



Prescriptions for PREVENTION



Guidance from the Western States
Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit

Plastics



Did you know?

Our modern world uses a lot of plastic and most of it does not get recycled. Instead, it pollutes our environment and water. Children are exposed to plastics and harmful compounds in plastics through their baby bottles, toys, and personal care products (like lotions, shampoos, etc). When plastics break down, they can even form “microplastics,” tiny particles that can be eaten or inhaled.

Do

- ✓ **Use or purchase products** packaged in materials such as glass or metal instead of plastics.
- ✓ **If you need to use plastics** look for those with recycling codes 1, 2, 4, and 5. These are safer.
- ✓ **Microplastics can get dislodged** from synthetic clothing in the wash:
 - ✓ **Avoid fabrics** such as “polyester,” “nylon,” “polyamide,” and “acrylic”;
 - ✓ **Consider installing an external filter**, they are effective at removing microplastics from wash water;
 - ✓ **To capture microplastics** in laundry, use microfiber catching balls or bags.
- ✓ **For more information** on [microplastics](#) click here.

Don't

- ✗ **Avoid plastics** with recycling codes 3 (phthalates), 6 (styrenes), and 7 (bisphenol A, or BPA) unless labeled “biobased” or “greenware”.
- ✗ **Do not microwave food** or beverages (including infant formula) in plastic.
- ✗ **Do not microwave or heat plastic cling wraps**. If you must use plastic wrap in the microwave, ensure it does not touch the food.
- ✗ **Do not store food in plastic containers**, use glass or unlined metal containers instead.
- ✗ **Avoid placing plastics** in the dishwasher.
- ✗ **Never burn plastics in a fireplace** or outdoor fire pit.



For more information, scan the code or visit <https://wspehsu.ucsf.edu/projects/prescriptions-for-prevention-exposure-sources/>