

# 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

## Where Can Phthalates Be Found?



### In Personal Care Products and Fragrances

**Applies to:** MMP MEP MnBP MiBP MHBP

**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** **MCP** **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

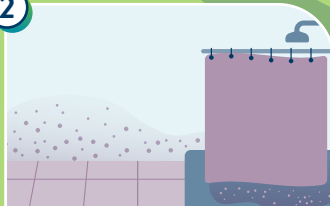
Car interiors

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 MECPPE 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

www.health.mn.gov  
To obtain this information in  
a different format, email:  
health.biomonitoring@state.mn.us

Minnesota Department of Health  
Biomonitoring Program  
625 Robert St N, PO BOX 64975  
St. Paul, MN 55155-2538



For more information and resources,  
please visit our webpage:  
health.mn.gov/healthykidsmn