

The Wellness Family

Dr. Brayton Keeps You Informed



SURPRISE: IT'S BOTTOM'S UP WITH UNHEALTHY CHEMICALS

A Historical Look at Chemicals in Consumer Products

For years, consumers of clothing, home furnishings, cleaning supplies, etc. have been exposed to toxic chemicals known as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). These substances are used by manufacturers to make their products both resistant to water and to staining. However, use of these chemicals has resulted in the contamination of sources such as drinking water, subsequently creating chemical exposure to people, fish, and wildlife that can lead to cancer, destroy the immune system, and lead to a wide variety of other health problems.

The first PFAS were created in the 1930s. They were used primarily in nonstick and waterproof coatings. Society saw an increase in the production of these chemicals after a deadly fire broke out on a U.S. Navy aircraft carrier, the *USS Forrestal*, in 1967. The fire nearly decimated the ship and killed more than 130 people. As a result, scientists and manufacturers created PFAS containing aqueous film-forming foam or AFFF. This substance was capable of rapidly extinguishing fires. Today, there are more than 3,000 synthetic chemicals that can be defined as PFAS. They can be found in everything from popcorn bags to diapers.

There are essentially two classes of PFAS. These are known as PFOAs and PFOs. Per the National Center for Biotechnology Information, PFOAs "have been detected in more than 98% of the population of the United States"¹¹. These are usually found around military bases and manufacturing buildings, primarily found in water. PFOAs are known to increase both cholesterol and uric acid levels, which can lead to maladies such as kidney stones and gout.

Unsuspecting Chemicals Found in Diapers

One cannot deny that diapers have come a long way, from rags and moss, to cloth folded into a triangular strip secured with a safety pin beginning in 1849, to now a singular strip of material. Manufacturers began inventing cloth diapers en masse in 1887 along with wool soakers. These were placed over the cloth diaper to keep the clothing dry. In the early 1960s, the first disposable diaper was invented.

While these disposable miracles feel like a blessing for any frazzled parent, their convenience comes at a price. As diapers are not regulated like food or other household products, disposable diaper companies are not required to divulge what is in their diapers. Often these diapers contain things that can irritate the skin. This includes latex, formaldehyde, polyethylene, and polypropylene. Even the softness in a diaper is manufactured and is the result of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and phthalates. Because the material sits so close to the skin, it is often absorbed into the skin. Exposure to these can increase the risk of asthma, certain cancers, and reproductive function²¹. Companies like Kudos are pushing for a cloth diaper comeback and creating 100% cloth diapers that are hypo-allergenic and chemical free.



These chemicals have contaminated our drinking water. Exposing people, fish, and our wildlife to these chemicals can lead to the destruction of our immune system and a wide variety of health problems.

Feminine Hygiene Products (and the Infamous Baby Powder)

A report by a nonprofit known as Women's Voice for the Earth (WVE) points out that "feminine hygiene products may use ingredients that are known or suspected endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs)"³¹. Black and Latina women also tend to use products besides sanitary pads and tampons. These include wipes, powders, and deodorizers that can put them at an even higher risk of chemical exposure. Many feminine hygiene products contain formaldehyde-releasing preservatives, and formaldehyde is a carcinogen (similar to tobacco or asbestos) and a potent allergen. Tampons usually contain dioxins used to bleach the product. Dioxins have been known to cause cancer and reproductive toxicity. The fact that these chemicals are used in tampons is not even listed on the label.

Many sanitary pads are no less toxic. A study done in 2015 showed that women use sanitary pads on average 1800 days in their lifetime. This means that during that time, they are exposed to certain plastic materials that release VOCs (volatile organic compounds) and phthalates^[4] which are endocrine disruptors. They also have been known to cause neurocognitive impairment, asthma, congenital disability, and cancer.

Much has been made of the now infamous legal case against Johnson & Johnson Baby Powder in 2018 in which a jury initially awarded two women \$4.7 billion, reduced to \$2.1 billion after an appeal, claiming Johnson & Johnson's Baby Powder caused ovarian cancer. A report released by Reuters revealed a previous lawsuit with the same claims. Furthermore, the report claims that Johnson & Johnson knew as early as 1957 that there was asbestos in their powder. More reports from both the company and independent labs revealed the same findings through the early 2000s, per the report.

Women will most likely not stop using sanitary pads and tampons. However, shopping wisely and doing research will help to reduce the risk. Generally, it is recommended that you look for organic products, or use an alternative method such as period panties. The Good Trade has excellent recommendations for these.

Adult Outer Wear for Incontinence

Much like diapers for infants, diapers and pads for incontinence also pose a threat to adults' health. If worn for an extended period of time, they can lead to an allergic reaction as well as dryness. In some cases, this results in diaper dermatitis, bacterial infections and, in some cases, dysplasia and cervical cancer. Adult diapers tend to contain something called polymers, which help with the absorption of liquid. However, these can cause irritation and, in some

situations, become toxic. Some polymers contain a chemical called sodium polyacrylate. While wearing pads or diapers may be necessary for some, it is highly recommended that the consumer looks at labels carefully when purchasing. While many will say these products are hypoallergenic or good for sensitive skin, many will still contain sodium polyacrylate.

The Chiropractic Factor

Your family wellness chiropractor is always looking for ways you and your family can live healthier lives, beginning with your nervous system. Caring for you means promoting a lifestyle free of chemical interference that can directly affect the health of that nervous system. We encourage you to always be on the lookout for natural solutions, and we are happy to help with any recommendations. Any move away from the use of chemically saturated products will be beneficial to all.

Resources

- [1] https://pubchem.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/compound/Pentadecafluorooctanoic_acid
- [2] <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0890623818302259>
- [3] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3948026/>
- [4] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28739294/>



*Dear Patient,
Dr. Brayton is dedicated to providing you with the absolute best in family wellness care. So take a moment today to discuss with your Family Wellness Chiropractor any concerns you may have regarding your family's overall health and wellness.*

This newsletter is provided to you by:

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- [3] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3948026/>
- [4] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28739294/>



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