



Phthalates

What are phthalates?

Phthalates (tha-laytes), also called plasticizers, are a group of chemicals used to make plastic more durable or to make it softer and more flexible. They are in thousands of products, such as furniture, vinyl flooring, shower curtains, personal-care products (soap, deodorant, cosmetics, nail polish, shampoo, hair spray, sunscreen, detergents, household cleaners), medical devices, food packaging, and children’s toys, rattles, pacifiers, bottle nipples, and teethers. They can be used to retain the scents used in various products or fragrances, or to help lotions and cosmetics penetrate and stick to the skin.

How can phthalates affect our health?

Phthalates are endocrine disruptors – they interfere with our hormone systems and can cause:

- Changes to fertility
- Early onset of puberty
- Risk of low birth weight
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Impacts on the immune system
- Cardiovascular and respiratory problems
- Some cancers
- Neurological and behavioral problems

Most common foods linked to higher phthalate levels:

- Restaurant, cafeteria and fast-foods
- High-fat dairy
- Fatty meats and poultry
- Cooking oils

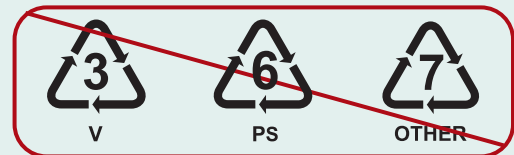
Ways to reduce phthalates:

- Eat fresh, unprocessed food when possible.
- Use glass, ceramic or metal containers for food prep and storage.
- Don’t heat your food in a plastic container or use plastic wrap over food in the microwave.

- Avoid air fresheners and personal care products that say “fragrance” or “perfume.”
- Learn how to identify phthalates in product ingredients and select “phthalate-free” versions.
- Look for the recycling symbol usually molded into the plastic on the bottom of a product.

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:

