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Toxic Chemical Leaches from Popular Baby Bottles *Parents Need Information to Protect Their Kids*

MINNEAPOLIS — A chemical known to be toxic to the nervous and reproductive system, and a developmental toxin, leaches from popular clear, plastic baby bottles, according to Toxic Baby Bottles: Scientific Study Finds Leaching Chemicals in Clear Plastic Baby Bottles, a new report released today. The chemical, called bisphenol A, is a disruptor of hormone function and has been found by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in the urine of 95 percent of Americans tested.

The report is based on independent laboratory testing of the most popular baby bottles on the market commissioned by the Environment California Research and Policy Center. It can be found at: www.EnvironmentCalifornia.org.

“We all want to raise our children in ways that are safe, healthy and that maximize their potential,” said David Wallinga, MD, Director of the Food and Health Program at the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP). “Sadly, that’s made harder by the fact that manufacturers aren’t required to give parents even the most basic safety information on toxic chemicals in baby bottles and other household products.” IATP works in coalition with the Environment California Research and Policy Center for safer plastic and other consumer products.

Five of the most popular brands of baby bottles on the market were tested to determine whether bisphenol A leached from the bottles into liquids contained inside them. All five leached bisphenol A at levels that have been found to cause harm in numerous laboratory animal studies.

Figure 1.

Baby bottle brand tested	Range of bisphenol A detected (parts per billion)
Avent	8-10 ppb
Dr. Brown’s	6-7 ppb
Evenflo	8-9 ppb
Gerber	6-7 ppb
Playtex	5-6 ppb

Bisphenol A is most commonly used to make clear polycarbonate plastic for consumer products, such as baby bottles. Through use, this plastic breaks down and leaches bisphenol A into liquids and food to which it comes into contact.

Scientists have linked very low doses of bisphenol A exposure to cancers, impaired immune function, early onset of puberty, obesity, diabetes, and hyperactivity, among other problems. Alarming, the median level of bisphenol A found by the CDC in humans is higher than the level found in animals to cause adverse health effects.

“Parents can’t make informed health choices about baby products when they’re left in the dark by manufacturers.” said Wallinga, a physician. “We need a drastic overhaul in how we regulate consumer products to require manufacturers to demonstrate their products are safe, made safely, and made from safe ingredients, before they’re allowed on the market.”

Absent action by state or federal authorities to protect consumers from bisphenol A, or to ensure that consumers are notified of bisphenol A in baby and other products, IATP recommends that parents and other childcare providers:

- Choose glass or safer-plastic baby bottles; see IATP’s Smart Plastics Guide for more information (www.iatp.org)
- Never heat food or beverages in plastic containers or bottles, which can speed up the process of toxic chemicals leaching out of the plastic;
- In washing plastic products, avoid harsh dishwashing soap and hot water, both of which speed up leaching.