

Information You May Not Have Heard About BPA

WRITTEN BY: DR. WENDY ROGERS

Is a can of tomatoes just a can of tomatoes? Or is there something more ominous lurking within? This never occurred to me until recently reading “7 Foods Experts Won’t Eat”. In the article, the endocrinologist stated he would never eat canned tomatoes due to the high BPA levels present. BPA is used to line food cans and the acidity of tomatoes pulls the BPA into the product. So, I thought to myself as I cleaned all of the canned tomatoes out of our pantry, if this hadn’t occurred to me (as a naturopathic physician), I wonder how many other people are also in the dark?

For those of you who may not know or need a review, BPA, also known as Bisphenol A, is a chemical found in plastics, the inner coatings of food and drink cans, medical devices, receipts, bottle tops, older water supply pipes, some dental sealants and composites, and the list goes on and on. Per a report done in March 2010, the global production of

BPA was expected to exceed 6.3 million metric tons by the year 2015.

Within the last ten years, the evidence has been building that this prevalent chemical is toxic and a probable danger to our health.

Research has shown BPA behaves as an endocrine disrupter, meaning it interferes with normal hormone functioning and balance. The molecule structure looks a lot like estrogen thus has lots of opportunity to create havoc in areas in which estrogen or other hormones may play a role. There are strong correlations between BPA and not only illnesses more commonly associated with hormone malfunctions such as thyroid disease, endometriosis, fibroids,

and infertility but also cancer, cardiovascular disease, obesity, and asthma. Scientists revealed in a primate study, the potential of it stopping synaptic connections

from forming in certain areas of the brain critical to cognitive and mood function. A recent study showed a strong association between higher levels of BPA found in mothers while pregnant and their children developing symptoms similar to those on the ADHD/autism spectrum.

Our primary source of exposure is through our food. Most of us know to avoid drinking liquid out of plastic bottles that have been exposed to heat and heating/microwaving any kind of food in plastic is a bad idea. The BPA present in hard plastics forms a fairly strong bond but will leach out into liquids much more readily when the plastic is exposed to heat, acidic fluids, strong detergents or other abrasive chemicals. When news of the “evils” of BPA started becoming public, many water bottle manufacturers began creating BPA-free versions. But don’t let those other plastics lull you into a false sense of security. The “alternative” plastics often have detrimental health implications as well but are less talked about.

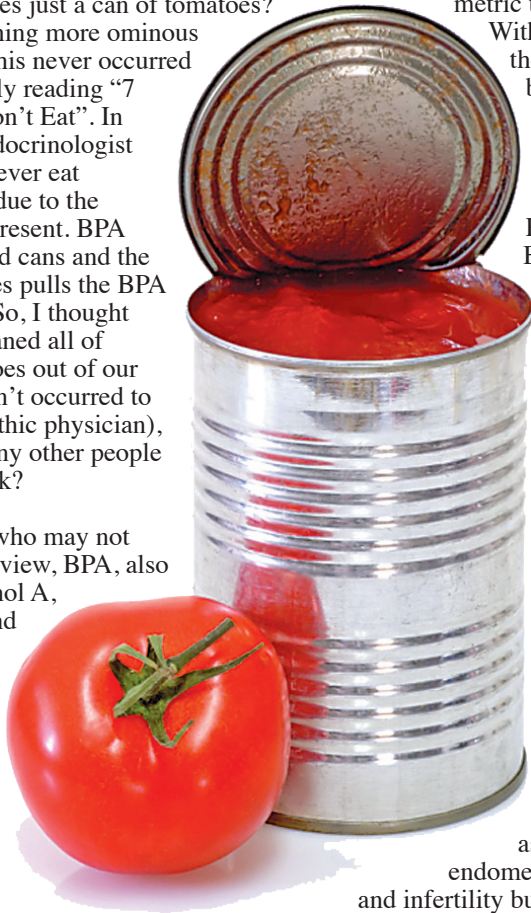
A newer, less known concern is the amount of exposure we receive from many forms of paper such as receipts, movie tickets, and product labels. Within paper, the molecule bond of BPA is much weaker thus easily transferred to our hands. Our exposure from these papers is potentially several times greater than what is found in various food containers, especially when our hands are wet or damp. While there isn’t concern

currently with absorbing it through our skin, we end up handling these various forms of paper and then pass it on to our food via our hands.

Completely avoiding any BPA exposure is nearly impossible but there is a lot we can do to limit it. So here are a few strong recommendations:

NEVER heat any food in plastic. Drink from glass or stainless steel containers whenever possible and store your food in glass. ALWAYS wash your hands before eating and when feasible avoid over handling receipts, movie tickets, etc., And last but not most certainly not the least, your primary diet should come from whole, unprocessed foods vs. what is found in packages of plastic and cans.

Lowering your exposure to BPA goes a long way towards preventing its potential ill effects. And if you ever have any questions on how to further protect yourself, feel free to call the doctors at True Health Medicine, PC and we will be happy to help.



Dr. Wendy Rogers is a naturopathic physician and licensed acupuncturist with True Health Medicine, PC, a group practice of naturopathic physicians and acupuncturists. The clinic is located at 8555 SW Tualatin Rd, Tualatin OR. 503-691-0901