

BISPHENOL-A (BPA)

Get the Facts About

What is bisphenol-A?

Bisphenol-A (BPA) is an additive that is used to harden plastics in many food and beverage containers and baby bottles. Plastics with BPA are sometimes used to line cans or other metal containers.

Can BPA harm my health?

In 2008, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) conducted a review of available research and information on BPA, and, at that time, assessed that food-related materials made with BPA on the market were safe. But recent studies have reported subtle effects of low doses of BPA in laboratory animals. While BPA is not proven to harm children or adults, these newer studies have led federal health officials to express some concern about the safety of BPA.

The US Environmental Protection Agency intends to form an action plan to investigate health concerns and minimize human exposure. The greatest concern is for fetuses, infants (formula fed and breast fed), and young children because their bodies are still growing and developing.

In January, 2010, the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences announced \$30 million in funding to investigate BPA. They expect to have the results of this research in about two years.

What can I do to reduce my exposure?

While we wait for the results of the studies, individuals and families who want to reduce their chances of exposure to BPA can follow these tips:

- **Plastics with BPA in them are clear and have a number 7 or the letters PC (for polycarbonate) printed or molded onto them – usually on the bottom.**
- Avoid using food, beverage or baby bottles containing the number 7 or PC (polycarbonate) imprinted on them;
- Avoid heating plastic containers with the recycling number 7 and the letters PC in microwave ovens, in water on the stovetop, or by adding boiling water into them, particularly when preparing infant formula.
- Wash the containers by hand with warm water and soap, instead of in dishwashers.
- Stainless steel and glass do not contain BPA.
- Replace worn or scratched polycarbonate plastic containers, preferably with glass or stainless steel containers.
- Pregnant or breastfeeding women can eat or cook with fresh or frozen products instead of canned foods — which may contain BPA — to reduce fetal or infant exposure to BPA.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has put together a brochure on how to protect your baby from BPA:

http://www.mass.gov/Eeohhs2/docs/dph/environmental/exposure/bisphenol_a_brochure.pdf

BOSTON
PUBLIC
HEALTH
COMMISSION



Boston Public Health Commission
1010 Massachusetts Avenue
Boston, MA 02118
www.bphc.org
Dr. Barbara Ferrer, Executive Director
Thomas M. Menino, Mayor

For more information, please call:

617-534-5966