

The Guide to Bisphenol A

What is Bisphenol A?

Bisphenol A (BPA) is a synthetic chemical compound used in a wide range of consumer products, including hard, clear plastic reusable water bottles and baby bottles, and the linings of some food cans. It is classed by the government of Canada as a hormone disruptor.

You can read all the latest research and news about bisphenol A in the [Toxic Nation blog](#) on the Toxic Nation web site at www.toxicnation.ca. Check out the ["news articles"](#), ["chemicals and health"](#), and ["bisphenol A"](#) sections.

Who is exposed to Bisphenol A?

Everyone. Bisphenol A is found in many everyday products including food cans, plastic water containers and baby bottles. A study in the US found that 95% of people tested had been exposed to BPA.

Why is it a concern?

Bisphenol A is a hormone disruptor. Studies have linked low-dose BPA exposure with such effects as: permanent changes to genital tract; increase prostate weight; decline in testosterone; breast cells predisposed to cancer; prostate cells more sensitive to hormones and cancer; and hyperactivity.

Where is it used?

BPA is primarily used to make polycarbonate plastic food and beverage containers and epoxy resins that are used to line metal cans for food, such as cans of soup. Polycarbonate plastic food and beverage containers that contain BPA will be labeled recycling symbol #7. However, not all recycling symbol #7 containers will be made with BPA.

How can I be exposed?

The BPA in products can leach out and be subsequently ingested by people.

What are alternatives to Bisphenol A?

Until there is a ban on Bisphenol A, the best alternative is to avoid food and beverage containers that contain the chemical. Use glass or stainless steel refillable drinking bottles, instead of hard plastic ones. For juice or other drinks, it's best to use lined aluminum bottles. Stainless steel bottles are great for water.

For baby bottles, choose glass or look for companies that make hard plastic bottles without Bisphenol A. They are often available at health food stores, organic markets and grocery stores and some baby stores.

Avoid eating canned food when you can. Instead of canned vegetables or fruits, choose fresh or frozen ones (they're healthier for you that way, too!). You can also buy many different kinds of soups and beans in reusable glass jars. And, instead of buying soft drinks in cans, choose glass bottles.

What are hormone disruptors?

Hormone or endocrine disruptors are substances that can interfere with the normal functioning of the hormone system of both people and wildlife in a number of ways to produce a wide range of adverse effects including reproductive, developmental and behavioural problems.

What is Canada doing about Bisphenol A?

Recently the Canadian government has chosen BPA (along with approx. 200 others) for more careful study to determine if it poses a risk to human health or the environment. BPA will be monitored in 5,000 Canadians as a part of the Canadian Health Measures Survey. Most exposure is assumed to be through ingestion, but there is currently no legislation for BPA in Canada regarding BPA leakages from products.

The Ontario government has announced that it will set up an expert panel to review bisphenol A, and other toxic chemicals.

Who is most at risk?

Foetuses, infants and children around puberty. Foetuses are especially sensitive groups as their immature detoxification systems make them more vulnerable and they are at a delicate stage of development.



ENVIRONMENTAL | DEFENCE

Environmental Defence protects the environment and human health. We research. We educate. We go to court when we have to. All in order to ensure clean air, safe food and thriving ecosystems. Nationwide. Environmental Defence is a national charity.

Environmental Defence
317 Adelaide Street West, Suite 705
Toronto, Ontario, M5V 1P9
Tel: (416) 323-9521
Fax: (416) 323-9301
Web: www.environmentaldefence.ca and www.toxicnation.ca