



Prescriptions for PREVENTION

Guidance from the Western States
Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit



Water



Did you know?

Drinking water can sometimes be contaminated with many different toxic chemicals, including radon, lead, nitrates, gasoline, pesticides, and PFAS. Other concerns include harmful algal blooms and bacteria or other contaminants that can make water unsafe. Disasters like wildfires or flooding can affect drinking water. Extra precautions should be taken if you drink from a private well.



Do

- Information on drinking water can be found here: [CDC Drinking Water FAQs](#)
- View [your local drinking water report](#) here
- Reliable laboratories for drinking water testing can be found here: [US EPA Web portal](#)
- If chemicals or toxins are in your water source, [consider using a home water treatment system or filter](#)
- If there is a wildfire or other major disaster, check with your local government or utility to make sure water is safe for use
- If you use a private well:
 - Be sure to test your water
 - [Review guidance for testing and water treatment for owners of private wells](#)
 - Flooding and proximity to agriculture or livestock can pollute well water. Use extra caution under these conditions



Don't

- Don't drink from untreated or unfiltered water sources
- Don't swim in bodies of water with active [algae blooms](#)
 - [State level resources here](#)
- Don't store water in or drink from plastic bottles, especially plastics with the recycle codes 3, 6 or 7
 - Choose glass or unlined metal bottles instead
 - If you must buy bottled water in plastic bottles, discard after first use and don't reuse the bottle
- Don't boil water to sterilize it unless there is a "boil water order" in your town. Boiling does not effectively remove lead and other toxic chemicals



For more information, scan the code or visit

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

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