

# Why Should You 'Care What You Wear'?

## The 'skinny' on toxic clothes

Chemicals enter your body through your lungs (breathing), your mouth (ingestion) and through the body's largest organ—your skin (absorption)

Today's clothes are often saturated in toxic chemicals used to bleach, dye, soften and make fabrics stain- and color-resistant

Chemicals used to process clothes and fabrics include endocrine and hormone disruptors, carcinogens, and skin irritants that can cause rashes and eczema

Accessories like jewelry, belts and bags may contain high levels of lead

Clothes continue to release toxic chemicals even after washing



## Toxic fibers, toxic environment

The fiber industry is the second-largest industrial polluter, second only to oil

The apparel industry accounts for 10% of global carbon emissions

More pesticides are used to grow cotton than any other crop

Textile dyeing and treatment account for 20% of industrial water pollution

Globally, 8,000 synthetic chemicals are used to turn raw materials into textiles

When synthetic clothes are washed, they release microfibers that pollute rivers and oceans, endangering marine life and contaminating fish we consume

## The human cost of cheap, fast fashion

Most garment workers face forced overtime, job insecurity, no trade union rights, and poor health from exhaustion and exposure to toxic chemicals

170 million children work in the textile and garment industries

Average hourly wage for garment workers: Bangladesh \$0.24, Cambodia \$0.45, Pakistan \$0.52, Vietnam \$0.53, China \$1.2

Between 2013-2015, more than 3,400 Indian cotton farmers committed suicide due to the burden of debt created from buying GMO seed, fertilizers and pesticides

# Be Part of the Solution: Care What You Wear!

Many big-name clothing retailers have no idea how complex and how "dirty" the global fashion supply chain is. Yet these retailers perpetuate this toxic supply chain by using marketing tactics that encourage the production of cheap, throw-away garments. As long as retailers are making a profit, they have no reason to change—unless we demand change.

## The next time you shop for clothes...

Buy natural, plant- and animal-based fibers; avoid petroleum-based, non-biodegradable fibers

Don't buy into fast fashion trends; boycott "fast-fashion" brands

Buy clothes made from organic and regenerative fibers

Buy better quality clothes; care for and repair them throughout their lifetime

Wash your microfibers responsibly

Ask retailers "who farmed my fiber and who made my clothes?"

**The fashion industry doesn't have to be toxic. Fibers can be grown using organic, regenerative practices. Fabrics can be processed without toxic chemicals. Clothes can be assembled by workers who are treated fairly. An organic, regenerative fashion industry can even be part of the climate solution!**

**For more information on how you can transform the fiber industry, visit:**

[regenerationinternational.org/care-what-you-wear](https://regenerationinternational.org/care-what-you-wear)

[organicconsumers.org/campaigns/care-what-you-wear](https://organicconsumers.org/campaigns/care-what-you-wear)

