

PLASTIC FREE HYGIENE

From Columbus Zoo and Aquarium's 2017 Plastic Free August Challenge.

Can you believe we are about one third of the way through Plastic Free August? The month will be over before we know it! This email is packed to the brim with tips and tricks, so let's jump right in. Today is all about hygiene products. It seems like everything we need to keep ourselves smelling lovely every day come in copious amounts of plastic! But, as is the trend this month, there are alternatives!

Soap

Whether hand or body soap, there's a bar of soap for your needs. Both Fresh Thyme and Whole Foods have large displays of various types of soaps completely package free, or wrapped in paper. You may even find cardboard or paper-wrapped soaps at Kroger or Giant Eagle. Or check out the two shops I mention in the next section for even greater variety! The [most recent blog post](#) from one of the zero waste blogs I follow is all about bar soap. It's one of the simplest swaps we can make.

Shampoo / Conditioner

This is my new favorite alternative. Shampoo and conditioner bars! Yes, you can buy shampoo and conditioner in bar form – for both ladies and gents. I'm definitely never going back to bottled shampoo and conditioner.

A great local option is [Chagrin Valley Soap & Salve Company](#). From right here in Ohio, Chagrin Valley Soap & Salve has strong ethics for their products – organic, sustainably sourced, cruelty free, and ethically traded products, in sustainable packaging. They also have several different shampoo bar options, and you can find them in Fresh Thyme and Whole Foods, so you don't need to make a separate trip for these products! Their website also has a [handy tool](#) for helping you choose which bar would be best for you. You can even buy sample sizes so you don't have to commit to a full bar before you try it!

Or, if this whole bar soap thing isn't for you, there's also this other company [Plaine Products](#) that is taking a stand against single use plastics. Plaine Products offers shampoo, conditioner, and body wash in aluminum containers, and they offer a refill service. Their website offers these easy three steps: (1) Open your jar and put on the pump lid; (2) Contact us for a refill when you are getting low; (3) When you receive your refill, send back your empty jars in the same package to be refilled and reused! The first time you order from you'll get a pump for the jar, and then you'll just keep transferring that pump to your new containers so you don't end up with excess plastics from that, either! You can even set up a subscription for every 2, 3, 4, or 6



months so you'll automatically receive new bottles with zero effort.

Deodorant

When I decided to make the move towards plastic free, deodorant was the bane of my existence. As someone who had been faithfully using Secret's Clinical Strength deodorant for many years now, I desperately scoured the internet for a plastic free, natural alternative. (Did you know that aluminum is a main ingredient in most antiperspirants which may cause some pretty serious health issues? My favorite zero waste blogger [shares her story](#) on her blog [Going Zero Waste](#) of how switching to natural deodorant eliminated pain in her breast from benign tumors. Crazy stuff.) Nothing I bought in stores seemed to work for me, and all of the recipes I found online needed crazy ingredients like shea butter, diatomaceous earth, vitamins, and arrowroot powder. Where on earth was I going to find those?



And then I stumbled across [this recipe](#) on Going Zero Waste for an all-natural deodorant that was so easy it seemed too good to be true. But, I already had the two ingredients the recipe called for (yes, only two!) so I figured I'd give it a shot. Let me tell you – it is the best thing I've ever used in my life. Ever. And, it literally costs pennies (about \$0.10 a batch). No plastic, no aluminum, works like magic, and is cheap. I'm sold.

Toothpaste / Toothbrushes

Oral hygiene is important. But there's so much plastic involved! Good news is there are companies in the world making bamboo toothbrushes. [Brush with Bamboo's](#) brushes are made with a bamboo handle, plant-based bristles (not completely plastic free, but a step in the right direction), and cardboard [compostable] packaging. The bristles will go to landfill, but the handle has plenty of new potential when it's reached the end of its brushing life (campfire, anyone?)!

Toothpaste is a little trickier. From what I've found, there are three basic options.

- (1) Make your own. There are recipes all over the internet. On the Going Zero Waste blog, Kathryn shares her [toothpowder recipe](#). She worked with a dentist to come up with this recipe, and even shares a [follow up post](#) about her annual checkup after making the switch. I haven't gotten there yet, but after the magic of her deodorant recipe, I wouldn't doubt for a second that this toothpowder is also magic. (You'll hear about more magic recipes from this website on Monday!)
- (2) Buy [Tom's of Maine](#) brand. I know you can buy this brand at Whole Foods and Fresh Thyme, and perhaps at other grocery stores as well. I don't have any experience with this brand so I

cannot speak first-hand, but I do know that their packaging can be recycled through [Terracycle](#). There is a drop off location in central Columbus, so you wouldn't have to go to great lengths to recycle them, either!

- (3) [Bite Toothpaste Bits](#). Toothpaste tablets were such an odd concept to me about 6 weeks ago, but I bought some before I was traveling and I'm sold. They took some getting used to, but my teeth feel amazing! Just wet your toothbrush, pop a tab in your mouth and chew it up, then brush! These guys come in a glass bottle, and you can even sign up for an automatic refill subscription service so you never have to worry about running out or buying more little bottles.

Feminine Products

Ladies – it's time for some real talk. We create a lot of trash. A lot of synthetic, plastic trash that is not good for the earth *or our bodies*. But guess what – there are alternatives! (Are you catching a pattern yet?) I'm going to keep this section short because this email is already far too long, but I feel like this is an important topic that should be discussed. Rather than share all of the alternatives that are available to us, I'm just going to share two blog posts that say the same things I would: [this one](#) about menstrual cups, and [this one](#) about cloth pads.

I know this email was a long one, but our daily hygiene routines are so encased in plastic and there are so many easy swaps to make these daily tasks a little better for our earth. There are so many more swaps that can be made in the health and beauty department, but there's simply not enough room in this email (or even this month) to cover them all. I encourage you to take a look around the two blogs I've shared today: [Going Zero Waste](#) and [Litterless](#). Both of these blogs are down-to-earth, easy and fun to read, and offer practical advice on how to live with less waste.