

The health risks of BPA



If

you use plastic containers or water bottles to store your food, chances are you have heard of BPA (Bisphenol A). BPA is an industrial chemical used to make two common synthetics:

Polycarbonate: a clear, shatter-resistant plastic found in a wide variety of consumer products, including food and drink containers. These are also used in baby bottles, baby toys, plastic cups, plastic water bottles, plastic milk bottles, and plastic microwavable and oven plates/tins.

Epoxy Resins: used in industrial adhesives and high-performance coatings. Epoxy Resins are also used to line the inside of many canned foods to prevent acidic vegetables and fruits from damaging the aluminium cans. Many of the soft-drink cans available on the market shelves are also lined with Epoxy Resins.

Health Effects of BPA

Studies have found that BPA can cause your oestrogen levels to rise dramatically, regardless of whether you're a male or female. As a result, BPA has been linked to a wide variety of health problems including that of infertility, breast and reproductive cancer, obesity, diabetes, early onset of puberty and behavioural changes in children. BPA has also been linked to a lowered sperm count in males.

In September 2010, Canada declared BPA as a toxic substance. BPA is now banned in plastic infant feeding bottles in the US and throughout Europe.

Is BPA-free Safe?

To calm the consumer backlash on recent BPA findings, manufacturers have begun advertising some products as “BPA-free.” However, a recent study found that most plastic products leach just as much endocrine-disrupting chemicals into your food, even if they’re labeled “BPA-free”.

The culprit? BPA-free products have been replaced with products containing BPS (Bisphenol S). Although BPS has not been studied as much as BPA, preliminary studies show that it shares comparable levels of the hormone-mimicking properties as well.

Reducing your exposure to BPA

So what do we do? It is almost impossible to cut your exposure to BPA completely however, you can reduce your level of exposure using the following steps:

- Use only glass baby bottles
- Swap plastic water bottles for re-usable stainless steel bottles
- Store your food in glass jars and pyrex containers – not plastic ones
- Do not microwave your food – especially in plastic containers
- If you opt to use plastic kitchenware, avoid putting them in the dishwasher and replace all of the older scratched varieties
- Replace all of your plastic dishes and cups with glass
- Avoid using plastic wrap and NEVER microwave any food covered in it

References

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