



## Baby Bottles and Bisphenol A (BPA)

Many food and liquid containers, including baby bottles, are made of polycarbonate, or have a lining that contains the chemical bisphenol A (BPA). BPA is used to harden plastics, keep bacteria from contaminating foods, and prevent cans from rusting.



There are concerns, though, over the possible harmful effects BPA may have on humans, particularly on infants and children. Animal studies have shown effects on the endocrine functions in animals related to BPA exposure. Additional studies will determine what level of BPA exposure might cause similar effects in humans. As research continues, concerned parents can take the following precautionary measures to reduce babies' exposure to BPA:

- Avoid clear plastic baby bottles or containers with the recycling number 7 and the letters "PC" imprinted on them. Many contain BPA.
- Consider using certified or identified BPA-free plastic bottles.
- Use bottles made of opaque plastic. These bottles (made of polyethylene or polypropylene) do not contain BPA. You can also look for the recycle symbols with the number 2 or 5 in them.
- Glass bottles can be an alternative, but be aware of the risk of injury to you or your baby if the bottle is dropped or broken.
- Because heat may cause the release of BPA from plastic, consider the following:
  - Do not boil polycarbonate bottles
  - Do not heat polycarbonate bottles in the microwave
  - Do not wash polycarbonate bottles in the dishwasher

**Breastfeeding** (/English/ages-stages/baby/breastfeeding/Pages/default.aspx) Breastfeeding is another way to reduce potential BPA exposure. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends breastfeeding as the sole source of nutrition for your baby for about 6 months. When you add solid foods to your baby's diet, continue breastfeeding until at least 12 months.

If you are considering switching from canned liquid to powdered formula, note that the mixing procedures may differ, so pay special attention when preparing formula from powder.

If your baby is on specialized formula to address a medical condition, you should not switch to another formula, as the known risks would outweigh any potential risks posed by BPA.

Risks associated with giving infants inappropriate (home-made condensed milk) formulas or alternative (soy or goat) milk are far greater than the potential effects of BPA.

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**Source** Adapted from Caring for Your Baby and Young Child: Birth to Age Five (Copyright © 2009 American Academy of Pediatrics)

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