

Product Options in Women-Engaged Research (P. O. W. E. R.) Study

A research study to learn
about the personal care
products purchased and
used by Black women in
Massachusetts

THE COLLABORATIVE

Silent Spring Institute

Resilient Sisterhood Project

Black women in Massachusetts



HEALTH INEQUITIES

Black women have higher rates of hormone-mediated problems compared to other groups of women, including diabetes, pre-term birth, infertility, earlier puberty, uterine fibroids, and more aggressive forms of breast and endometrial cancers.



EDC EXPOSURE

Exposure to endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs), chemicals that interfere with the body's hormones and have important impacts on health, have been linked to many hormone-mediated diseases. Although nearly every American is exposed to EDCs, some are more exposed than others. Black women have higher body burdens of parabens and phthalates likely due to differences in personal care product use.

WHAT WE DID

03/06

1
one

- Recruited 25 women to join the conversation
- Held five virtual workshops
- Discussed product use and considerations when selecting personal care products

- Participants logged their product use over three days using a smartphone app
- App users entered information about their products and frequency of use
- We inventoried products logged

2
two

3
three

- Held two follow-up workshops
- Shared summaries of the discussions and app-inventoried products
- Discussed recommendations to limit exposures to harmful chemicals in consumer products

P . O . W . E . R Findings

04/06

1 IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS WHEN CHOOSING PRODUCTS

- Natural
- Fragrance
- Effectiveness
- Representation / Black-owned

2 SOURCES FOR PRODUCT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Social media
- Friends and family
- Professionals
(dermatologist/
hairstylist)

3 MOST FREQUENTLY LOGGED PRODUCTS

- Toothpaste
- Facial soap, cleanser, or
wipes
- Deodorant and/or
antiperspirants
- Lotions and creams

4 POPULAR PRODUCT RETAILERS

- Sephora
- Target
- CVS
- Walmart



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Choose paraben-, phthalate-, and fragrance-free products. Download Silent Spring's free Detox Me app for more tips.
- Support beauty brands that evaluate their products for chemicals of health concern.
- Talk with beauty professionals about using products without endocrine disrupting chemicals.
- Support policies that address discrimination based on personal appearance and that increase ingredient transparency.

06/06



Robin Dodson
Silent Spring



Lilly Marcelin
RSP



Aleyana Momplaisir
RSP

The P. O. W. E. R. Team



Elissia Franklin
Silent Spring



Jennifer Ohayon
Silent Spring

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turi.org

