

Dishwashers and Dishwasher Detergents are Safe

You may have seen social media posts alleging adverse health impacts from using dishwashers and dishwashing detergents. These misleading claims use shoddy science and are deliberate deceptions aimed at scaring consumers for commercial gain. They have no factual basis and create unnecessary fear. We're here to set the record straight.

You might have heard...

MYTH: Your dishwasher and dishwasher detergent are not safe.

1

FACT: Your dishwasher is designed to provide you with clean dishes safely, conveniently, and efficiently.

Both dishwashers and the detergents used in them are formulated with a strong emphasis on safety and performance. Dishwasher detergent is made with ingredients that effectively break down food residues and leave dishes sparkling clean, all while adhering to stringent safety standards set by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and individual company policies.

Cutlery, glasses, dinnerware, and cookware cleaned in a dishwasher are safe to use. When paired with an effective dishwasher detergent that eliminates the need for pre-washing, dishwashers can significantly save both energy and water.



You might have heard...

MYTH: Alcohol ethoxylate, an ingredient used in dishwasher detergents, can harm your gut health.

FACT: Alcohol ethoxylates are non-ionic surfactants designed to effectively break down and remove grease and food residues from dishes.

2

These ingredients have been safely used in both detergents and cosmetic products for many years. Their safety profile is well-studied and documented. In fact, **alcohol ethoxylates are listed on the EPA's Safer Choice "Safer Ingredients" list**, confirming their safe use in household products.



You might have heard...

MYTH: There is a scientific study that indicates that alcohol ethoxylates in dishwasher detergents can harm your gut health.

3

FACT: When used as directed, dish detergents and rinse aids are safe and effective.

A study from 2023 titled "Gut epithelial barrier damage caused by dishwasher detergents and rinse aids" is often cited to support this false claim. However, despite what the title suggests, the study did not focus on household dishwasher detergents; moreover, **the study actually concluded that no harmful effects from dishwasher detergents were observed, even at concentrations far above normal usage conditions.**

Scientific experts from the Center for Research on Ingredient Safety (CRIS) at Michigan State University [reviewed this study](#) and confirmed that **"When used as directed, dish detergents and rinse aids are safe and effective."**



You might have heard...

MYTH: Polyvinyl alcohol (PVA) used in dishwasher detergent packs contributes to microplastics.

FACT: The grade of PVA used for detergents is specially designed to dissolve completely rather than forming microplastics.

4

PVA is a water-soluble polymer used to make dishwasher detergent packs. The grade of PVA used for detergents is specially designed to dissolve completely rather than forming microplastics. **For more information on the safe use of PVA used in detergent products, please visit www.CleaningInstitute.org/PVA**

