

PLASTIC BOTTLES – ARE THEY SAFE?

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For the past few days we have been covering an issue that is generating a lot of concern. Certain types of plastic containers can leech a chemical called bisphenol A (BPA). The chemical can mimic the female hormone estrogen. Given to animals at high doses it can cause all sorts of health problems ranging from infertility and obesity to several types of cancer.

There is no question that Americans are exposed to the chemical. A [study by the CDC](#) estimated that 92.6 percent of Americans age 6 and above had measurable BPA in their bodies.

The chemical industry has maintained for years that the high dose animal experiments do not show any human effects and the FDA, which would regulate the chemicals, has said there is no danger. Many scientists have continued to look for possible danger in both animal and human studies.

On Tuesday, the National Toxicology Program, a division of the National Institutes of Health issued an alarm. The agency said there was a possibility BPA could be causing brain problems in fetuses and children and prostate and breast problems in adults.

The actual quote from the draft report concluded "there is *some concern* for neural and behavioral effects in fetuses, infants, and children at current human exposures. The NTP also has *some concern* for bisphenol A exposure in these populations based on effects in the prostate gland, mammary gland, and an earlier age for puberty in females."

The designation of "some" concern is equivalent to 3 on a danger scale of 1 to 5. You can [see the report itself here](#). A few members of Congress have issued calls for the FDA to ban the plastics. So far the FDA has not responded.

If you want to avoid bottles with BPA look on the bottom for very tiny numbers enclosed in arrows that [look like this](#). The number 7 indicates BPA. The numbers 3 and 6 indicates the presence of similar chemicals that some scientists and environmentalists believe could be cause for concern.

