

People told to avoid skin-lightening creams

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An association of local governments in the UK, called the LGA, has warned consumers about the use of some skin-lightening creams. The LGA discovered that some of the whitening cosmetics they tested

contained banned ingredients and were thus illegal. However, they were available for purchase in UK stores. An LGA spokesperson said these ingredients could pose a serious threat to consumers' health. He said there has been an increase in the number of users experiencing health problems after using the creams. These include seizures, rashes and scarring. The spokesperson said the creams could increase the risk of skin cancer, and liver and kidney damage.

The global skin-lightening industry is booming. In 2017, it was valued at an estimated \$4.8 billion and is forecast to nearly double to around \$8.9 billion in the next decade. Many people use it to reduce the darkness of the color of their skin. The LGA warned that "rogue retailers" were selling illegal skin-lightening lotions on which the label incorrectly listed the ingredients and omitted the illegal substances. The LGA said some illegal ingredients acted like paint stripper and could burn off the top layer of skin. It said: "Skin creams containing banned ingredients are very dangerous and could seriously damage your health, scar you for life and even kill you, so they should be avoided at all costs."

Sources: independent.co.uk / theguardian.com / inews.co.uk

Writing

All skin-lightening products should be banned. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

association / local / governments / consumers / cream / ingredients / threat / liver / industry / booming / decade / skin / illegal / paint stripper / dangerous / scar / cost

True / False

- a) The UK national government spoke about skin-lightening cream. T / F
- b) Local UK governments found all skin-lightening creams to be illegal. T / F
- c) Skin-lightening creams are only available online in the UK. T / F
- d) A spokesperson said skin-lightening creams could cause liver damage. T / F
- e) The skin-lightening cream industry is worth \$8.9 billion worldwide. T / F
- f) The article says rogue retailers are selling \$8.9 skin-lightening creams. T / F
- g) Some skin-lightening creams omit ingredients on their labels. T / F
- h) Local governments say some skin-lightening creams can kill. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. association | a. application |
| 2. use | b. prohibited |
| 3. pose | c. rise |
| 4. increase | d. good-for-nothing |
| 5. risk | e. contents |
| 6. booming | f. likelihood |
| 7. rogue | g. union |
| 8. ingredients | h. steered clear of |
| 9. banned | i. constitute |
| 10. avoided | j. flourishing |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What are the different functions of skin?
- b) What worries do you have about your skin?
- c) What do you do to look after your skin?
- d) What do you think of skin-lightening cream?
- e) How dangerous are cosmetics?
- f) What does 'beauty is only skin deep' mean?
- g) Should shops be fined for selling the skin-lightening creams?
- h) Why do people worry about their skin color?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. An association of local | a. a serious threat |
| 2. available for purchase | b. the ingredients |
| 3. these ingredients could pose | c. kidney damage |
| 4. increase the risk | d. costs |
| 5. liver and | e. is booming |
| 6. The global skin-lightening industry | f. double |
| 7. forecast to nearly | g. governments in the UK |
| 8. the label incorrectly listed | h. of skin |
| 9. burn off the top layer | i. of skin cancer |
| 10. they should be avoided at all | j. in UK stores |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- Are cosmetics a waste of time and money?
- Do you trust what is written on the label of goods?
- What do you think of skin-darkening cream?
- How would you feel about being burnt by cosmetics?
- Do people look better without cosmetics?
- How sensitive is your skin?
- What questions would you like to ask the creams' makers?

Spelling

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- warned seorsnmcu
- whitening stcoeicsm
- contained banned tidrgenenis
- These include seizures, rashes and agnirscr
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- they should be idoedva at all costs

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. a	3. i	4. c	5. f
6. j	7. d	8. e	9. b	10. b

Role Play

Role A – Skin

You think it is most important to look after your skin. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as important to look after. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these to look after (and why): eyes, back or waistline.

Role B – Eyes

You think it is most important to look after your eyes. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as important to look after. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these to look after (and why): skin, back or waistline.

Role C – Back

You think it is most important to look after your back. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as important to look after. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these to look after (and why): eyes, skin or waistline.

Role D – Waistline

You think it is most important to look after your waistline. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as important to look after. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these to look after (and why): eyes, back or skin.

Speaking – Skin, etc.

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important things to take care of at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|---------|-------------|
| • heart | • skin |
| • brain | • waistline |
| • hair | • eyes |
| • back | • teeth |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	F	d	T	e	F	f	T	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.