

Health Concerns: Plastic Bottles and Containers

Certain plastic compounds permitted for use in food and drink packaging could be hazardous to your long-term health.

Bisphenol A (BPA):

BPA was originally developed as a synthetic oestrogen, and is found in baby bottles, drink bottles, plastic food storage containers, the internal coatings of food tins and in some dental sealants.

The concern is that as BPA leaches from the plastic into food and drinks, it may produce an oestrogenic effect, thus possibly impacting on hormonal function, reproductive health, brain chemistry and blood sugar balance.

Both freezing and heating these plastics – such as in the dishwasher, microwave, fridge and freezer may disrupt these chemical compounds and accelerate their leaching into foods and drinks.

Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET):

PET may also leach oestrogen-like compounds.

What can we use in place of plastics:

Look for Baby bottles, drink bottles and containers stating that they are BPA-Free.

Use glass food storage containers where possible. There are many brands, even available in the supermarkets with lids that are BPA free.

Stainless steel drink bottles, with non-toxic paint are available in good health food stores, and outdoor adventure stores.

Heating and Cooling foods, Covering foods:

Never heat food in microwaves in a plastic container.

Do not cover food with plastics:

In microwaves: use unwaxed baking paper as a splatter guard

Wrap lunches in unwaxed baking paper, or aluminium foil.

Freeze foods in glass containers.

Of Note:

The U.S. Food and Drugs Administration (FDA), have reviewed the scientific evidence and concluded that current use of BPA poses no known risk to human health, including children and infants. (www.plasticsinfo.org)

Recent Research: <http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/710617>

Plastic bottles cause glands to malfunction. "Bisphenol A (BPA) is a high-production-volume chemical commonly used in the manufacture of polycarbonate plastic. Low-level concentrations of BPA in animals and possibly in humans may cause endocrine disruption. Whether ingestion of food or beverages from polycarbonate containers increases BPA concentrations in humans has not been studied. One week of polycarbonate bottle use increased urinary BPA concentrations by two-thirds. Regular consumption of cold beverages from polycarbonate bottles is associated with a substantial increase in urinary BPA concentrations irrespective of exposure to BPA from other sources.