



PFAS

What are PFAS?

PFAS (pea-fass), also called “forever chemicals” (short for per-and poly-fluoroalkyl substances), are a class of chemicals found in products such as food packaging and carpets to repel water, grease and stains. They are also found in firefighting foam, waterproof makeup, and sunscreen. PFAS break down very slowly and can accumulate in the body by eating contaminated food from fast-food wrappers due to their grease-repellant properties. They are also found in our food supply due to leaching from packaging, fish ingesting contaminated water, and irrigating vegetables with contaminated water.

How can PFAS affect our health?

- Linked to kidney and testicular cancers
- Elevated cholesterol
- Decreased fertility
- Thyroid problems
- Impaired fetal development
- Endocrine disruption
- Immune system disruption, specifically, reduced effectiveness of vaccines in children

Where can we find PFAS?

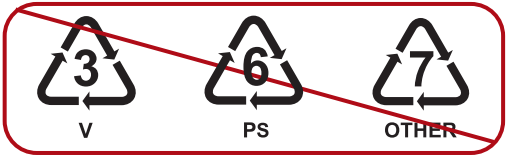
- Non-stick cookware
- Food packaging
- Stain-resistant fabrics (carpets/furniture)
- Cosmetics

Ways to reduce PFAS:

- Reduce fast-food and take-out consumption.
- Limit making/eating microwave popcorn; make popcorn on the stove instead.
- Replace non-stick cookware with stainless steel, cast iron, glass, or ceramic alternatives.
- Don't heat food in plastic wrap or a plastic container in the microwave.
- Look for the recycling symbol usually molded into the plastic on the bottom of a product.
- Don't leave bottled water in the sun or in your car on a hot day. When heated, chemicals from the plastic can leach into the water, making it harmful to drink.

Avoid the plastics marked 3, 6 or 7.

NO! Plastics to avoid:



Choose safer plastics with the numbers 1, 2, 4 and 5.

Safer plastics:



Which is safer – tap water or bottled water?

Tap water is filtered, disinfected and often contains added fluoride. Safety standards for tap water are set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and enforced by the city or state where you live, while bottled water has no governing agency. Using bottled water may be necessary at times, especially during emergency situations or after natural disasters. But, because bottled water is usually sold in a plastic container, phthalates may leach from the plastic into the water (especially if bottles have been sitting in heat or sun), the water could be contaminated with PFAS. For more information, visit the [EPA's website](#).