

Clean Air Alternatives to Aerosol Spray



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This is probably not a surprise to you if you have ever used an aerosol spray can, but these little stinkers are often dangerously toxic to you and the environment. All you have to do is read the warning label to realize you just may have a time-bomb in your hand. We all know that if allowed to heat-up, that pressurized aerosol can actually become a real bomb and explode. But did you also know that the fine vapor mist, along with the inevitable chemical cocktail of some aerosol products, has been linked to cancer, brain damage and even death for the user? Furthermore, [aerosols](#) are at the root of some big environmental problems such as air pollution and global warming.

Next to injections, breathing fine vapor mist is the fastest way to absorb a chemical into your body. For someone having a massive asthma attack, medicinal delivery through a fine mist is a godsend. For children getting their annual flu shot, the new flu mist, in lieu of a needle, is also something to be celebrated. But for the rest of us just trying to get ready for the day, clean our homes or finish a project, the user-friendly aerosol can often requires a deal with the devil. Just as asthma medication is quickly inhaled via aerosol spraying, so are the hundreds of questionable chemicals that come in other types of aerosol cans.

Fortunately, there are numerous alternatives to that highly flammable, often highly polluting, potentially cancer-causing aerosol can.

Sunscreen

The spray-on sunscreen is mighty tempting; who likes the greasy feeling of hand-applying suntan lotion? I know I don't and neither do my kids. But it is very likely your lungs or your children's lungs like the fine particle spray laced with numerous dubious chemicals even less. Furthermore, why trade the possibility of skin cancer from the sun for the possibility of another type of cancer somewhere inside your body? Do your body and the air a favor and return to the hand-applied sunscreens — or find a “stick” alternative such as California Baby.

Odor Removal

We all enjoy a [fresh-smelling home](#), car and office. Yet diaper pails, pet odors, and food odors are notoriously difficult to dispel....unless you know about vinegar. Vinegar has an extraordinary capacity to wipe-out even the strongest, most persistent odors. All you need to do is mix water with [white vinegar](#) (I like 2/3 vinegar and 1/3 water) in a spray bottle and mist as you would with an air freshener. You will smell the strong scent of vinegar for about five minutes, but then it dissipates, taking along the offensive odor with it! I spray trash bins, shoes, pet areas, the kitchen, my car and laundry room with vinegar on a regular basis and without the guilt and risk of using toxic aerosols. Another plus to vinegar — it is very inexpensive, especially if you buy the big jugs at Costco.

If just removing the stinky smells is not enough and you want some lovely scents to escort you through your day, try pure [essential oils](#). You can apply the scent of your choice in a number of ways: a) just sprinkle a few drops on your carpet, bed linens or wood floors; b) mix a few drops of the essential oil in a spray bottle filled with water and spray; c) use a water-based diffuser or d) use a candle diffuser. Try lemon, lavender, rose and/or cinnamon for some fresh clean scents. Personally, I love Do Terra essential oils for their purity and high medicinal grade – and thus recommend these highly.

Clothing Starch

Some people love their clothes starched to keep them extra crisp and fresh. If you are one of these well-dressed individuals, try ditching the aerosol spray and use a mixture of cornstarch and water in a spray bottle instead. Mix one tablespoon of cornstarch for each pint of water. Test the blend on a dish towel and add more cornstarch if needed (a 1/2 teaspoon or less at a time), to get the crispness you desire.

Furniture and Stainless Steel Polish

Try olive oil or any cooking oil as a wood furniture polish. Olive oil also works well with stainless steel. If you prefer a scented polish, again, just add a few drops of a pure essential oil such as lavender or lemon. Be sure to use a little elbow grease to polish the oil to create a nice sheen and remove any oily residue left behind.

Hair Spray

Farrah Fawcett probably could not have managed her signature hairdo if it weren't for aerosol hair spray, but fortunately having two shellacked wings of hair framing your face is no longer in style. That is not to say that some of us still don't rely on a little help with our locks. If you need hairspray, ditch the aerosol can and choose a pump hair spray instead. Early forms of aerosol hairspray contained vinyl chloride, a known carcinogen, as well as, CFCs which were very effective at eating the ozone in our atmosphere, and therefore a big culprit in global warming. Fortunately, both CFCs and vinyl chloride were banned in hairspray products in the

1970s. However, according to a PBS website, even without the vinyl chloride, it is not known whether the ingredients currently used in hairspray are safe for human use.

I hope this list of alternatives will encourage you to ditch a few aerosol cans. If you have additional alternatives to aerosol products, please share, so we can all enjoy cleaner air.