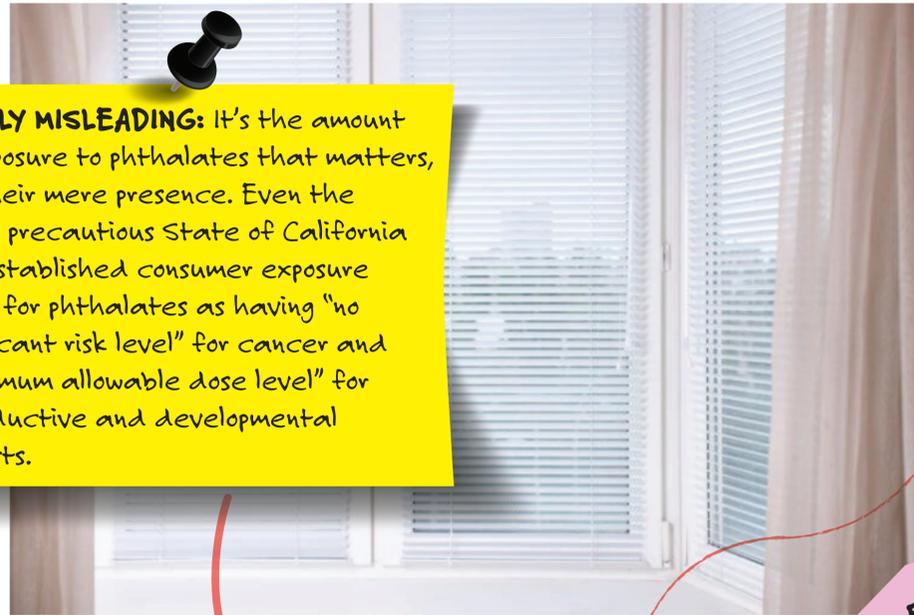


# 15 Things in Your Home That Can Cause Cancer

BY LAUREN CAHN

Your couch, your fridge—even your nice countertops could be hiding cancer-causing substances. Here's what you can do about it, according to top toxicology experts.

## Your vinyl flooring and your miniblinds



**WILDLY MISLEADING:** It's the amount of exposure to phthalates that matters, not their mere presence. Even the overly precautionous State of California has established consumer exposure levels for phthalates as having "no significant risk level" for cancer and "maximum allowable dose level" for reproductive and developmental effects.

The errors and deceptions in this story are almost too many to count. We're going to systematically dismantle them here.

Most vinyl flooring produced today does not contain phthalates. And the State of California has determined that certain phthalates that might be used in flooring are safe to use below established threshold levels.

**MINIBLINDS?** Most are made from rigid PVC, which do not contain phthalates. They won't cause a mass health hazard. Unless you eat them, in which case there may be larger problems to address.

**FALSE.** Not all PVC vinyl products contain phthalates. Did she do any basic homework for this story?

L JULIA/SHUTTERSTOCK  
Phthalates are suspected of causing cancer and may adversely affect human reproduction or development. They're found in vinyl flooring, shower curtains, synthetic leather, miniblinds, wallpaper, and anything made with PVC vinyl. They're also found in food packaged in plastic.

**IRRESPONSIBLE.** Consumers have safely used PVC products for years - including those that contain low levels of phthalates. She fails her readers by advancing such a dishonest and factually-baseless claim.

**WRONG AGAIN.**

Low density polyethylene plastic is the choice for most food packaging.  
Where vinyl is used in food packaging and wraps, usually "non-phthalate" plasticizers are employed.  
Vinyl has been used in food contact applications for decades -- effectively and safely.

### What can you do?

Stay away from products made with PVC vinyl. Look for products that are labeled as phthalate-free. Toss plastic toys made before 2008, according to [mindbodygreen.com](http://mindbodygreen.com), and switch to glass and stainless containers and bottles. And reconsider your use of plastic wraps and food containers.

**AGAIN, NO PHTHALATES HERE.** Ms. Cahn isn't qualified to write about this topic if she can't even get the basic facts straight.

Next, find out the causes of cancer that might surprise you.

**READERS BEWARE:** Based on Ms. Cahn's performance in this story, readers may want to steer clear of her next installment...

So ... Don't ride in a car (vinyl interiors in most), Don't go to the hospital (PVC is used in life-saving blood bags), Don't visit commercial buildings (often featuring vinyl floors and wall coverings) and don't use computers. Okay?

**LAUGHABLE.** Note that Ms. Cahn cites a holistic living website here, rather than a credentialed scientific source or respected peer-reviewed study.