



The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly about Chlorine

The Good

Chlorine was added to public water for the first time in the U.S. in 1908. By adding small amounts of chlorine to the water the majority of bacteria could be killed. The result was a dramatic decline in regular outbreaks of cholera and typhoid fever. The use of chlorine today as a disinfectant for public water is near universal. It is also used in higher concentrations at public pools, spas, and as laundry bleach with results that are perceived as largely beneficial. In the short term, that may be true, but not over the long haul.

The Bad

Because chlorine is so commonly present in the everyday water we consume, we tend to accept the negative side effects because they are so prevalent.

- Dry skin • Dry Hair • Poor Taste • Acrid Odor

The Ugly

Unfortunately, the long-term affects of even low levels of chlorine in water are downright dangerous. Chlorine in everyday drinking water produces carcinogenic traces. Thus, it shouldn't be surprising that it has been linked to cancer of the colon, rectum, bladder, breast, esophagus, larynx and of Hodgkin's Disease, not to mention heart disease as well. The increase in these conditions was recognized as far back as the 1920s. This shouldn't surprise us. When you smell laundry bleach you don't need to read the label to know it's poisonous. Over time, even minute doses can be lethal.

Because it is present in all public water supplies, it is up to us to remove it in our own homes. At the very least, you should filter the water you drink. Since studies indicate that exposure through inhalation or absorption through the skin can be several times higher than even drinking, it is prudent to filter the water for your entire home not just at the point of use, but at the point of entry.

...chlorine in drinking water may actually pose greater long-term dangers than those for which it was used to eliminate."

"Since chlorine is ... present in all public drinking water supplies, it is up to the individual to remove it at the point-of-use in the home."

—Francis T. Mayo,
Director Municipal Environmental Research Lab

"Chlorine is the greatestcrippler and killer of modern times. While it prevented epidemics of one disease, it was creating another. Two decades ago, after the start of chlorinating our drinking water in 1904, the present epidemic of heart trouble, cancer and senility began."

—Dr. N. W. Walker, D.S.

"There was a higher incidence of cancer of the esophagus, rectum, breast, larynx and of Hodgkin's Disease among those drinking chlorinated surface waters."

—Dr. John Andelman, Ph.D.