Bisphenol A (BPA) Information for Parents

WHAT IS BPA?

Bisphenol A, more commonly known as BPA, is a chemical that has been used for more than 40 years in the manufacture of many hard plastic fooc containers such as baby bottles and reusable cups and the lining of metal food and beverage cans, including canned liquid infant formula. Trace ar BPA can be found in some foods packaged in these containers.

In 2008, the Food and Drug Administration conducted a review of toxicology research and information on BPA, and, at that time, judg related materials containing BPA on the market to be safe.

But recent studies have reported subtle effects of low doses of BPA in laboratory animals. While BPA is not proven to harm children adults, these newer studies have led federal health officials to express some concern about the safety of BPA.

WHY ARE THERE CONCERNS ABOUT BPA AND WHAT IS THE GOVERNMENT DOING TO ADDRESS THESE CONCERNS?

It is clear that the government and scientists and doctors need more research to better understand the potential human health effe exposure to BPA, especially when it comes to the impact of BPA exposure on young children.

The Department of Health and Human Services -- through its Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Institutes of Health (I the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) -- is investing in important new health studies in both animals and humans to better determine and evalua potential health effects of BPA exposure, including $30 million in studies at NIH. We expect to have the results of this scientific research in approxi 18 to 24 months.

While we learn more, the Food and Drug Administration is supporting current efforts by industry to stop the manufacture of infant bottles and feed made with BPA from the U.S. market. The FDA is also seeking to strengthen its oversight of BPA so the agency can respond quickly, if necessary, more scientific evidence becomes available.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO MINIMIZE YOUR INFANT'S EXPOSURE TO BPA?

In the meantime, while scientists are gathering more data, there are some simple, reasonable steps families and parents can take to minimize exp BPA.

#1 FOLLOW RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES TO FEED YOUR INFANT.

HHS supports the American Academy of Pediatrics' recommendations for infant feeding and supports breastfeeding for at least 12 months whenever possible, as breast milk is the optimal source of nutrition for infants.

If breastfeeding is not an option, iron-fortified infant formula is the safest and most nutritious alternative. The benefit of a stable source of good nu from infant formula and food outweighs the potential risk of BPA exposure.

Parents should discuss any significant changes to your baby's diet with your baby's doctor or nurse.

#2 DISCARD SCRATCHED BABY BOTTLES AND INFANT FEEDING CUPS.

Worn baby bottles and cups are likely to have scratches that harbor germs and - if they contain BPA - may release small amounts of the chemical.

#**3 TEMPERATURE MATTERS**.

Be careful how you heat up your child's breast milk or formula. Studies have found there is a very small amount of BPA in plastics and other packa materials that can transfer to food and liquids. Additional traces of BPA levels are transferred when hot or boiling liquids or foods come in contact v packaging made of BPA.

- Do not put boiling or very hot water, infant formula, or other liquids into BPA-containing bottles while preparing them for your child.
- Before mixing water with powdered infant formula, the water should be boiled in a BPA-free container and allowed to cool to lukewarm.
- Ready-to-feed liquid formula can be served at room temperature or gently warmed up by running warm water over the outside of the bottle.
- Always remember: Do not heat baby bottles of any kind in the microwave – the liquid may heat unevenly and burn your infant
- Sterilize and clean bottles according to instructions on infant formula labels. They should be left to cool to room temperature before adding infa formula.

#4 CHECK THE LABELS ON YOUR BOTTLES AND FOOD PREPARATION CONTAINERS.

- As a good household practice, only use containers marked "dishwasher safe" in the dishwasher and only use "microwave safe" marked containe microwave.
- As a good household practice, discard all food containers with scratches, as they may harbor germs and may lead to greater release of BPA.

***WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT BPA IN FEEDING PRODUCTS FOR INFANTS*?**

Liquid Infant Formula. There are small amounts of BPA in liquid infant formulas sold in cans. Infant formula in this packaging can offer importa advantages for some infants, and the proven benefit of good nutrition outweighs the potential risk of BPA exposure.

If you are using liquid infant formula in cans:

- Do not heat cans of infant formula on the stove or in boiling water. Ready-to-feed liquid formula can be served at room temperature or gently in a nursing bottle by running warm water over the outside of the bottle.

Powdered Infant Formula. FDA has found that powdered infant formula mix typically has no detectable level of BPA.

Infant Bottles Made with BPA. The six major U.S. manufacturers of baby bottles and infant feeding cups have confirmed to FDA that as of Janu they have not manufactured these products using BPA for the U.S. market. These manufacturers represent more than 90% of the U.S. market. Th

manufacturers produce brands that include Avent, Doctor Brown's Natural Flow, Evenflow, First Essentials, Gerber, Munchkin, Nuk, and Playtex.

Plastic Containers Made with BPA Used in Food Preparation. Plastic containers have recycle codes on the bottom. In general, plastics that a marked with recycle codes 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 are very unlikely to contain BPA. Some, but not all, plastics that are marked with recycle codes 3 or 7 made with BPA.

- Do not put very hot or boiling liquid that you intend to consume in plastic containers made with BPA. BPA levels rise in food when containers/p made with the chemical are heated and come in contact with the food.
- Discard all bottles with scratches, as these may harbor bacteria and, if BPA-containing, lead to greater release of BPA.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR WEB SITE

Q: Should I throw away baby bottles that contain BPA?

A: Parents should examine bottles and discard them if worn or scratched because scratches can both harbor germs and, in BPA-containing bottles, greater release of BPA. For those who want to use baby bottles and feeding cups not made with BPA, consumers should know that such products a widely available in the U.S. market.

Q: Is liquid infant formula sold in cans safe?

A: There are small amounts of BPA in liquid infant formulas sold in cans. The benefits of good nutrition from liquid infant formula sold in cans far o the potential risk of exposure to a small amount of BPA. As a result, HHS does not advise against the use of liquid infant formula in cans. Families considering alternative feeding approaches should discuss them with their child's healthcare provider.

Q: Is powdered infant formula sold in cans safe?

A: FDA has found that powdered infant formula mix typically has no detectable level of BPA. In rare cases, small amounts of BPA are found in infa sold in powdered form. Families using powdered infant formula need to carefully follow instructions about preparing the formula. Families conside alternative feeding approaches should discuss them with their child's healthcare provider.

Q: My baby always puts his plastic toys in his mouth. Should I throw them away?

A: No. In general, children's toys are made of plastics that are not made with BPA.

Q: Is BPA in pacifiers?

A: The part of the pacifier that a child puts in his or her mouth is made from latex or silicone and does not contain BPA. In some pacifiers, the har shield designed to prevent swallowing might contain BPA; however, the only exposure would come from the child mouthing the shield, and the trar BPA is negligible.

Q: Should adults be concerned about exposure to BPA?

A: Concern over potential harm from BPA is highest for young children, because their bodies are early in development and have immature systems detoxifying chemicals. Adults and older children should follow reasonable food preparation practices to reduce exposure to BPA. The National Insti Health is supporting additional studies to better understand BPA and adults.

Q: What is HHS doing to address the concerns regarding BPA?

A: The Department of Health and Human Services -- through its Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Institutes of Healt and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) -- is investing in important new health studies in both animals and humans to better determine and e the potential health consequences of BPA.

New FDA Studies on BPA: As part of its update on BPA, FDA, in collaboration with NIH, is undertaking major studies to address safety issues. T studies are designed to better understand how BPA is metabolized in adults and children and determine, among other things, the effects of BPA on developing bodies of children. More Information

NIH Funding to Investigate BPA: The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences is providing $30 million in funding to investigate BPA includes support for FDA studies and external grants. More Information

New CDC Research on BPA: CDC uses advanced laboratory science and innovative techniques in its efforts to assess people's exposure to envir chemicals. In December 2009, CDC released a report on the human exposure to environmental chemicals, including BPA. More Information