



# Healthy Kids Phthalates Information



Phthalates are a family of chemicals that are used to make plastics more flexible and durable. They also have uses in personal care products and a wide range of other product types. Some phthalates have been banned for use in certain children's products and other chemicals have replaced them.

Many phthalates are considered “endocrine-disrupting” chemicals. This means that they can affect the body’s natural hormones. Hormone changes can affect development in infants and children.

Finding phthalates in a child’s urine is common and does not mean your child’s health will be affected. Scientists are still learning what levels may be unsafe.

For more information and resources, please visit our webpage:



Healthy Kids MN  
[health.mn.gov/  
HealthyKidsChemicals](http://health.mn.gov/HealthyKidsChemicals)

## Where Can Phthalates Be Found?



### In Personal Care Products and Fragrances

Applies to: MMP | MEP | MnBP | MiBP | MHiBP

#### Main Uses:

- Commonly added to personal care products, cosmetics, and consumer products, added as solvents or scent stabilizers

#### Common Ways Kids Are Exposed:

Using shampoo, soap, lotion, nail polish, and other personal care products



Breathing in air fresheners, scented cleaning products, candles, and incense



## Where Can Phthalates Be Found? (cont.)



### In Plastics and Building Materials

Applies to: Phthalates

MBzP MECPP MEOHP MCPP MONP MINP MCOP MCiOP MCNP

Phthalate replacements

MECPTP MEHHTP MCOCH MHNCH



1

**Phthalates** are in consumer products made of flexible plastics and home and building products such as:



Clothing like shoes and rain jackets

Vinyl toys

Shower curtains

Vinyl flooring

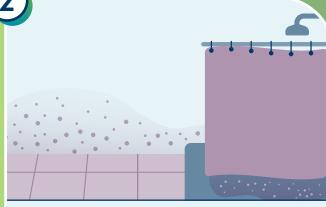
Car interiors

Paints, wallpaper, adhesives and sealants

Inflatables

Processed and pre-packaged food

2



**Phthalates** gradually leach from products and get into food, air, and dust inside homes and vehicles.

3

Children can be exposed by:

- Eating processed and pre-packaged foods
- Biting or sucking on soft plastic toys not made for teething
- Breathing in air and dust
- Swallowing dust when putting hands or objects in their mouth
- Crawling and playing on the floor, which increases contact with dust



## How You Can Lower Exposure to Phthalates

- Buy unscented personal care products like lotion and shampoo when possible. Products with “fragrance” or “parfum” in the ingredient list may contain phthalates.
- Some products may be labeled as “phthalate free.” You can also contact the company to ask if a product contains phthalates.
- Be aware that air fresheners, plug-ins, sprays, and other scented home products may contain phthalates. Consider limiting their use.
- Limit the use of incense, scented candles, and scented cleaning products. If you use them inside, use good ventilation with fans or open windows.
- Do not allow children to chew on plastic objects not made for that purpose.
- Clean floors and surfaces in your home to keep dust from building up.
- Have your child wash their hands before eating.
- Choose minimally processed foods when possible. Foods that are pre-packaged, including fast food, may contain phthalates.



## Phthalates and Phthalate-Replacements Tested in Your Child's Urine

MMP MEP MnBP MiBP MHBP MBzP MCHP MECPP MEHHP MEHP MEOHP  
MCPP MONP MINP MCOP MCiOP MCNP MECPTP MEHHTP MCOCH MHNCH

**Phthalates and their replacements change into related chemicals once inside the body. We call these “breakdown products.”** Healthy Kids Minnesota tested for 21 breakdown products in your child’s urine. Phthalates and phthalate-replacements have long chemical names so we use common abbreviations in this sheet and your child’s results table.

For more information on the full chemical names, please visit:



[health.mn.gov/  
HealthyKidsResults](http://health.mn.gov/HealthyKidsResults)

