



Prescriptions for PREVENTION

Guidance from the Western States
Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit



Arsenic



Did you know?

Arsenic is a naturally occurring element found in soil, water, and some foods. With high and prolonged exposure, arsenic can be harmful to your child's health. It can affect brain development. Some kinds of arsenic, like those used in industry or on older pressure-treated woods, may increase risk for certain cancers later in life.



Do

- Eat a **well-balanced diet** of fruits, vegetables, and a variety of grains whenever possible.
- Eat a diet low in **rice-based ingredients**. When eating rice, rinse thoroughly before cooking, and choose white basmati rice which tends to have lower arsenic levels than brown rice.
- Test for arsenic if you use **well water**.
- All public water supplies are required to provide an annual [Consumer Confidence Report on water quality](#).
 - [This resource can help you interpret those results.](#)
 - Read your local report and determine if arsenic levels are too high (**exceeding 10 ppb**).
 - If arsenic is present at a high level in your water, **treat your water** with a home water distiller, or a reverse osmosis filter to remove arsenic.



Don't

- Don't boil water to try to remove arsenic.
- Don't use untested private well water or water with high levels of arsenic to dilute infant formula or make baby food.
- Don't play in playgrounds built with [arsenic contaminated \(CCA-treated\) wood](#) made prior to 2004.
 - Do not grow anything for human consumption in soil where CCA treated wood is or was previously used.
- Considerations before and during pregnancy:
 - Don't drink water with high levels of arsenic or use it to prepare foods (like coffee or soup).



For more information, scan the code or visit

<https://wspehsu.ucsf.edu/curriculum-tools/prescriptions-for-prevention/>

Material developed in partnership with the Environmental Research and Translation for Health (EaRTH) Center: <https://earth.ucsf.edu>