


DATE LINE, A POPULAR USA NATIONWIDE TV NEWS CHANNEL PROGRAM, AIRED A STORY ABOUT THE DANGERS OF 'ARTIFICIAL CHEMICALS' IN THE FOODS AND COSMETIC PRODUCTS THAT VIRTUALLY EVERY AMERICANS USE EVRYDAY. IT COMPARED TWO DIFFERENT FAMILIES, ONE THAT WERE TRING TO LEAD A GREEN LIFESTYLE AND ONE THAT DID NOT CARE.

The story below highlights the shows details followed by the actual transcripts.

Sophyto Organics, is a certified organic manufacture of skin care products, our licensing prohibits us from using 'artificial chemicals', suspect ingredients and processes in our formulas. **Sophyto Organics** use whole food nutrients, as the basis of its proprietary formulas rather than manmade synthetic s. The benefit of using our technology is that in addition to providing hundreds of active ingredients rather than just a few, the results can be equally as good if not better than any premium product. Our preservative system is also food grade, we do not use any petrochemicals which includes parabens as mentioned in this article nor do we use any suspect or untested processes whilst still maintaining up to a 3 year boxed shelf life.

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Two families test their lifestyles

INTRODUCTION

Better living through chemistry. It may be an old joke, but it's the modern way of daily life in America.

You can't get away from chemicals if you try, and the truth is, in many cases you wouldn't want to.

Chemicals clean your clothes, help breakfast slide onto your plate, and make life a lot more convenient.

But a flurry of new research shows that some chemicals from food and household products are seeping into our bodies. While many are harmless, others may be downright toxic.

"All of us in America are exposed to dozens, even hundreds, of chemicals our grandparents and our parents weren't exposed to," says Dr. Phillip Landrigan. "They're in blood, they're in urine, they're in breast milk, they're in the cord blood of newborn infants ... We really know very little about the toxicity of these chemicals and to me as a pediatrician, that's worrisome."

How do you live? What choices do you make? Are you just cozying up to chemical America without even thinking about it?

THE FAMILIES

Scientists can measure the levels of toxins in our systems by analyzing our blood and urine in what are called "body burden" tests.

The tests are expensive, and not readily available to the public. But Dateline arranged to have the tests done on two families who were willing to share their results publicly and find out just how "toxic" they really are.

'The Greens'

They live in Sonoma, Calif.

Mother Andrea is a strict vegan, saying "I don't eat dairy. I don't eat eggs. No butter, of course. And I don't even use animal products. I don't wear leather or wool or silk."

Her husband, Steve, is a vegetarian, and they've raised their daughters, 13-year-old Marielle and 11-year-old Jordan, as vegetarians as well.

Their home is solar-powered and built chemical-free.

"Starting with household products, cleaning products," says mother Andrea, "when we buy them, we buy more natural versions."

She estimates that 80 percent of their food is organic.

'The Browns'

We call the other family "the Browns," and they are much closer to your average American family.

Dale, Joan, 15-year-old Robert, and 18-year-old son Chris also live in California, and they say their hectic lives often lead straight to the drive-thru.

Dale says the family is very busy, working 40 to 60 hours per week. "By the time you're home, it's 8, 9 o'clock at night," he says, "There's no time to prepare and put the effort there."

Dale says when he buys household products, he doesn't worry about what's in them. "I worry about how effective and cost."

THE TESTS

We sent both families' blood and urine samples to Axys analytical labs in Canada to see how many toxins have literally become a part of them.

We tested for 76 different industrial chemicals.

The "Brown" family tested positive for 43 chemicals.

And the "Green" family? They had 42 chemicals in their systems.

But this is more than a numbers game.

The amount of each chemical in your body can be much more telling than how many chemicals you have overall.

"Brown" family: 7 of 7 chemicals found

Joan: moderate

Dale: low

Robert: high

Chris: high

"Green" family: 7 of 7 chemicals found

Andrea: low

Steve: moderate

Marielle: low

Jordan: moderate

When the "Brown" children don't know why they tested high for phthalates, which are common plastic softeners.

Phthalates are used in a wide variety of consumer products, including cosmetics, paint, food packaging, and plastics, including children's toys.

"I drink a lot of bottled fluids and I microwave a lot in plastic," said Robert.

Dale was afraid of this, saying he "never thought of the container" as a potential health hazard.

Phthalates are also found in vinyl shower curtains, Medical IV tubing, nail care products, some printing inks, pharmaceuticals, vinyl flooring, sealants, car-care products, and, to a lesser extent, some cosmetics and personal care products. They are a common component of fragrance for personal care and cleaning products.

In many laboratory studies phthalates are linked to birth defects of the male reproductive system, including a penis deformity called hypospadias, and undescended testicles, a condition linked to infertility and testicular cancer.

Studies of typical phthalates levels in people link the chemicals to sperm damage, low sperm count, feminization of baby boys, asthma, and alteration of reproductive hormone levels in baby boys drinking breast milk with high levels of phthalates.

These studies are considered preliminary, but are consistent with a wealth of observations in animal studies.

"Brown" family: 23 of 46 chemicals found

Joan: low

Dale: low

Robert: not tested

Chris: not tested

"Green" family: 23 of 46 chemicals found

Andrea: low

Steve: low

Marielle: not tested

Jordan: not tested

PBDEs, or polybrominated diphenyl ethers, are brominated fire retardants used in foam furniture and plastics for electronics like televisions and computers for the past 25 years. People are exposed to PBDEs from these products and from PBDEs that have built up in the environment, including in house dust and food.

In 2005, manufacturers stopped selling two of the most toxic PBDE commercial mixtures because of concerns over their ubiquity in human blood and breast milk. These same mixtures were banned in Europe two years earlier, although European manufacturers had never used them widely. The two chemicals remain in many U.S. homes, primarily in foam furniture, and they commonly contaminate house dust.

These chemicals interfere with the thyroid gland, which controls metabolism and growth. They may jeopardize brain development in children, and they raise concerns with respect to thyroid disease in adults. Safe exposure levels have not yet been established.

"Brown" family: 5 of 13 chemicals found

Joan: low

Dale: moderate

Robert: not tested

Chris: not tested

"Green" family: 4 of 13 chemicals found

Andrea: low

Steve: low

Marielle: not tested

Jordan: not tested

When he heard his family had three times as much PFCs as the "Green" family, Dale said "Teflon! Ah, that pan, I've got to stop using it!"

PFCs are ubiquitous stain- and grease-proof coatings on furniture, carpet, clothing and food packaging. They include Teflon, Scotchgard, Gore-Tex, Stainmaster, and coatings on microwave popcorn bags, butter boxes, and fast food containers. They never break down in the environment, and some can build up in the body over time. They move through the atmosphere easily, and contaminate wildlife globally, from polar bears to cormorants. In laboratory studies they have been linked to multiple types of cancer (breast, liver, testicular, and pancreatic) and birth defects. In studies of workers they are associated with prostate cancer and elevated risk of stroke. Safe levels of exposure have not yet been set.

EPA is currently conducting an assessment to estimate health risks from consumers' exposures to PFCs, but in the meantime, the chemicals are still the standard in stain- and grease-proof coatings in products ranging from blue jeans to French fry boxes. The California legislature has just introduced a bill to ban certain PFCs from food packaging.

"Brown" family

Joan: low

Dale: moderate

Robert: low

Chris: moderate

"Green" family

Andrea: below detection limit

Steve: below detection limit

Marielle: low

Jordan: below detection limit

Triclosan is a pesticide designed to kill microorganisms. It is added to a range of consumer products, from liquid hand soap to cutting boards, toothpaste, children's toys, and shoe liners.

Because of its ubiquity in products, triclosan is widely detected in human urine, wastewater treatment plant effluent, and rivers and streams across the country.

Triclosan is toxic to wildlife. In the environment it breaks down into toxic chemicals, including a form of dioxin linked to cancer and other health concerns, and methyl triclosan, a persistent pollutant that can build up in the food chain over time.

It forms carcinogens when combined with chlorinated tap water, it can disrupt reproductive hormones, and it alters thyroid gland function in frogs through mechanisms thought to be relevant to humans, raising questions about its presumed safety in products. Scientists voice additional concerns over the potential for resistant strains of bacteria to develop as the use of the chemical in consumer products continues to increase.

BPA

"Brown" family

Joan: below detection limit

Dale: below detection limit

Robert: below detection limit

Chris: moderate

"Green" family

Andrea: below detection limit

Steve: moderate

Marielle: moderate

Jordan: high

In a surprise to the "Green" family, their canned food contains Bisphenol A (BPA).

"We eat a lot of refried beans and I don't make those from scratch," says Andrea.

BPA are building blocks in plastics and resins used for baby bottles, water coolers, dental sealants, and metal food can linings. It is widely detected in food and drinks held in these plastic or epoxy-lined containers, and it leaches out of new dental sealants into saliva.

Recent studies have linked BPA to many adverse health effects in mice and rats at doses that may overlap with typical human exposures. These effects include early puberty, breast cancer, diabetes, and low sperm count.

The current "safe" levels of exposure for humans established by FDA are set far above levels now shown to be harmful in lab studies. Because a fraction of the population may incur exposures that overlap with levels harmful to lab animals, some prominent scientists consider BPA to be one of the top chemicals of concern for public health.

Parabens

"Brown" family: 4 of 6 chemicals found

Joan: moderate

Dale: low

Robert: moderate

Chris: low

"Green" family: 4 of 6 chemicals found

Andrea: moderate

Steve: low

Marielle: moderate

Jordan: low

Parabens are used to prevent the growth of bacteria and mold in cosmetics, increasing its shelf life.

Joan, who was in the moderate range, had more than four times Andrea's levels. Joan worries "a little bit" about the toxin levels in her make-up, but says "It's in everything, it looks like."

Parabens are found in a wide variety of cosmetics and body care products, including moisturizers, face and skin cleaners, shampoos, conditioners, sunscreens, deodorants and antiperspirants, shaving gels, toothpastes, makeup, and many others. They are also used as preservatives in some prepared foods and beverages, and in some medications. Daily use of body care products can result in repeated, direct exposures to parabens.

Some parabens can irritate the skin or cause allergic reactions. Laboratory studies indicate that parabens are estrogenic, meaning they can mimic the hormone estrogen, disrupting normal function of the hormone system. In a recent study, traces of 5 different parabens were found in the breast cancer tumors of 19 of 20 women examined. Other lab studies also link parabens to cancer, and to reproductive health problems as well.

Mercury

"Brown" family

Joan: low

Dale: low

Robert: not tested

Chris: not tested

"Green" family

Andrea: low

Steve: low

Marielle: not tested

Jordan: not tested

Blood samples were tested for total mercury. Total mercury is the sum of all forms of mercury, including methylmercury, the form that contaminates seafood, and the forms of mercury used in dental fillings and as preservatives in vaccinations and flu shots.

Levels of mercury in all 4 adults were low relative to others that EWG has tested. Children were not tested. These levels are similar to those in people who eat seafood only rarely.

Lead

"Brown" family

Joan: low

Dale: low

Robert: not tested

Chris: not tested

"Green" family

Andrea: moderate

Steve: moderate

Marielle: not tested

Jordan: not tested

The "Green" family was surprised to see they had higher levels of lead. Steve and Andrea couldn't explain its presence.

"I guess I can't remember because of all the lead in my body," joked Steve. My brain's not functioning!"

Lead is thought to pose risks at any level, and scientists are beginning to question the role that a lifetime of lead exposure may play in neurodegenerative diseases of aging like Parkinson's and Alzheimers.

Americans' lead exposures are much lower now than they were before about 1980, when the use of leaded gasoline and lead-based house paint was restricted. Now, most people are exposed to lead through their drinking water (it leaches from lead pipes, pipe solder, and brass fixtures in the home) or through dust from chipping paint in older homes.

LINKS

Skin Deep: Environmental Working Group's cosmetics safety database

<http://www.cosmeticsdatabase.com>

EWG's Human Toxome Project

<http://www.ewg.org/sites/humantoxome/>

Are you toxic? A body burden quiz

<http://extras.insidebayarea.com/bodyburden/bodyburden.html>

Andrea's Web site (the mom from our "Green" family)

<http://www.greenworkinprogress.com>

Is it in us? A project on chemical contamination in our bodies

<http://www.isitinus.org>

Commonweal's Biomonitoring Resource Center

<http://www.commonweal.org/programs/brc/index.html>

Dr. Landrigan / Mt. Sinai Children's Environmental Health Center

<http://www.childenvironment.org/>

Sources: Environmental Working Group and Dateline NBC

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It's not easy being green

Ever worry that your family uses stuff every day that contains potentially harmful chemicals? Two very different families face a Dateline test

TRANSCRIPT

By Josh Mankiewicz

Correspondent

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This story originally aired Dateline NBC on April 20, 2008.

CALIFORNIA - Better living through chemistry. It may be an old joke, but it's the modern way of daily life in America.

You can't get away from chemicals if you try, and the truth is, in many cases you wouldn't want to.

Chemicals clean your clothes, help breakfast slide onto your plate, and make life a lot more convenient.

But a flurry of new research shows that some chemicals from food and household products are seeping into our bodies.

While many are harmless, others may be downright toxic.

Dr. Phillip Landrigan: All of us, all of us in America are exposed to dozens, even hundreds, of chemicals our grandparents and our parents weren't exposed to ... They're in blood, they're in urine, they're in breast milk, they're in the cord blood of newborn infants ... We really know very little about the toxicity of these chemicals and to me as a pediatrician, that's worrisome.

How do you live? What choices do you make? Are you just cozying up to chemical America without even thinking about it?

Scientists can measure the levels of toxins in our systems by analyzing our blood and urine in what are called "body burden" tests.

The tests are expensive, and not readily available to the public. But Dateline arranged to have the tests done on two families who were willing to share their results publicly and find out just how "toxic" they really are.

Meet our first family. We'll call them "the Greens." They live in Sonoma, Calif.

Andrea is a strict vegan, saying "I don't eat dairy. I don't eat eggs. No butter, of course. And I don't even use animal products. I don't wear leather or wool or silk."

Her husband Steve is a vegetarian, and they've raised their daughters, 13-year-old Marielle and 11-year-old Jordan, as vegetarians as well.

Josh Mankiewicz, Dateline NBC: Your girls have never had any meat?**Steve:** Never had any meat.**Josh Mankiewicz:** Any interest in it?**Marielle:** No.**Jordan:** No, not really.**Josh Mankiewicz:** No?**Girls:** Nope.**Andrea:** Well, maybe they had a little bit. I'm thinking when they were learning to crawl they did get into the cat chow once.

But it's not just the decision to leave the meat-eating to their cats that makes "the Greens" so green.

Andrea: Starting with household products, cleaning products ... When we buy them, we buy more natural versions ... We purchase food, mostly organic foods, anywhere from produce to dry pasta, our mustard. You know pretty much everything in our cabinets or 80 percent is organic.

This organic, all-natural approach even extends to the roof over their heads. Their home is solar-powered and built chemical-free.

Josh Mankiewicz: Do people consider you extreme? Nutty? Wacky? Are you guys those wacky Californians everybody makes jokes about?**Andrea:** We're the wacky Californians to the non-Californians...**Steve:** We've decided this is how we want to live our lives. And we think there are long term benefits to living our life this way. That, number one, we'll be healthier. That we potentially will live healthier, more vibrant lives, especially as we get older.**Josh Mankiewicz:** But you're not really actively out there proselytizing for this?**Andrea:** I've started a Web site, greenworkinprogress.com. And it's you know for people who are interested...**Steve:** We're not knocking on doors and saying "Hi, we're the green people, here to help you live your life." You know, we're never going to go that far.

Because they've put so much thought into their diet and their environment, "the Greens" are especially curious to see what a body burden test will show.

Josh Mankiewicz: I get the feeling that you guys are going to be a little disappointed--**Steve:** Yeah...**Josh Mankiewicz:** --if you're not at least a little bit lower than our other family.**Andrea:** We'll have to see. We'll have to see...

Meet "The Browns"

That other family, we're calling them "the Browns," are much closer to your average American family.

Josh Mankiewicz: What did you have for breakfast and what did you have for lunch?**Dale:** Breakfast, I had two eggs and two slices of provolone cheese, then for lunch I had top sirloin steak...**Joan:** I had an egg sandwich that Dale made me and for lunch I had a turkey sandwich and a tangerine and that's it.**Robert:** For breakfast I had a bowl of cereal and for lunch I had pizza with some orange soda.**Chris:** For breakfast I had a Balance bar and then for lunch I had two fish tacos.

Dale, Joan, 15-year-old Robert, and 18-year-old son Chris also live in California, and they say their hectic lives often lead straight to the drive-thru.

Josh Mankiewicz: How many of the dietary choices you make every day are made because you got a job, you got a job, you're in college, and you're in high school and everybody's in a hurry?**Dale:** We work 40 to 60 hours a week. You know, my wife works at least that much. The boys are involved in athletics, so even when we're not working more than an eight hour day at work, we're going off to some sporting event after that. By the time you're home, it's 8, 9 o'clock at night frequently.**Josh Mankiewicz:** And you want to grab whatever's most convenient?**Dale:** Right. There's no time to prepare and put the effort there.**Josh Mankiewicz:** What about home products? Soap, detergents, lotion, cosmetics, stuff to get out stains. Who buys those things in the family?**Dale:** I buy all those.**Josh Mankiewicz:** Do you worry about what's in them? Or do you just worry about how effective they are?**Dale:** I worry about how effective and cost.**Josh Mankiewicz:** And the reason for that is what? That if it was really harmful it would say so on the bottle or if you're not, I'm not eating it, I'm spraying it on the rug?**Dale:** Correct. It's not something we're ingesting.**Josh (to the boys):** Do you ever think about "Gee, what's in that detergent? Or what's in hand soap? Or what's in that orange soda I had?"**Chris:** No. I always think those things are probably, like soap especially, will probably be like safe because it cleans your hands and stuff.**Josh Mankiewicz:** You've by now heard about the other family that we're talking to that sort of lives green. All four of them are vegetarians. Their mom is a vegan. The kids have never had any meat in their whole lives and they're very careful about what products they buy and bring into their home.**Dale:** God bless 'em...**Josh Mankiewicz:** How do you think you'll stack up relative to the other family?**Dale:** I'm not that concerned.**Joan:** Well, I'm hoping we'd be the same, but all you hear about on the news is about the chemicals and how your body's absorbing the chemicals from makeups and bottled water and everything, so there could be a difference.**Josh (to Dale):** You're not worried?**Dale:** I'm not worried on that one.**Joan:** I hope your blood results can back that. (laughter)

We sent both families' blood and urine samples to Axys analytical labs in Canada to see how many toxins have literally become a part of them.

We tested for 76 different industrial chemicals.

And now the results are in.

Josh Mankiewicz: Family A has 43 chemicals and family B -- that's you -- has 42 chemicals.**Steve:** Yeah, we won! (laughter)

Not so fast. This is more than a numbers game.

The amount of each chemical in your body can be much more telling than how many chemicals you have overall.

Perfluorochemicals, or PFCs, are found mostly in non-stick, stain-proof and grease-proof coatings on cookware, furniture, clothing and fast food containers.

Dale: Teflon! Ah, that pan, I've got to stop using it!

For Dale, who does most of the cooking for "the Browns," hearing that his beloved non-stick pans were a likely source of PFCs was frustrating.

Dale: As soon as the pan has obviously started losing its coating, we replace it because I am concerned. But clearly even though we've done that, it's still in my system.

The "Brown" family had three times as much PFCs as the "Green" family. To Andrea, it's a no-brainer.

Andrea: We purposely avoid Teflon pans. We were shopping the other day and it was hard to find ones without it. But it's better. It may take a little more elbow grease, but it's worth it...**Josh Mankiewicz:** No Teflon, no Gore-Tex, no Scotchgard?**Andrea:** Goodness, no! **Josh Mankiewicz:** "Goodness, no"?! Those are the things that made America great! **Andrea:** Better living through chemistry, right? (laughs)

Next, we tested for parabens -- chemicals used as preservatives in cosmetics and products like moisturizers, shampoos, shave gel and toothpaste.

Long before we got any results back, Joan -- from the "Brown" family -- was questioning what's in her personal care products.

Joan: I've been reading in the news lately about lotions and makeup and things and all the chemicals in those products. And there's a little concern.**Josh Mankiewicz:** And does it worry you?**Joan:** A little bit...**Josh Mankiewicz:** Do you wear makeup every day?**Joan:** Yes.**Josh Mankiewicz:** And do you ever think when you're putting makeup on, "Maybe I'm giving myself some sort of hazardous chemical that's not going to go away?"**Joan:** (laughs) Well...**Josh Mankiewicz:** Or do you think to yourself "I hope this is the right shade."**Joan:** I think to myself, "I hope this is the right shade!"

Both moms, Joan and Andrea, were in the moderate range -- but Joan had more than four times Andrea's levels. And both moms had more than either of the dads or the kids.

Joan: I don't think I can get away from using lotions and things like that. It's in everything, it looks like.

Phthalates are hard to spell, but easy to detect in virtually every American -- and in every member of both our families. They're used to make plastic products from water bottles to children's toys to shower curtains, and are also a key ingredient in paint, cosmetics, and anything with fragrance.

Robert and Chris, the "Brown" kids, had the highest levels of phthalates of any member of either family. In fact, their levels were higher than 76 percent of people who have ever been tested for phthalates by the Centers for Disease Control.

But they don't know why.

Chris: I used to paint houses, and I used sealants on decks and stuff. And I drink lots of bottled water.**Josh Mankiewicz:** You probably don't think of that affecting your health?**Chris:** No...**Josh Mankiewicz:** And you?**Robert:** I drink a lot of bottled fluids and I microwave a lot in plastic.**Joan:** Oh gosh...**Josh Mankiewicz:** You don't look happy...**Joan:** No...**Josh Mankiewicz:** You were afraid of this ... I'm thinking you probably don't perceive plastic containers as anything more than a convenience.**Dale:** Correct.**Josh Mankiewicz:** If you have health concerns, it's probably more what's in the container than the container itself.**Dale:** Never thought of the container. You're absolutely right.

Last year, California banned phthalates in baby and children's products, and Europe outlawed it in cosmetics, too. Andrea's ban is even older.

Andrea: From a very early age, we took in very few plastic toys. The girls played with wooden blocks. I mean, there were plastic toys -- we don't live in a bubble -- because bubbles are made of plastic (laughs) but it's always been a conscious effort.**Marielle:** If you go somewhere, like if we were little and went to a friend's house, there could have been toys that had it.**Jordan:** Or if we went to someone else's house and they had different soap, or a public bathroom...**Josh Mankiewicz:** And your parents don't say don't wash your hands at someone else's house--**Jordan:** Definitely not!

When we tested for triclosan, a pesticide found in most anti-bacterial liquid hand soap, the "Greens" showed barely a trace. The browns were in the low-to-moderate range.

Josh Mankiewicz: Joan and Robert are low. (To Robert:) You've never done a dish a day in your life so that I understand. (laughter, then to Joan:) You, I don't understand.**Joan:** I wear gloves!

The "Greens" wage war on dirt the old fashioned way.

Steve: We eat healthy and create strong bodies with good immune systems.

The "Browns" depend on a little extra help.

Josh Mankiewicz: You go out of your way to buy antibacterial soap, don't you?**Joan and Dale (nodding):** All the soaps have it now.**Josh Mankiewicz:** This is an example of something families buy not because it's convenient but because they think it's actually going to help them. In this case you might even spend a little extra money to buy something you think is killing more germs.**Dale (and Joan nodding):** That's absolutely the truth with the dish soap.

If you're keeping track, it may seem the "Green" family is coming out way ahead, but our next two tests left them nearly speechless.

Bisphenol A is a toxin and possible carcinogen found in recycled and reusable plastics like baby bottles. In metal food cans lined with plastic, it can leach out of the container and into your food.

The "Brown" family had levels so low they were barely detectable.

But for the "Green" family, dad Steve and daughter Marielle had moderate levels, and youngest daughter Jordan was actually in the high range.

Josh Mankiewicz: In this case, you are higher than the other family. **Steve:** No way! (laughs) This is surprising...**Josh Mankiewicz:** You eat a lot of canned foods?**Andrea:** We eat a lot of refried beans and I don't make those from scratch. **Josh Mankiewicz:** What?**Andrea:** I know... **Josh Mankiewicz:** Don't you care about your family? **Andrea:** I'm sorry! (feigns crying) I'm sorry! **Josh Mankiewicz:** What are you doing?

Andrea: Yeah, we do use a lot of cans. **Josh Mankiewicz:** You're surprised by that? **Andrea:** My mind is racing I'm thinking where is it? How do I get rid of it?

And in our final test, another shock for "Team Green": both Steve and Andrea's blood tests found lead in their systems, and at substantially higher levels than Joan or Dale.

Steve: We didn't grow up in some house where we were eating paint off the walls. **Andrea:** Maybe we did that when we were infants. You remember? **Steve:** I guess I can't remember because of all the lead in my body. My brain's not functioning! (laughs)

So, neither family gets an "A" on this test, and although the green family has fewer toxins, there's no real winner.

Each family has at least 40 of the 76 different industrial chemicals we tested for.

No one has high enough levels of anything to cause concern, but no one -- not even the "Green" kids -- is living toxin-free.

Andrea: It doesn't surprise me. They're in the air we breathe and even though we try to bring in products with fewer chemicals, it's just the nature of the society we live in. **Dale:** You hear so often in the press that certain items are bad, then six months later you hear maybe they're not so bad and this is what's bad and you tend to get a little complacent and distrustful of the news when you first hear it. But when you actually get tested and you see the results and you see it's in your system, regardless of whether or not you know that risk will cause you to be ill later, it's prudent to live as safely as you can. **Dr. Phillip Landrigan:** What they have to do next is pay more attention to the products they use to clean their homes, to the personal care products they use ... They should think about the plastics they use in their house and minimize use of plastics, switch to glass in some instances, switch to stainless steel drinking canteens for walking around town. In short, families can become smart consumers.

So make your own choice of how green you want to live. But know this:

In this country, like in a lot of the industrialized world, avoiding chemicals is almost as hard as avoiding your family. Like it or not, both are going to be a part of your life for a long time.

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