



The Alliance for a **HEALTHY TOMORROW**

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DPH Issues Bisphenol-A (BPA) Warning, Coalition Calls for BPA-Free Children's Products

Boston—The Massachusetts Department of Public Health's (DPH) Bureau of Environmental Health today will issue a consumer warning on bisphenol-A (BPA), a toxic chemical that leaches from polycarbonate plastics and the linings of food and beverage cans. The Alliance for a Healthy Tomorrow (AHT) praises the DPH for issuing a warning and reinforcing public health concerns regarding BPA's links to a range of health problems including breast cancer, miscarriage, obesity, and diabetes. In light of this warning, advocates are re-issuing a call to action, urging the state to use its existing powers to phase out BPA from consumer products to better protect Massachusetts' families.

“By issuing this warning, Baystate health officials have confirmed that the science is clear and exposure to BPA is dangerous,” said **Mia Davis, BPA Coordinator at Clean Water Action**. “While this is an important first step, a warning will not adequately protect Massachusetts residents, particularly developing children. Families want children's products sold in Massachusetts stores to be BPA-Free.”

BPA mimics the hormone estrogen and disrupts the body's endocrine system. When hormones are disrupted, many systems in the body can be affected, leading to serious health impacts. In animal studies, BPA exposure is linked to early onset of puberty, increased diabetes risk, hyperactivity, and certain cancers, including breast cancer. The developing fetus and young children are most vulnerable for a number of reasons including the vulnerability of body systems undergoing growth and development. BPA has been found in the bodies of 95% of Americans tested.

“Scientists working on BPA have known for years that it can cause harm during development, making us particularly concerned about BPA exposure in children and fetuses,” said **Laura Vandenberg, PhD**, a Research Scientist at Tufts University who has published extensively on Bisphenol A. “The release of this warning shows that the DPH is now paying attention, but only a ban on BPA will protect fetuses and young children from unnecessary risk.”

The warning is anticipated to state that children under the age of two, pregnant women, and chemotherapy patients should, where possible, avoid products that contain BPA.

The DPH has the legal power in Massachusetts to ban the sale of toxic household products that are hazardous to children. Connecticut recently became the first state in the nation to ban the toxic chemical from infant formula and baby food cans and jars, as well as the full range of reusable food and beverage containers. Connecticut's progress follows government action in Canada, Minnesota, Suffolk County New York, and Chicago which prevent the sale of BPA (polycarbonate) baby bottles, and in some cases, sippy cups.

AHT has asked the DPH to regulate the sale of all products containing BPA intended for use by children 3 years of age and under and that may be mouthed or ingested, and also to issue a consumer warning to avoid products containing BPA directed to pregnant women, women planning to become pregnant, and those going through chemotherapy for breast cancer.

“Recent studies show that BPA is linked to breast cancer and even interferes with chemotherapy treatment for breast cancer,” said **Erin Boles**, Associate Executive Director of Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition. “Breast cancer is the second most common cancer after lung cancer, with rates continuing to rise. It is so important that we protect women from contact with hazardous chemicals that contribute to this worldwide epidemic.”

AHT’s citizen activists have delivered 8,490 consumer messages and made countless phone calls to Governor Patrick over the last few months urging him to take action to protect Massachusetts families from BPA. The group is calling for the DPH to follow Connecticut’s lead and ban BPA from baby bottles, infant formula and baby food cans and jars, as well as the full range of reusable food and beverage containers.

“Connecticut has protected its children, don’t children in Massachusetts deserve the same protection?” said **Cheryl Durr Patry**, mother of 4 from Medfield. “I urge our state officials to rise to the standards set by our neighbor to the south.”

Representative Ed Markey, Dean of the Massachusetts Congressional delegation and Chair of the Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Environment, filed federal legislation a year ago to ban bisphenol A (BPA) in food and beverage containers, and a version of that legislation recently passed the House of Representatives in the Food Safety Enhancement Act. “I applaud the Governor for taking a clear public health stand on BPA and reinforcing the need to protect children and families from this widespread toxic chemical. Parents have enough to worry about without wondering what dangerous substances are in their children’s food. I appreciate the support from officials at all levels of Massachusetts government on this tremendously important issue.”