whenever possible.

Most of the work of Center investigators is focused in three main disease areas: cancer, respiratory diseases such as asthma and allergens, and neurotoxicology/neurodegenerative diseases including ALS and autism. Center members attempt to identify and study environmental exposures that contribute to human diseases and communicate these results to other researchers, at risk communities, and the public, in general. Several of our researchers are studying the health effects of chemicals in cosmetics and other beauty products, and the uneven distribution of burdens negatively impacting communities of color and other disadvantaged populations. Our Center works closely with WE ACT for Environmental Justice to develop strategies to communicate their findings to protect the public against disease and to improve the overall health of communities of color in northern Manhattan and the Bronx.

For further information about the Center, please contact the Center Administrator, Gail Garbowski at gcg1@cumc.columbia.edu.
Thank you to our funders who made this event possible!

NIH
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

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