



Prescriptions for PREVENTION

Guidance from the Western States
Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit



PFAS (Per- or poly-fluoroalkyl substances)



Did you know?

PFAS is a group of thousands of chemicals. These products have been used for non-stick coatings and stain or water-resistant fabrics since the 1940s. Exposure to PFAS chemicals is common. Most people are exposed through contaminated food or drinking water, and sometimes because of "waterproof" or "stain-proof" products. PFAS are sometimes called "forever chemicals" because they stay in our environment and our bodies for a long time. Children with higher PFAS exposures are more likely to have poor growth as babies, cholesterol problems, and accelerated puberty. Long-term exposure may increase cancer risk, affect reproductive health and may reduce the effectiveness of some vaccines.



Do

- Ask your water provider if they have PFAS testing levels, or test your well if you use well water.
 - There's a [map where PFAS has been detected here](#)
 - Some states also have PFAS testing data available online
- Check your [Consumer Confidence Report on water here](#)
- Consider [using a filter certified to reduce PFAS levels](#):
 - Be sure to select a filter certified to decrease PFAS
 - If levels are above 0.004 parts per trillion (ppt) for PFOA or 0.02 ppt for PFOS, consider using an alternate source of water if you're not able to use a PFAS-certified filter
 - Boiling water does not reduce PFAS
- Eat an organic diet as much as possible, PFAS has been detected in non-organic produce
- Click [here for more info](#) or [here for resources](#)



Don't

- Don't use takeout containers or grease-resistant paper to store food. Transfer to reusable containers made of glass, ceramic or stainless steel as soon as possible.
- Don't buy:
 - Stain-resistant carpets or furniture (usually PFAS coatings)
 - "Stain resistant", "water repellent" or "dirt repellent" clothing or shoes, unless these are necessary for safety and no alternative is available
 - Cookware with non-stick coatings
 - Personal care products (skin products, hair products etc) with ingredients that contain "fluoro" or PTFE (ex. "waterproof" makeup)
 - Coated dental floss, get uncoated
- Avoid applying waterproofing sprays or treatments that contain PFAS.



For more information, scan the code or visit: wspehsu.ucsf.edu/prescriptions-for-prevention

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