

The Truth  *About Health*

WARNING: YOUR DEODORANT MAY CAUSE BREAST CANCER

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A recent study published in the Journal of Applied Toxicology suggests that a chemical used in deodorants and other cosmetics may cause breast cancer.

Researchers examined 20 human breast cancer tumors and found para-hydroxybenzoic acids (parabens) in 90% of the tumors. High concentrations of parabens were found in 22% of tumors.

Parabens are used as preservatives in some deodorants, antiperspirants, body sprays, hair removal creams, shaving gels, face creams, cleansers and shampoos.

Previous studies have shown that parabens are absorbed through the skin and bind to estrogen receptors where they mimic the hormone estrogen and encourage breast cancer growth.

Dr. Phillappa Darbre, lead researcher of the study, noted that the results do not prove parabens cause cancer but that the chemical was high enough in some of the tumors to promote breast cancer cell growth.

“One would expect tumors to occur evenly, with 20% arising in each of the five areas of the

breast,” Darbre noted.

“These results help explain why up to 60% of all breast tumors are found in just one-fifth of the breast — the upper-outer quadrant, nearest the underarm.”

While Darbre has conducted other studies which have shown a link between deodorants and cancer, future studies are needed to determine the effect parabens have on normal cells.

SOURCE: Journal of Applied Toxicology, January 2004; Guardian, www.guardian.co.uk, January 11, 2004; New Scientist, January 12, 2004; WebMD Health, www.my.webmd.com, January 12, 2004.