
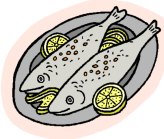












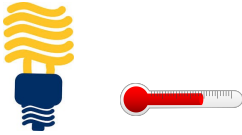


PRENATAL ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT - WISCONSIN ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH NETWORK

Before, during, and after pregnancy, women are exposed to many chemicals that may affect the growing fetus.

FOOD and WATER		INFORMATION & ADVICE
Fruits and vegetables		Fresh fruits and vegetables are important for a healthy diet. <i>When possible, buy organic and antibiotic-free fruits, veggies, dairy and meat.</i> Pesticides can cause problems with your ability to have a baby, specifically miscarriage & some birth defects.
Fish		<i>Fish is healthy for you; try to eat up to 2 meals per week that are low in mercury, such as Pollock, tilapia, and salmon. Buy light tuna, not albacore.</i> Some fish (shark, swordfish, king mackerel or tilefish) are very high in mercury, which can cause problems with your baby's brain development.
Cooking and storing in plastic		<i>Use glass for storage and microwaving when possible. Try to buy fresh/frozen foods instead of canned. Breastfeed babies when possible.</i> Canned food liners and some plastics contain BPA. BPA is a chemical that interferes with hormones in the body. <i>Do not microwave in plastic, or wash in dishwasher. Don't reuse disposable plastic.</i>
Canned food		
Cookware and dishes		Imported pottery or ceramics – also clay, dirt, and paint chips – may contain lead. Lead can damage the brain and nerves, and increase the risk of miscarriage, stillbirth and low birth weight. <i>Eat foods rich in iron (lean red meats, chicken), calcium (dairy and leafy green veggies), and vitamin C (oranges, grapefruits, tomatoes, and green peppers).</i>
		<i>Use cast iron cookware instead of Teflon.</i> Teflon is made from a chemical (PFOA) that has been linked to inability to have a baby.
Well water		<i>Well water should be tested for nitrates and bacteria, which can make pregnant women and babies sick.</i>

PERSONAL		INFORMATION & ADVICE
Smoking and vaping		<i>Talk to your doctor about quitting smoking.</i> Smoke chemicals can harm the growing baby: low birth weight, asthma, and/or learning problems.
Antibacterial		<i>Use regular soap or hand gels.</i> Avoid antibacterial products that contain triclosan, which promotes "super bacteria" and has hormonal effects.
Personal hygiene		Artificial fragrances and other chemicals in soaps, lotions, shampoos and other personal products are linked to reproductive problems, asthma, skin irritation, and cancer. <i>Buy natural or chemical-free when you can.</i>
Clothing and linens		<i>Wash new clothing, towels and sheets before using them. Use green dry cleaners when possible, or avoid dry cleaning clothes.</i> Chemicals on these items may reduce your ability to have a baby, cause early delivery or stillbirth, affect your nerves, and increase your risk for cancer.
Toxic home remedies		<i>Do not use these remedies. Ask your doctor about alternatives to azarcon, greta or pay-loo-ah, and remedies that contain mercury or mercurio.</i> These items may contain heavy metals such as lead or mercury. Lead can cause damage to the brain and nerves, it also increases the risk of miscarriage, stillbirth and low birth weight.

HOME and WORK	INFORMATION & ADVICE
Smoke safety 	<p>Get a detector for both smoke and carbon monoxide, or ask your landlord. Make sure gas stoves and fire places are working properly and are well ventilated. Smoke detectors are very important for preventing smoke inhalation and burns. Carbon monoxide is an invisible gas that is very harmful.</p>
Pesticides inside and out 	<p>Pesticides are dangerous for women, babies, and children. They can make it hard to have a baby; cause miscarriage, birth defects, learning disabilities, and even cancers.</p>
Older homes and home improvements 	<p>Pipes and paint in some older homes main contain lead, lead can cause damage to the brain and nerves. It also increases the risk of miscarriage, stillbirth and low birth weight.</p> <p>Dust from paint and building materials can contain lead and other toxins that can cause breathing problems. <i>Choose low-VOC paints.</i></p> <p>Radon is a cancer-causing gas that can be found in basements. <i>You can purchase a test kit at a hardware store.</i></p>
Cleaning supplies 	<p>Strong cleaning chemicals, and other products with strong scents like air fresheners, often contain phthalates that can cause health problems, such as thyroid problems, cancer, low birth weight and infertility. <i>Avoid strong smelling chemicals and use alternatives to air fresheners.</i></p>
Air fresheners 	
Plastic 	<p>Choose PVC-free plastic materials when you can, or use alternatives such as cloth. PVC plastic (shower curtains, window clings, some toys and teething rings) might contain certain chemicals that can cause cancer and birth defects.</p>
Mercury 	<p>Use LED lights when possible. Take caution when cleaning up a broken mercury light bulb or ask your landlord to do it. Use electronic thermometers when possible. Mercury exposure can cause problems with how the baby's brain and nerves develop. Compact fluorescent light bulbs contain mercury.</p>

For more information and resources, go to WEHOnline.org/prenatal and talk to your health care professional