

Lipstick Found to Contain Alarming High Levels of Aluminum, Cadmium and Lead

By: Ethan A. Huff, Natural News

A popular cosmetic product since time immemorial, lipstick has long been used by women in many diverse cultures to accentuate their femininity and emanate their own unique expressions of elegance and style to the outside world. But a new study released by the *University of California, Berkeley* (UCB) School of Public Health raises fresh concerns about the safety of using conventional lipstick products, as many of them were found to contain dangerously high levels of aluminum, cadmium, lead and other toxins.

UCB researchers tested 32 common lipstick and lip gloss products widely sold in stores today and found that many of them are loaded with cadmium, chromium, aluminum and at least five other metals. Published in the peer-reviewed journal *Environmental Health Perspectives*, the findings revealed that women who use such products even at modest levels could be greatly increasing their risk of developing a host of potential health conditions, including gastrointestinal upset, nerve damage, and cancer.

"Lipstick and lip gloss are of special concern because when they are not being blotted on tissue or left as kiss marks, they are ingested or absorbed, bit by bit, by the individual wearing them," explains a UCB press release about the study. "Using acceptable daily intakes derived from this study, average use of some lipsticks and lip glosses would result in excessive exposure to chromium, a carcinogen linked to stomach ulcers."

Most conventional beauty products contain a multitude of toxins at varying levels

Of the 32 products tested, researchers found that 24 of them, or 75 percent, also contained lead, which is known to cause brain, cellular, and DNA damage. Since no level of lead exposure is considered safe for young children, this discovery is particularly concerning as many younger girls use lipstick with their friends when they play dress up and other childhood games.

"I believe that the FDA (*Food and Drug Administration*) should pay attention to this," says Sa Liu, author of the study and researchers in environmental health sciences at UCB. "Our study was small, using lip products that had been identified by young Asian women in Oakland, Calif. But, the lipsticks and lip glosses in our study are common brands available in stores everywhere. Based upon our findings, a larger, more thorough survey of lip products - and cosmetics in general - is warranted."

The FDA actually did conduct its own investigation back in late 2011 on lead in lipstick and found that every single sample among 400 collected contained lead. A shocking 380, or 95 percent, of the lipstick samples tested contained levels of lead at more than 0.1 parts per million (ppm), which is higher than the maximum level permitted in candy bars. But in typical FDA fashion, the agency largely discounted its own findings, declaring at the time that lead levels are "very low and [do] not pose safety concerns."

"Some of the toxic metals are occurring at levels that could possibly have an effect in the long term," says UCB professor S. Katharine Hammond, who helped lead the new study. "It's the levels that matter."

Sources for this article include:

<http://newscenter.berkeley.edu/2013/05/02/toxic-metals-in-lipstick/>