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Toxic Chemical Leaches from Popular Baby Bottles

A hormone-disrupting toxic chemical known to be a developmental, neural, and reproductive toxicant—called bisphenol A—leaches from popular clear, plastic baby bottles, according to a new report released today by Environment California Research and Policy Center. In *Toxic Baby Bottles: Scientific Study Finds Leaching Chemicals in Clear Plastic Baby Bottles*, Environment California Research and Policy Center worked with an independent laboratory to determine whether toxic chemicals leach from the most popular baby bottles on the market.

“A child’s first few years are an exciting time for parents who hope that their child starts his or her life happy and healthy,” said Rachel Gibson, Environmental Health Advocate and Staff Attorney for Environment California, who is the report’s author. “Unfortunately, parents do not have the information they need to adequately protect their children from toxic chemicals. California should require manufacturers to remove toxic chemicals from children’s products and, in the meantime, give parents the information they need to make informed purchasing decisions—right away.”

Environment California Research and Policy Center worked with an independent laboratory to analyze five of the most popular brands of baby bottles on the market to determine whether bisphenol A—a chemical linked to developmental, neural, and reproductive problems—leached from the bottles into liquids contained inside them.

- The five bottle brands tested include: Avent, Dr. Brown’s, Evenflo, Gerber, and Playtex.
- All five bottle brands leached bisphenol A at levels found to cause harm in numerous laboratory animal studies.

Bisphenol A is most commonly used to make clear polycarbonate plastic for consumer products, such as baby bottles. Through use, this plastic breaks down and leaches bisphenol A into liquids and food to which it comes into contact.

Scientists have linked very low doses of bisphenol A exposure to cancers, impaired immune function, early onset of puberty, obesity, diabetes, and hyperactivity, among other problems.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found bisphenol A in the urine of over 95% of people they tested. Alarming, the median level of bisphenol A found in humans is higher than the level that causes adverse health effects in animal studies.

In June 2006, San Francisco became the first jurisdiction in the United States to pass a prohibition on the use of bisphenol A in toys and child care articles intended for use by children under the age of three. California will likely consider similar legislation this year.

In the absence of both government action and adequate information about the presence of toxic chemicals in consumer products, Environment California Research and Policy Center recommends that parents and others caring for children do the following:

- Choose glass or safer-plastic baby bottles;
- Never heat food or beverages in plastic containers or bottles, which can speed up the leaching process;
- In washing plastic products, avoid harsh dishwashing soap and hot water, both of which speed up the leaching process; and
- For additional helpful tips and other information, visit www.EnvironmentCalifornia.org.

“Parents cannot be expected to deal with these issues on their own,” said Gibson. “California must act to assist parents and ensure that products on the market are not potentially harmful for children.”

Environment California Research and Policy Center calls on California to:

- Phase out the use of bisphenol A and other hazardous chemicals, especially in products used by children;
- Require manufacturers to label children's products with the name of any *potentially* dangerous chemical and the specific health risks associated with the chemical; and
- Reform chemicals policy to require chemical manufacturers to demonstrate that their chemicals are safe before they are allowed on the market and in consumer products.

For a tip sheet, parents should visit www.EnvironmentCalifornia.org.

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