

Looking after baby and expectant mother

Top Tips for caring for yourself and protecting baby
Reduce your risk to yourself and baby by limiting exposure to chemicals.

- Minimise the amount of skincare products you use on yourself
- Avoid products that contain - parabens, phthalates, fragrances (parfums)
- Avoid deodorants/antiperspirants that contain aluminium (salts)
- Avoid products that contain Triclosan (soap, hand washes, toothpaste)
- Limit all over body products like tanning lotion. If you do use one, look for non-chemical versions)
- Avoid hair dyes unless you can source an organic reduced chemical product

In the kitchen

- Eat plenty of fresh organic fruit and vegetables. If you can, go for Organic. They use less chemicals. If not, wash all fruit and vegetables thoroughly before use
- Limit the amount of tinned and processed food you consume
- Avoid microwaving food and particularly heating food in plastic containers.
- Use glass or Pyrex for storing food
- Avoid cleaning products with chemicals. Source Eco products that are labelled as free from harmful chemicals

In the Sun

We all know that wearing SPF is important, but chemical sunscreens — the kind you've probably been wearing for years — can be irritating for some people with sensitive skin. That's where mineral sunscreen comes in.

Mineral sunscreens help prevent sun damage, just like traditional sunscreens, but they do so using physical blockers like zinc oxide and/or titanium dioxide. These ingredients work by reflecting the sun off your skin, as opposed to absorbing and transforming harmful rays on the skin as chemical sunscreens containing the likes of oxybenzone, avobenzone and homosalate do. Keep in mind as you shop around that although it most often refers to mineral sunscreens, "natural" is "not a term that dermatologists use" when referring to sunscreen, nor is the term legally regulated in personal care products. Remember that the real danger of sun exposure isn't the use of chemicals in sunscreen. But no matter which type of sunscreen you choose, make sure it's labelled "broad spectrum" for protection from both types of harmful rays and has an SPF of 30 or greater.

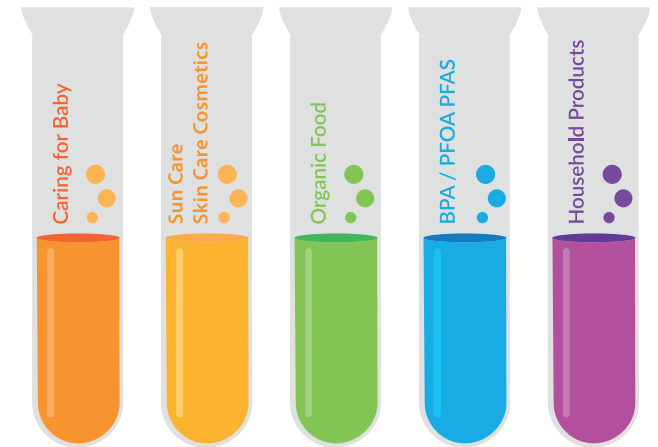
The science

CHEM Trust report, written by Prof R. Sharpe, on EDCs and male reproductive health disorders, 2009 <http://www.chemtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/chemtrust-historyandbackground-feb2016.pdf>

CHEM Trust and HEAL report, written by Prof A. Kortenkamp, on breast cancer and exposure to hormonally active chemicals, 2008 https://www.env-health.org/IMG/pdf/2-Breast_cancer_and_exposure_to_hormonally_active_chemicals_-_an_appraisal.pdf

CHEM Trust report, written by G. Lyons, on effects of pollutants on male vertebrate wildlife, <http://www.chemtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/Male-Wildlife-Under-Threat-2008-full-report.pdf>

WHO(2012) Endocrine disruptors and child health. possible developmental early effects of endocrine disruptors on child health. Geneva; World Health Organisation 2012



Reduce your risk to Exposure from Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals

*A guide to safer cosmetics, personal
healthcare, baby products, household
cleaners and cookware*

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Top Tips

- Choose products free from harmful chemicals
- Drink from stainless steel or glass bottles
- Discover more about the ingredients in a product and use less often
- Select un-fragranced where possible.
- Do your Research. Avoid chemicals of concern. There are many affordable alternatives to products with harmful chemicals.
- Think about making your own. DIY blogs on making household cleaners, body creams and cosmetics are freely available on the internet
- Buy PFOA free cookware
- Avoid clothes and baby clothes treated with perfluorocarbons (PFCs). To make their fabrics repel water, most manufacturers rely on perfluorocarbons (PFCs), the same chemicals used to make non-stick cookware e.g. Teflon



What is the Endocrine System?

The Endocrine system is involved in every stage of life, including conception, development in the womb and from birth throughout early life, puberty and adulthood. It does this through control of the other vital systems that orchestrate metabolism, immune function, reproduction, intelligence, and behaviour.

What are Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals?

Chemicals known as Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals (EDCs) are of great concern. They can be found in products we use, work with or come into contact with every day including our food and drink. EDCs disrupt or interfere with the human Endocrine or Hormone system. Some are known or suspected of being able to mimic the female hormone oestrogen. This would leave women at increased risk of breast cancer.

Endocrine disrupters are also linked to damage of male reproductive health. Many studies link “probable causation” between endocrine exposure and a range of illnesses including autism, infertility, obesity, diabetes, low sperm quality and prostate cancer.

How are we exposed to EDCs?

We eat, breathe, drink, touch EDCs every day. Many are persistent and remain in the environment for centuries and can build up in the body. EDCs are found in components of plastics, flame retardants, carpets, upholstery and cookware. They are found in homes, schools, workplaces, toys, clothing, sunscreen, cosmetics, personal skincare, electronics, cleaning products, lawn care products food and food packaging.

A vast body of scientific literature exists on the health impacts of some EDCs, whilst for the cocktail effect of EDCs on our body, there is little research. Laboratory studies and human epidemiological studies confirm that EDCs have a wide array of effects on the human body. They have been implicated in neurological diseases, reproductive disorders, thyroid dysfunction, immune and metabolic disorders.

What distinguishes EDCS from other chemicals of concern?

- 1 **Dose:** a central feature of endocrine disruption is that effects are found at very low chemical concentrations. Effects of EDCs at very low concentrations can be different from the effects of the same chemical at higher concentrations.
- 2 **Timings:** There are many periods of vulnerability during which exposure to EDCS can be particularly harmful. The most well studied critical periods are prenatal and early postnatal development. Effects of early life exposure may not manifest until later in life. Effects in one generation may be transmitted to future generations through mechanisms involved in programming gene activity such as epigenetic changes.
- 3 **Traditional approaches:** Traditional approaches: Determining safe exposure levels (e.g. Chemical risk assessments) do not work with EDCs.

What can I do to reduce my risk?

- 1 Eat a healthy diet, rich in organic fruit and vegetables, limit tinned and processed food
- 2 Avoid exposure to garden and household pesticides, solvents and sprays
- 3 Reduce the amount of cosmetic, skincare and cleaning products you use
- 4 Choose natural materials wherever possible e.g. clothing, mattresses
- 5 Do your research: Check ingredients list before you buy and look out for the EU Ecolabel Soil Association Certification label and Natrue logo
- 6 Drink from Stainless Steel or Glass bottles. Plastic bottles contain BPA and research suggests that BPA free made not be any safer. Manufacturers have made “regrettable substitutions” like BPS or BPF which are just as toxic