



Sherrill Sellman, author of *MOTHERS, Prevent Your Daughters From Getting Breast Cancer*

EXCERPTS FROM: *MOTHERS, Prevent Your Daughters From Getting Breast Cancer*

We live in a chemical soup. They're everywhere, in everything and they're here to stay. How many? It is estimated that since World War II, more than 80,000 synthetic chemicals have invaded our world. About 40 million tons are manufactured worldwide.

It is shocking to learn that hardly any of these substances have been tested for safety, but have been added to our food, skin care, water, cleaning products etc. without our consent and, most of all, without warnings of their potential dangers. Approximately 1000 new chemicals are made each year.

Surprisingly, city dwellers use more chemicals per acre than farmers and spend more than one billion dollars annually. In a lifetime 50 lbs of toxic waste can enter a body from drinking water and at least 450 lbs can enter the body through the skin. Organochlorines are chlorine-based chemicals. They are extremely toxic and lethal. Herbicides, pesticides, including DDT, its metabolite DDE, dieldrin, atrazine, methoxychlor, heptachlor, kepone, chlorine bleach, most disinfectants as well as various plastics such as vinyl chloride made into the plastic products such as baby bottles and babies soft toys.

They accumulate in our bodies in many ways: from drinking water, from food grown with agricultural chemicals, from plastic migrating into canned and microwaved foods, and from food or body contact with chlorine bleached paper products (coffee filters, tampons, paper cups, toilet papers). Although pesticides are designed to kill insects and other organisms, that's not all they do. In fact, only 2 per cent of the 1.2 billion pounds of pesticides sprayed on crops accomplish this purpose! The other 98 per cent are absorbed into the air, water, soil, or food supply – and into our bodies. The majority of organochlorines are stored in fat cells and breast tissue. The tendency of organochlorines to stay in the body is evidenced by the fact that recent samples of fat and breast milk collected from women in the United States and Canada contained DDT, chlordane and dieldrin, organochlorines banned for over three decades (as well as those in current use such as DDE and PCBs). Women with high levels of agricultural organochlorines in their blood are 4 to 10 times more likely to develop breast cancer than women with low levels. Women with breast cancer have 50-60 percent more PCBs, DDE and other pesticides and organochlorines in their tissues than women without breast cancer. The really scary thing about these pervasive chemicals is that fetuses and infants can be harmed by exposure to chemicals at levels that do not appear to harm adults. In fact, these hormone-

disrupting chemicals can have effects at extraordinarily low doses, as low as parts per trillion. Mixtures of chemicals can have effects that are different from those of individual chemicals. For instance, a combination of only two different organochlorines together in minute doses has been found to be 1000 times more potent in affecting human estrogen receptors as with the chemicals alone.

So, there's no escape. We're surrounded. Products that look innocent, such as commercial soaps as shampoos, can be harboring potent carcinogenic hormone disrupters. So are our foods. Our favorite salad green, lettuce, can be sprayed with pesticides as many as 12 times in its short life. The lawns our children play on, the household cleaners we use in our ovens, on the sink, for the toilet. The water we bathe in. These are just some of the ever-contaminating ways chemicals have silently infiltrated into our lives and put at health at risk. What do we do to survive the toxic onslaught? It has become obvious that going organic is really no longer an option. From eating organic fruits and vegies to using organic personal care products, household cleaning products and organic pest control, going organic is really the only way to go. A recent study found that pre-schoolers who were eating primarily organic foods had 6-9 times less pesticide residues in their bodies! So, just making small changes do make a difference!