



Prescriptions for PREVENTION

Guidance from the Western States
Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit



Plastics



Did you know?

Our world uses a lot of plastic. Plastic pollutes our land, water, air, food and bodies. Children are exposed to plastics, and harmful chemicals in them, through baby bottles, diapers, toys, and personal care products (like lotions, shampoos, etc). When plastics break up they become “microplastics,” tiny and invisible particles that can be eaten, drank, inhaled, or absorbed through skin. Microplastics may harm reproductive and lung health.



Do

- Use and purchase products packaged in materials like glass or food/medical grade stainless steel instead of plastics.
 - If you must use plastics, codes 2, 4, and 5 are typically safer.
- Use plant-based cellulose or coconut husk sponges instead of plastic sponges
- Microplastics can get dislodged from synthetic clothing in the wash:
 - Use 100% organic cotton, linen, wool, hemp, or bamboo clothing
 - Avoid fabrics like “polyester,” “nylon,” “polyamide,” and “acrylic”
 - Consider installing a washing machine filter, to remove microplastics from water
 - Capture microplastics in laundry with microfiber catching balls or bags
 - Install an outdoor lint trap to reduce microfibers released into the air
- Consider water filters targeting microplastics
- For more information on [microplastics click here](#).



Don't

- Don't use plastics with codes 1 (Bisphenols), 3 (phthalates), 6 (styrenes), and 7 (BPA)
- Don't use plastic cookware like spatulas, cutting boards, and utensils
- Don't microwave food or beverages (including breast milk or infant formula) in plastic
- Don't microwave or heat plastic cling wraps. If you must use plastic wrap, ensure it does not touch the food.
- Don't heat food that is still in the can it came in! Metal cans used for food or beverages are frequently lined with plastic.
- Avoid using plastic water bottles if possible. When needed, keep them out of the sun or hot locations. Do not reuse single-use plastic bottles.
- Don't store food in plastic containers.
- Don't place plastics in the dishwasher.
- Don't burn plastics in a fireplace or outdoor fire pit.
- Don't rely on single use cups for hot beverages, bring a reusable one!



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

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