

Dr. Oz Gets it Wrong Again

It's time to understand the science behind BPA

By Michael Roizen, M.D., and Mehmet Oz, M.D.



Do's & Don'ts Here's what you can do: Although BPA is in many products you're in contact with every day, and alternative chemicals from the same bisphenol family (bisphenol B, C, E, F, G, M, P, PH, S, TMC and Z) used in many plastics labeled "BPA-free" may have similar effects,

these strategies can help you reduce your exposure: 1. Eat fresh instead of canned fruit. Ditto for veggies.

Do's and Don'ts 2. Don't heat/microwave food or drinks in plastic containers. Heat speeds the transfer of BPA from plastics into edibles. Store food, especially acidic foods like tomato sauce, in glass or uncoated metal containers. 3. Say "no thanks" to receipts, tickets and anything else printed on thermal paper. If you take one, wash your hands. BPA may be absorbed through the skin and can hitchhike from your fingers into your body when you eat. 4. Avoid plastic food packaging whenever possible to reduce your exposure, too.

Proponents of BPA (the ubiquitous chemical bisphenol-A) are fueling a science war. To counter the growing sentiment that BPA is harmful, chemical-industry lobbyists recently launched a splashy advertising campaign asking consumers to "listen to the science" about BPA. We agree! But why would proponents of something that is now judged too toxic for pregnant mothers and babies tell you to look at the science?

Well, let's look at the science.

Where it is found: BPA is used to make strong, transparent plastics for food storage and packaging. It's in the thin, slightly powdery coating on the thermal paper used for most cash-register receipts. It's used in the epoxy resins that line most food cans and in some fire retardants in electronics.

What the chemical industry says: The American Chemistry Council is correct that the Food and Drug Administration and the European Food Safety Authority say BPA is safe at the levels most of us are exposed to.

What we say: The FDA and EFSA haven't yet taken into account a growing body of research suggesting that even at low levels, repeated exposure to BPA can change your endocrine functions (BPA is a hormone disruptor) and have other long-lasting effects on developing fetuses and infants, as well as damaging sperm quality. Other research is even more troubling.

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Comment [1]:

Although it is good advice to vary a diet, most food poisoning cases in recent years have been from "fresh" products. There are zero cases of food borne illnesses from the failure of metal packaging in the last 38 years. As doctors you should not forget about this "real" food safety issue.

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Comment [2]:

We think an article like this, which is 100% opposite of the opinions of the U.S. FDA and the European Food Safety Authority, may be fueling a science war.

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Comment [3]:

You should check your facts here. The U.S. FDA, EFSA and Health Canada have all stated, "Health Canada's Food Directorate continues to conclude that current dietary exposure to BPA through food packaging uses is not expected to pose a health risk to the general population, including newborns and young children." http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/secureit/package-emball/bpa/bpa_hra-ers-2012-09-eng.php

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Comment [4]:

Please provide your toxicology and risk assessment credentials and compare them to the U.S. FDA and EFSA scientists.

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Comment [5]:

Actually you are wrong. In fact in 2011 the U.S. FDA published a 119 page report on "Updated Review of the 'Low-Dose' Literature (Data) on Bisphenol A (CAS RN 80-05- 7) and Response to Charge Questions Regarding the Risk Assessment on Bisphenol A."

What nearly 100 human studies have found: Everyday BPA exposure is associated with troubling and increasingly common health issues such as behavior and reproductive problems; high blood pressure; polycystic ovarian syndrome; and weight-related problems, such as diabetes.

- A brand-new study from New Jersey's Rowan University School of Osteopathic Medicine has found an association between BPA levels in children and risk for autism spectrum disorder.
- A recent lab study from the University of Houston found that exposure to BPA used as flame-retardants in computers, cellphones and other electronics may be linked to weight gain.
- Another new study puts the health-care cost of obesity related to BPA at more than \$1.5 billion dollars over several decades.

Those who know agree: When Newsweek recently interviewed 20 prominent scientists who research BPA, the majority said it's likely the chemical is linked to all of those health problems and to several forms of cancer as well, though more study is needed.

How does BPA cause trouble? When it gets into living cells, BPA is an endocrine disruptor. Not only does that mess with your metabolism and lead to weight gain, it also acts like estrogen and may have a particularly strong effect on fetal sexual development. It also might have an effect on brain development given its ability to change the activation of genes: Animal studies — and some research in children — suggest that it might increase the risk for aggression and anxiety.

Mehmet Oz, M.D. is host of "The Dr. Oz Show," and Mike Roizen, M.D. is Chief Wellness Officer and Chair of Wellness Institute at Cleveland Clinic. Consult with your physician before making changes to your personal regimen.

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Comment [6]:

Please see the review of this study. If you read it you would have seen that despite what has been reported, all test subjects' blood pressure went down.
<http://www.metal-pack.org/reportcards/reportcard-121114.html>

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Comment [7]:

The study was faulted due to high degree of contamination.
http://www.metal-pack.org/reportcards/data/BPA_Study_Report_Card_Bisphenol_A_Exposure_in_Children_With_Autism_Spectrum_Disorders.pdf

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Comment [8]:

When Newsweek interviewed 20 scientist who have received a majority of the \$180 million granted by NIEHS to research BPA, they agreed that it as an issue. In comparison, when the entire membership of the Society of Toxicology was questioned, BPA was not viewed as a concern.

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Comment [9]:

Great point, but if you had read the recent research you would know that BPA is quickly metabolized when ingested and removed from the body.
<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0041008X15000198>