

Toxic toys + Choosing safer products for kids



As a parent, grandparent, or a toy consumer, you have purchased a toy without knowing its 'ingredient list'. This is not always possible as there are hidden toxins in products. This is concerning because kids are chewing it, holding it, bathing with it, eating in it and sleeping with it. With that much usage and wear-and-tear, it's inevitable that some materials from that toy or book will leak into the air, their bodies or foods. For reasons of economy, globalization and simple ignorance, kids' products have been produced with toxins, non-recyclable materials, and plastics with potentially adverse health effects. These items are usually cheap on the front end with a high cost to our health on the back end. This bulletin just touches on the main points of this issue and more research is needed on this topic. It is recommended you check the resources below and examine the products in your home/ car/ diaper bag/ daycare.

There are toys on Canadian store shelves that have been banned in Europe since 1999 and in USA as of February 2009. Just because some toys are still legal in Canada it doesn't mean they are safe toys! **Where we spend our dollars advocates for what we believe in!**

What could make a toy toxic?

Phthalates (pronounced thay-lates): PVC (polyvinyl chloride) is the most common plastic used in products. There's a high chance that phthalates have been added to PVC to make the plastic softer and squishy. The problem is that they can't bind to the plastic and are unstable, therefore they leach out of the product. According to scientists, large doses of some phthalates can have health effects. More research is needed & some findings are inconclusive.

Lead and cadmium are also added to PVC to make toys durable, malleable and economical. Repeatedly sucking on, or swallowing, these items could bring on a range of damaging symptoms, from a drop in IQ, to a prolonged period of vomiting, diarrhea and cramping, to possible death, says Dr. Lennox Huang, deputy chief of pediatrics at McMaster Children's Hospital.



These chemicals have been known to harm children's endocrine system, reproductive system, development and linked to cancer.

Insecticides + Pesticides: 25% of the world's insecticides and 10% of the world's pesticides are used in conventional cotton crops.

(www.panna.org) This is the most sprayed AND widely used crop. These chemicals impact the health of wild life, our environment, our soil, beneficial micro-organisms, water supply and our bodies.

How to be a proactive consumer?

1. Research the toy manufacturers and do your homework!
2. Check for recalls at Consumer Product recalls on Health Canada site: www.healthcanada.gc.ca/cps
3. Check where the toy was made. China and India made toys present the greatest risk for lead, at this moment. However, China also makes non-PVC toys because the European and some North American markets demand it and are willing to pay more!
4. Choose toys with natural finishes, non-PVC plastics, organic cottons, non-toxic metals and of course, no choking hazards! Polyethylene and ethylene vinyl acetate are safer plastics.
5. Consult your family physician if you want your child to have a blood test for lead exposure.

Safer products for the family, a few options...

- www.FineWoodenToys.com - wooden toys & puzzles
- www.ForYourBugaboo.com - healthy choices for baby
- www.miYim.com - simply organic toys
- www.MomKnowsBest.ca - natural solutions
- www.OrganicBabyWorld.ca - baby and family needs
- www.OrganicallyHatched.com - organic baby products
- www.UndertheGreenRoof.com - non-toxic wooden toys
- www.UndertheNile.com - organic cotton clothing toys

Toxicity testing on Canadians- on now!

Five thousand Canadians aged 6 to 79 years are being tested for environmental chemicals. Blood and urine samples will be analyzed for substances like: phthalates, metals, PCBs, bisphenol, organochlorine pesticides, etc.

Resources about non-toxic products

- Safe Kids Canada**
www.safekidscanada.ca / 1-888-SAFETIPS (723-3847)
www.PVCinformation.org
- Health Canada**
www.healthcanada.gc.ca/cps
www.AboutOrganicCotton.org
- Book: Slow Death by Rubber Duck: How the Toxic Chemistry of Everyday Life Affects Our Health by Rick Smith**
www.OTA.com - Organic Trade Association

first aid/ wellness scenario #7

Answers next bulletin

1. What 'root' food is great to stimulate immune system and to clear congestion and toxins during colds and flus?
2. How do you make home-made (chemical-free) cough syrup?

Answers to last 2HEALTH Bulletin's scenario #6:

What do you do if you suspect poisoning? If person is unconscious, call EMS/ 911 and do not provoke vomiting. If conscious, call Poison Centre (1-800-268-9017) and wait for their instructions. They may suggest ingesting fluids or inducing vomiting - depending on the poison and the victim's condition. You need to know (if possible): name of poison, amount ingested/ inhaled, age and weight of victim.

What are 5 ways to prevent poisoning in the home with kids? 1. Install + regularly check Carbon Monoxide detectors. 2. Use toxic-free, environmental, organic/ home-made cleaners. 3. Store harsh, toxic chemicals away from reach and sight. 4. Practice safe food handling and discard older and expired foods immediately. 5. Be aware of toxic plants for kids (and pets). Check Health Canada's website: www.healthcanada.gc.ca

This bulletin was inspired by the recent media attention on the questionable practices of toy manufacturers + recalls, a newsletter by 'The Center of Education for Children's Health and the Environment' and by several concerned parents and citizens (like us at 2HEALTH). Please continue your research and let's keep our children (in our homes and community) safe. **Where we spend our dollars advocates for what we believe in!**

WANT BULLETIN

Safety + First Aid 101 for Babysitters and Nannies

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2HEALTH First Aid + CPR training is Red Cross certified
~creating confident rescuers + safer homes since 1992~