



**Why is there concern?** Researchers are concerned that even at low levels, environmental estrogens may work together with the body's own estrogen to increase the risk of breast cancer. An ingredient called **bisphenol-A (BPA)** is used in certain plastics (**polycarbonate plastic**) and the lining of canned food and beverages. BPA can leach out of plastics and can liners with heat. BPA is an environmental estrogen.

**How is BPA used?** In the U.S., 2.3 billion pounds of BPA is produced each year. About 60% is used in hard plastics (sports and baby bottles, sports equipment, auto parts, CDs/DVDs) and 40% is used in epoxy resins to line metal food and beverage cans and in dental sealants.

**Are we exposed to BPA?** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published a study in 2008 showing that low levels of BPA were detected in 92.5% of the urine samples in a survey of the general U.S. population. Other researchers have detected BPA in human breast milk and one study reported detecting BPA in the body fat of women. The major source of BPA is the diet, e.g. BPA from canned foods and BPA leaching from polycarbonate beverage containers.

### What you can do now:

#### Learn the name of this environmental estrogen

- **Bisphenol-A (BPA)** is an environmental estrogen found in polycarbonate (PC) plastic
- PC plastic has been used to make plastic sports bottles and baby bottles
- To find PC plastic, look for recycle symbol "7 – PC" or symbol "7" and "Other"
  - Not all PC plastic containers that have BPA are clearly marked
  - If the plastic is hard and transparent, assume it is made of PC and has BPA
  - NOTE: Single-use water bottles are NOT made of PC, and do not contain BPA
- BPA is used extensively in the epoxy lining of metal food and beverage cans

#### Minimize leaching of BPA from PC plastic sports or baby bottles

Wear and tear, harsh detergents, and **especially heat**, can cause BPA to leach out

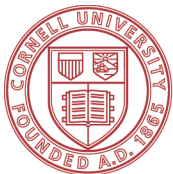
- DO NOT microwave in plastic containers
- DO microwave in heat-resistant glass (e.g. Pyrex) or lead-free ceramic containers
- DO NOT leave PC bottles where they can heat up (hot car, hot sand, etc.)
- DO NOT wash in the dishwasher. DO hand wash PC bottles in mild detergent.
- DO NOT use PC plastic bottles that are worn or scratched
- DO RECYCLE - Many recycling programs accept Type 7 PC plastics in recycling bins

#### Make alternative choices

- Use food-grade stainless steel water bottles or glass baby bottles instead
- Minimize your use of canned foods. Eat more fresh, frozen or dried produce.
- Look for products that are clearly labeled "BPA free" or "Bisphenol-A free"

**View Videos and Learn More at:** <http://envirocancer.cornell.edu/research/endocrine/videos/>

- Our videos are also on **YouTUBE** (search word "enviroestrogen") on <http://www.youtube.com/>



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