

# Healthy Kids Phthalates Information

## Phthalates

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 new 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. However, **finding phthalates in children's urine is common and does not mean their health will be affected.** Scientists are still learning what levels may be unsafe.



For more information and resources, please visit our web page: [Healthy Kids Minnesota: Chemical Information and Resources.](#)

## Phthalates and phthalate-replacements measured in your child's urine

Phthalates and their replacements change into related chemicals once inside the body. We call these "breakdown products." Healthy Kids Minnesota measured these 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 our web page: [Healthy Kids Minnesota: Explanation of Results.](#)

## What are the main uses and ways kids are exposed?

### Phthalates in personal care products and fragrances

(MMP, MEP, MNBP, MIBP, MHiBP, MBZP)

#### Main uses

Personal care products, cosmetics, and consumer products, added as solvents or scent stabilizers

#### Common ways kids can be exposed

- Using shampoo, soap, lotion, nail polish, insect repellent, and other personal care products
- Breathing in scented candles and air fresheners

## Phthalates and phthalate-replacements in plastics and building materials

(Phthalates: MEHHP, MECPP, MCOP, MONP, MINP, MCP, MEOHP, MCIOP, MCNP)

(Phthalate-replacements: MCOCH, MECPTP, MEHHTP, MHNCH)

### Main uses

- Food processing equipment and food packaging
- Consumer products made of flexible plastics (like food storage containers, vinyl toys, inflatables, shower curtains, shoes and raincoats, school lunchboxes and binders)
- Home and building products such as vinyl flooring, wallpaper, adhesives, paints, and sealants

### Common ways kids can be exposed

- Eating food stored or packaged in plastic
- Breathing in or ingesting house dust. Phthalates in consumer products and building materials can get out of plastic and into dust.
- Biting or sucking on soft plastic toys not made for teething

## How you can lower exposure to phthalates

- Try to avoid microwaving or heating food that is in plastic containers.
- 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.
- Look for products that do not list “fragrance” on the ingredient label.
- Avoid burning scented candles or using air fresheners in the home.
- If you want to know if a product contains phthalates, you can contact the company. Some products may be labeled as “phthalate free.”

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