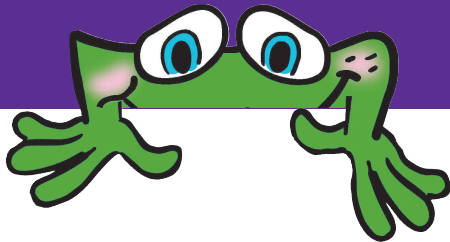


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**WHAT IS IT?** Lead poisoning occurs when there is an increased level of the metal lead in the blood, usually resulting from the ingestion of lead-contaminated soil, water, or paint dust and chips. Lead poisoning in children ages 6 and under remains an especially serious health concern to this day.

## WHY SHOULD I CARE?

Lead poisoning can cause **serious and permanent health problems**. High levels of lead in the body can cause **severe cramps, seizures, brain injury, and even death**.

Even low levels of lead can harm a child's developing brain and nervous system, leading to **reduced IQ and learning disabilities**. Lead can also pass from a pregnant mother to her unborn child.

## WHERE IS IT?

Lead can be found indoors and out. Indoors, deteriorating **lead paint (found in houses built before 1978)** can flake and chip, resulting in **paint particles or dust that can be ingested** by young children and expectant mothers, especially when construction and renovations take place. **Water can become contaminated** with lead by sitting in household pipes overnight and can contribute to the accumulation of lead in a child's body. More recently, **lead has been found in imported jewelry, toys, and in some lipsticks**.

**Outdoors, soil near heavily traveled roadways and bridges** where old paint has been stripped, may also contain high levels of lead. **Until lead is removed from old houses and the environment, childhood lead poisonings will continue to occur.**

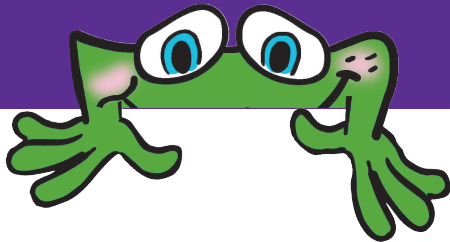
## WHAT YOU CAN DO: MINIMIZE EXPOSURE. REDUCE RISK.

- **If your house was built before 1978, have it professionally tested for lead content** – especially window sills and window wells, where paint typically chips and flakes and is just the right height for teething children.
- **Have all lead paint removed** by a certified lead paint abatement contractor.
- **Temporarily relocate pregnant women and children** during home renovations involving lead paint. They should not return until the area is declared “lead free” by a certified lead abatement specialist.
- **Reduce possible lead content in water** by running cold water for 30 seconds before using it for cooking or drinking, if it has been sitting in the pipes for several hours (ex. overnight or after work).
- **Wash your children's hands frequently** – especially before eating and after playing outdoors, in order to reduce the chances of ingesting lead from contaminated dust or soil.
- **Read labels to check contents and ingredients** of toys and jewelry. Avoid purchasing questionable, non-labeled or imported items. Choose toys made in the USA only, where lead is prohibited.



# ENDOCRINE DISRUPTORS

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**WHAT ARE THEY?** Endocrine disruptors are chemicals that may interfere with the body's hormones, which are the "messengers" that help the cells in our organs function properly. These chemicals can "mimic" or replace the body's normal hormone functions and may have adverse health effects.

## WHY SHOULD I CARE?

Scientific evidence is mounting that endocrine (hormone) disruptors in our environment, have adverse health effects on wildlife and may produce similar health effects in humans:

- **Reproductive and developmental disorders**
- **Learning problems and immune system dysfunction**
- **Neurobehavioral dysfunctions** at birth and in childhood
- **Increasing incidence of testicular cancer**, malformation of the male reproductive tract and declining sperm counts
- **Increasing incidence of breast cancer**

The more exposure, the greater your risk. Early life exposures are of particular concern.

## WHERE ARE THEY?

Endocrine (hormone) disruptors are found in many common products we use every day. **Bisphenol A (BPA)—a suspected endocrine disruptor—is commonly found in baby bottles and water cooler containers made of #7 plastic.**

One recent study by the CDC showed **95% of Americans have detectable levels of Bisphenol A in their bodies.** Phthalates (plasticizers) found in plastic cups, toys and PVC plastic are also suspected endocrine disruptors.

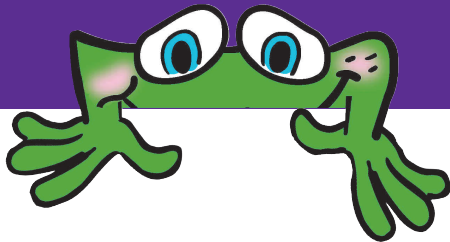
**Many common cosmetics, shampoos, lotions, and perfumes also contain phthalates and parabens, which are weak endocrine disruptors.** Certain lawn and garden pesticides may act as endocrine disruptors as well.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO: MINIMIZE EXPOSURE. REDUCE RISK.

- **AVOID buying or using products that contain plastic #3 (PVC), #6 (styrofoam) or #7 (polycarbonate),** especially when purchasing children's toys and other products. Remember the rhyme: "Choose #5, 4, 1 or 2, all the rest are bad for you". Avoid reusing #1 plastic.
- **Choose a reusable, BPA-free or stainless steel "traveler's mug" or sports bottle.**
- **Don't microwave foods with plastic wrap or in plastic containers.** Use and store foods in glass, porcelain or stainless steel containers (but do not microwave stainless steel).
- **Use glass baby bottles** and silicone nipples. Choose pacifiers, "sippy cups" and straws that are labeled "BPA Free".
- **Read ingredients to choose healthier baby, body, and beauty products.** Ingredients to AVOID are: methylparaben (shampoos, lotions), dibutyl phthalate (DBP) (nail polish), nonylphenol (shampoos, lotions), DEHP (di-(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate or Bis (2-ethylhexyl) phthalate used in PVC plastics.
- **Choose products that don't contain "fragrances"**- fragrances often contain phthalates.



## LOOK LOOK LOOK



**WHAT IS IT?** Air pollution refers to air that is contaminated by particles and/or noxious gases, such as those produced by the combustion of petroleum-based fuels used in cars, trucks, other equipment and industry. Ozone – another respiratory irritant – is created when exhaust fumes combine in the presence of sunlight.

### WHY SHOULD I CARE?

Air pollution can **decrease lung function and impact the cardiovascular, immune and respiratory systems.**

Air pollution is linked to **sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)** and to **heart disease in the elderly.**

**Childhood asthma rates have more than doubled in the last twenty years.** Air pollution can worsen symptoms of asthma (such as wheezing and coughing). Poor air quality affects **children, the elderly and the chronically ill as well.**

### WHERE IS IT?

Air pollution exists both indoors and outdoors. **Outdoors, fine particle pollution from burning fuels occurs year-round.** Ozone pollution is more prevalent during hot summer days and seasonal allergens often add to the problem.

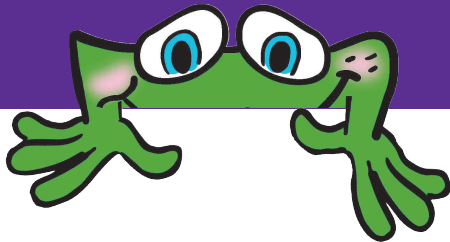
**Indoor air pollution can result from smoking or the use of chemical cleaners** and perfumes, as well as excess dust. Tightly built homes or offices (with insufficient ventilation) can trap **fumes from paint, carpets and other furnishings which may contain formaldehyde** (a carcinogen and respiratory irritant) and other toxic irritants.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO: MINIMIZE EXPOSURE. REDUCE RISK.

- **Help reduce outdoor pollution:** Drive less, walk more or use public transportation and carpools so you require less fuel to be burned. Use less electricity so power plants have to burn less as well.
- **Observe air quality alerts** and monitor weather to avoid triggering asthma and allergy attacks.
- **Avoid highly polluted areas**, such as busy streets and highways, whenever possible. When stuck in idling traffic, close windows and outside air vents – choose the “recycled air” vent option instead.
- **Keep indoor air clean:** Don’t smoke. Use natural cleaners. Open the windows to air out the house. Use low or Zero VOC (Volatile Organic Compound) paints.
- **Choose solid wood flooring or washable natural rugs** instead of wall-to-wall or synthetic carpeting.
- **Wash stuffed toys regularly.** Consider washing with bed linens or blankets. Use allergy-free mattress and pillow covers. Avoid purchasing overstuffed furniture and heavy draperies that tend to trap dust.
- **Vacuum often, using a HEPA filtration system** which is properly maintained. Change or clean filters as directed.



## LOOK LOOK LOOK



**WHAT ARE THEY?** Pesticides are chemicals used to kill unwanted plants, insects and animals. Many pesticides are “chemical cousins” of highly toxic materials originally developed as “weapons of war”. Common pesticides include: weed killers, lawn and garden pest control products, household insect killers, outdoor wasp killers, “bug bombs” and pet flea and tick killers.

### WHY SHOULD I CARE?

Pesticides have been linked to different cancers including **childhood cancer and non-hodgkins lymphoma**, as well as **endocrine disruption, nerve toxicity, reproductive effects and birth defects**.

Common (organophosphate) pesticides are also associated with smaller head size in infants, **indicating damage to the developing brain in pregnancy**. Farmers and golf course superintendents (groups heavily exposed to pesticides) have **higher rates of some types of cancers** as well. And, pesticides account for **thousands of fatal poisonings** annually.

### WHERE ARE THEY?

Pesticides are used both indoors and outdoors. The wide-spread use of pesticides for **roach and other insect control in homes, schools, offices, apartment buildings, and restaurants** continues.

Around the home and in our communities, **many still use pesticides for lawn and garden care, weed control and as flea and tick control on pets**.

**Most fruits and vegetables we consume have been treated with pesticides**. Pesticides are also used in the production of most meats, dairy products and grains. Only the foods labeled “certified organic” are pesticide-free.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO: MINIMIZE EXPOSURE. REDUCE RISK.

- **Don't treat your lawn with chemical pesticides** and don't allow children or pets to play on pesticide-treated lawns. Close windows and doors and wash outdoor furniture after any neighborhood spray.
- **Learn about and use the least toxic, natural methods of pest control** for your home and garden (Integrated Pest Management or IPM). Certain bugs are actually GOOD for your garden!
- **Remove shoes before coming indoors** to avoid tracking pesticide residue onto floors and carpets.
- **Prevent childhood poisonings** - clean out storage areas in the home, shed and garage. Safe discard unwanted pesticides and chemicals at an approved toxic waste disposal facility.
- **Wash hands thoroughly** after gardening or playing outside.
- **Choose certified organic produce:** look for labels with five-digit long PLU codes beginning with #9 (organic). When possible, avoid PLU codes starting with #4 (pesticide-treated). Wash all fruits and vegetables before eating.
- **Choose certified organic meats, grains and dairy products.**

