



# Prescriptions for PREVENTION



Guidance from the Western States  
Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit

## Phthalates



### Did you know?

**P**hthalates are chemicals that can affect the hormone systems in people's bodies. Hormone systems are important for normal bodily functions, including brain development and reproductive health. Phthalates are in thousands of products, including soaps, cosmetics, hair products, vinyl flooring, wall coverings, and plastic packaging. Exposure to some phthalates is associated with increased risk of reproductive harm, obesity and asthma. Some phthalates are suspected carcinogens.



### Do

- ✓ **When possible, purchase personal care products** that are **phthalate free**.
  - ✓ Choose unscented products whenever possible.
- ✓ **Wet mop or wet dust floors** and surfaces to remove household dust:
  - ✓ Use a microfiber cloth and/or a vacuum with a HEPA filter.
- ✓ **Use reusable glass**, or uncoated stainless-steel containers for food and drink, especially hot items.



### Don't

- ✗ **Avoid plastics** with recycling codes #3 (PVC), #6 (styrene) and #7 (BPA).
- ✗ **If plastics cannot be avoided**, choose recycling codes #1 (PETE), #2 (HDPE), #4 (LDPE), or #5 (PP).
- ✗ **Don't heat food in the microwave in plastic containers**, or put them in dishwasher.
- ✗ **Avoid canned or processed foods** – eat fresh!



For more information, scan the code or visit  
[wspehsu.ucsf.edu/prescriptions-for-prevention-environmental-hazards](http://wspehsu.ucsf.edu/prescriptions-for-prevention-environmental-hazards)