Reviewer’s report

Title: Use of skincare products and risk of cancer of the breast and endometrium: a prospective cohort study

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Reviewer: Janet Gray

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In a previously published study, involving women from the Norwegian Women and Cancer cohort, the authors demonstrated that women who heavily used body cream products had elevated levels of several plasma parabens. In the current study, using the same population-based cohort, the researchers examined whether or not high use of the same body products was associated with an altered incidence of either breast or endometrial cancer. Average age of entry into the study was 54-55 years of age, and participants were followed, on average, for just over 10 years.

Covariates included in final regression models included numerous demographic and reproductive health factors associated with risk for developing breast and/or endometrial cancers. Analyses resulted in no positive associations between heavy use of skin lotions and development of either breast (premenopausal, postmenopausal, total, ER+, ER-) or endometrial cancers. A statistically non-significant inverse relationship between total skin lotion use and postmenopausal breast cancer was reported.

This is a clearly written, well-presented report. The authors have done a fine job introducing their study, and have presented an especially strong discussion of the limitations and contexts for understanding their epidemiological results in light of other, mainly laboratory studies which might have predicted different (positive association) results.

It is important to publish both positive and negative outcomes of major studies, and this report will be an important contribution to a complex literature on possible associations between exposures to potential endocrine disrupting compounds and risk for developing cancer.

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Quality of written English
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Acceptable

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