



## Why be Fragrance-Free?

### What is the policy?

Idaho Naturopathic Medicine has a fragrance free policy which requests our staff and patients to refrain from wearing scented lotions, perfumes, aftershave, hair products, deodorants, or clothes carrying fragrances.

### What is fragrance?

The terms fragrance, scent, and perfume are synonymous; they chemical compounds which have odor. Unfortunately, what is nice smelling to some people are toxic to others. Fragrances are known allergens, indeed, the American Contact Dermatitis Society voted fragrance the *Allergen of the Year* in 2007. Unfortunately, when you read the term 'fragrance' on labels, there is no clear understanding of what chemicals are actually in the product. Thousands of chemicals, including phthalates, can be included in a fragrance, but are not required to be listed on the label. Some fragrant compounds are carcinogenic at high doses and some are listed as hazardous waste by the EPA. Some perfume ingredients, phthalates, are highly suspected of causing reduced genital development in baby boys. The fragrance industry is self regulating, meaning the FDA does not regulate the fragrances until on the market and doesn't know individual ingredients in fragrance products. Some fragrances can be used to cover up other odors; these products can then be labeled 'fragrance free' or 'unscented'. Thus, always read the ingredient list!

#### **Symptoms of fragrance sensitivity**

Skin rashes  
Shortness of breath  
Asthma attack  
Nausea  
Dizziness  
Brain fog  
Headache  
Itchy eyes/nose  
Runny nose  
Wheezing  
Coughing  
Eczema  
Sore throat  
Fainting

#### **Fragrance may be found in:**

Perfume  
Soap  
Shampoos  
Deodorants  
Laundry detergent  
Dryer Sheets  
Hair products  
Cleaning products  
Candles  
Some food  
Deodorizers  
Waxless candles

**Why do we have the policy?** Idaho Naturopathic Medicine has a fragrance-free policy because we want to provide a healthy environment for everyone to enjoy. Approximately 15-30% of the general population are sensitive to some chemicals and 12% are sensitive to multiple chemicals. Since we are a health facility, this percentage may be higher for the people who come into our office. By not wearing fragranced products into our office, you may help promote the health of the person sitting next to you in the waiting room, or the person who visits our treatment room after you leave. If you are a fragrance wearer, you might want to consider that you are not a good judge of being able to detect fragrance; the longer you smell any one odor, the less able your nose can detect it. We thank all our patients for their help in supporting our fragrance-free policy.



### Alternatives to fragrance:

- To investigate numerous personal care product ingredients: [www.cosmeticsdatabase.com](http://www.cosmeticsdatabase.com).
- Choose non fragrance detergents, soaps, and personal care products. Some national products such as Tide, Cheer, and Arm and Hammer have fragrance free laundry soaps.
- Candles: Look for bees wax candles with lead-free wicks.
- Natural perfumes can be made with essential oils.

Two App helps you scan product UPC codes to determine toxicity of products (and foods).

- **Think Dirty** <https://www.thinkdirtyapp.com/>
- **EWG Healthy Living Ap.** <http://www.ewg.org/apps/>

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### Reference

1 Caress, S. and A. Steinemann A Review of a Two-Phase Population Study of Multiple Chemical Sensitivities *Environmental Health Perspectives* 111( 12), September 2003. 2 Boy Genital Development *Environmental Health Perspectives* Volume 113, (8) pp1056-1061. August 2005.