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Toxic Compounds in Food Containers Wreak Havoc on Your Health



Women may want to think twice before using plastic food containers and cans, for a study found a chemical widely used in such packaging--known as bisphenol-A, or BPA--may be linked to the incidence of breast cancer.

Researchers reported persistent alterations to mammary gland development after giving doses of the compound to pregnant mice that were designed to mirror human exposure levels. Experiments suggested mammary glands of female mice grew in a way that made them more susceptible to breast cancer development and also to respond unusually to estrogen--which

fuels most breast cancer in humans.

Toxic Exposure

The mice involved in the study were treated late in pregnancy and about four days after birth; the offspring were examined when they reached puberty about a month later. Due to BPA exposure, researchers found:

- Large increases in the number and density of terminal end buds, part of the mammary gland structure where breast tumors originate in both animals and humans.
- A decrease in the ability to get rid of damaged cells that could be cancerous.
- Mice exposed to higher doses of the compound developed mammary glands more sensitive to estrogen.

What's more, while the results of the study are indeed concerning, they are not the first to highlight the negative health consequences of widely used chemicals: Research has also found that phthalates (also found in plastics) affect the genital development of baby boys.

[Endocrinology May 26, 2005](#)

[The Guardian May 30, 2005](#)

Dr. Mercola's Comment:

Studies have shown that [BPA can mimic the actions of estradiol \(a type of estrogen\)](#) in the body, contributing to, among other symptoms, the following changes in mice and rat studies:

- **Early puberty**

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- Increased fat formation
- Abnormal sexual behavior
- Disrupted reproductive cycles

As exposure to estrogen from external sources has been [linked to breast cancer in the past](#), the above results are consistent with previous findings on this topic.

The disruption of your hormone system, and all of the consequences resulting from it, is a typical way that environmental toxins [negatively impact your body](#).

Cancer has many contributing factors, so it is important to appreciate that prevention is not necessarily dependent on a single item. While there are [many steps you can take](#) to strongly influence your chances of avoiding this extremely common killer, reducing your exposure to toxins is an important step in the right direction. And, while for most of us it may be next to impossible to [completely avoid all toxins](#), the following tips can certainly be helpful:

Tips to Avoid Toxins

1. First and foremost [store your food in glass containers](#) whenever possible, as it is the most inert container you can use.
2. Buy and eat, as much as possible, [organic foods](#). If you can only purchase one organic product it probably should be free-range organic eggs. Fortunately, most grocery stores now have these available. If they don't, contact the store manager and encourage him or her to carry them. Additionally, I believe [raw milk products](#) are a key to staying healthy. They are best obtained locally but many people have a great challenge finding them. To find a raw milk distributor in your area, try the by-state and by-country locator at: <http://www.rawmilk.org>.
3. Rather than eating fish, which is largely contaminated with PCBs and mercury, consume a high-quality, purified fish or cod liver oil. Contact your favorite health food store to find it or another high-quality brand, or use [our store](#) for your convenience. Another option is to have your wild-caught fish lab tested to find out if it is a pure source (we've found a delicious, wild [Alaskan salmon](#) that is free from harmful levels of mercury and PCBs).
4. Avoid processed foods--remember that they're frequently processed with a variety of chemicals!
5. Only use natural cleaning products in your home. Most health food stores will have these available or you can search online for them.
6. Switch to [natural brands of toiletries](#), including shampoo, toothpaste, [antiperspirants](#) and cosmetics. Same sources as above for these, either your local health food store or you can search online.
7. Remove any metal fillings, as they're [a major source of mercury](#). Be sure to have this done by a [qualified biological dentist](#). Although nearly any dentist is technically qualified to replace your amalgam fillings, far less than 95 percent



have any clue on how to do it properly so your risk of mercury exposure is minimized. Please avoid the mistake I have seen THOUSANDS of patients make of having your fillings replaced by a non-qualified dentist. I made this mistake myself nearly 20 years ago. Do it right the first time and save yourself the expense and grief. If you don't personally know a qualified biological dentist, many people find one by contacting several of the health food stores in their area and asking the employees who they know. This is typically an excellent resource as they are usually networked quite well in the local health community.

8. Avoid using artificial air fresheners, dryer sheets, fabric softeners or other synthetic fragrances as they can pollute the air you are breathing.
9. Avoid artificial food additives of all kind, including [artificial sweeteners](#) and [MSG](#).
10. Get plenty of safe sun exposure to [boost your vitamin D levels](#) and your [immune system](#) (you'll be better able to fight disease).
11. Seek to build your health up through the nutrition insights detailed in my [Total Health Program](#), and then limit your use of drugs (prescription and over-the-counter) as much as possible. Drugs are chemicals too, and they will leave residues and accumulate in your body over time.

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