



## Common Environmental Contaminants

Contaminant	Compromising Action on Health	Source
<b>PCBs (Polychlorinated Biphenyls)</b>	Lowers immunity; disrupts thyroid and ovarian hormones; may cause breast cancer; impaired learning and memory	<b>Industry:</b> Old paints, varnishes, inks, hydraulic fluids, PCBs concentrate in fish.
Bisphenol-A	Disrupts thyroid function; lowers progesterone levels; increased breast cancer risk	<b>Household:</b> polycarbonate plastic food and beverage containers <b>Industry:</b> resin lining of cans and dental sealants, adhesives, building materials.
<b>Phthalates (DEHP, DINP, DIDP, DBP, DnOP, DnHP) &amp; PVC (Polyvinyl Chloride)</b>	Toxic to the thyroid; liver and kidney toxicity; mimics the hormone estrogen, endocrine disrupting chemical, decreased sperm production, changes in behaviour and cognition,	<b>Industry:</b> Added to plastics to make them soft and flexible – are ubiquitous in nature, automobile parts, lubricating oils, detergents <b>Personal Care Products:</b> in a range of cosmetic, soaps and other PCP <b>Other:</b> children’s toys, food containers, blinds, raincoats, furniture, flooring, wallpaper, blow-up furniture, shower curtains
<b>Dioxin</b>	Blocks testosterone in men; interferes with thyroid function; endometriosis and reproductive abnormalities; promotes cancer; damage to the thymus gland and immune system; can cause severe acne.	<b>Industry:</b> released into the air after the incineration of PVC; manufacturing of pesticides and herbicides; created during the bleaching of pulp and paper.
<b>Furans</b>	Carcinogenic; toxic to the developing fetus; toxic to the liver; infertility; suppresses immune system; hormone disruptor; high exposure may cause severe acne.	<b>Industry:</b> by-products of plastic production, manufacturing of iron and steel, industrial bleaching and incineration.
<b>Brominated Fire Retardants (PBDEs)</b>	Interferes with thyroid hormones; carcinogen; causes behaviour and memory problems; damages central nervous system.	<b>Household:</b> mattresses and futons, children’s pyjamas, carpets and drapes, computers, TVs, present in upholstery foam <b>Industry:</b> present as a fire retardant in plastic appliances,
<b>Parabens (Methyl, Propyl, Butyl, and Ethyl Paraben)</b>	Hormone disruptor; mimics estrogen and linked to breast cancer, decreases testosterone and sperm count, allergic contact dermatitis.	<b>Personal care products:</b> Used as a preservative in cosmetics, shampoo, conditioner, soaps, toothpaste and a range of other PCP. <b>Food:</b> antimicrobial, preservative and flavorant- packaged meats, fish and poultry, salad dressings, condiments, processed fruits and vegetables, frozen dairy products, cakes and pies, jellies and jams, beers and ciders, soft drinks, syrups <b>Pharmaceuticals:</b> injectable drugs, suppositories, hydrocortisone creams and ointments, antacids, medicated pain-relieving patches, mentholated vapour rubs, chap stick, antifungal and antibacterial preparations.