



Phenols & Reproductive Health

Understanding everyday toxicants and how you can minimize your exposure



Additional Resources

Learn more about the chemicals in your everyday products and environment:

The Environmental Working Group: www.ewg.org

Explore our website:
www.seed-program.org

Contact & Follow us:
SEED@hsph.harvard.edu
(Twitter and Instagram)
[@drmesserlian](https://twitter.com/drmesserlian)



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How can I minimize my exposure to phenols?

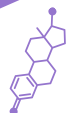


- Avoid foods and beverages in plastic or canned storage containers even if BPA-free
- Minimize single-use plastics (e.g., takeout containers, plastic lunchbags)
- Wash produce thoroughly and buy organic when possible
- Avoid using cosmetics and personal care products that contain phthalates
- Look for dental care products without triclosan or antibacterial properties
- Replace personal care and household products that have fragrance with safer products
- Review product labels and look for phenol or paraben-free (without BPA, BPF, BPS, BPB, BP-3, TCS, TCC, and 4-NP)

Phenols

Phenols are endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs) that are rapidly removed from our bodies. Still, these chemicals are found in many everyday products that lead to chronic and dangerous exposure.

Endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs) interrupt normal hormonal activity by mimicking, blocking, or altering hormones and changing the way that they function in the body.



BPA-free products are still harmful

Bisphenol A or BPA is one of the most studied and well known phenols. However, several BPA-free products and alternatives contain other harmful phenols like BPF or BPS (chemical analogs).

BPA, BFS, BPS, and other phenols have a variety of health consequences. These chemicals can:

- ✗ Decrease brain and heart health
- ✗ Decrease immune function
- ✗ Increase adverse birth outcomes
- ✗ Increase loss of pregnancy



Phenols are often added to plastic products to increase the strength and durability, while reducing the potential for bacterial growth. Along with BPA, triclosan is a common phenolic EDC found in everyday items such as toothpaste and antimicrobial or antibacterial soaps.

Where are phenols found?



Personal care products, dental products, nail polish, and cosmetics



Takeout containers, plastic packaging and bottles, and plastic storage containers



Canned food and beverages (including some BPA-free cans)



Cleaning supplies, candles, air fresheners, antibacterial products, and household dust



Electronics, vaping mouth pieces, and medical devices