



BPA

Submitted by Julie Mau and Heather Buren, UFSW

As firefighters, we are exposed to numerous chemicals, toxins and carcinogens in our job, including flame retardants, hydrogen chloride, diesel exhaust, dioxins, and benzene. Living in a modern world, we are also exposed to toxic chemicals from a wide range of sources, including cleaning and personal-care products, plastics, food, air and environment. How can we make better choices in our personal lives that can help keep our ourselves and our families safe? In this issue, we will review the endocrine disruptor BPA.

BPA is one of the most common chemicals to which we are exposed in everyday life. BPA is a synthetic estrogen that can disrupt the hormone system. Minuscule exposures can increase the risk for breast cancer, prostate cancer, infertility, early puberty, metabolic disorders, altered immune system, type-2 diabetes, and cognitive and behavioral development in young children. BPA is found in the epoxy lining of metal food cans (the shiny layer), plastic bottles (usually #7), microwave ovenware, plastic eating utensils, and cash register receipts printed on thermal paper.

What are some easy ways to avoid BPA in everyday life?

Tips:

- Buy fresh or frozen vegetables instead of canned, or look for specific cans that say “BPA free”. Amy’s, Eden Foods, Muir Glen and most of Trader Joes are in this category. A comprehensive list of manufactures can be found at bpafreecannedfood.wordpress.com
- Avoid bottled water when possible. Choose glass or stainless steel for food and beverage containers.
- Heat food in the microwave using ceramic or glass containers (heated plastic can leach BPA into food products).

- Use parchment paper, a ceramic plate, or paper towels to cover microwaved food instead of plastic wrap to avoid plastic melting onto food.
- Wash hands after touching thermal receipts.

Learn more at www.breastcancerfund.org

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