

Parents' Guide to Flame Retardants

Protect Your Family From Flame Retardants

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What are flame retardants?

Flame retardant chemicals were added to the foam in furniture and baby products to meet the outdated furniture flammability standard known as Technical Bulletin 117 (TB117). These chemicals do not provide a significant fire safety benefit in these products and they are associated with various health issues.



In 2010, we tested a variety of baby products containing foam.

80% contained dangerous or untested flame retardants.

As of January 2014, TB117 has been replaced by an improved standard, TB117-2013, which can be met without flame retardants and fully exempts children's products while maintaining fire safety. Car seats must meet a federal standard, FMVSS 302, and will continue to contain flame retardants for the time being.

How do flame retardants get into our bodies?

Flame retardants escape from products and end up in dust. One of the main sources of flame retardants in your home is the couch.



- 1** Chemicals migrate from products into dust
- 2** Dust gets on hands & food
- 3** Hands & food get put into mouths

Who is most vulnerable?

Moms, fetuses, and newborns

Many flame retardants persist in our bodies for years and can pass through the placenta from a mother to her growing fetus. These chemicals accumulate in breast milk, further exposing the newborn to flame retardants.



Still, the benefits of breast feeding outweigh risks posed by these chemicals.

Infants and toddlers

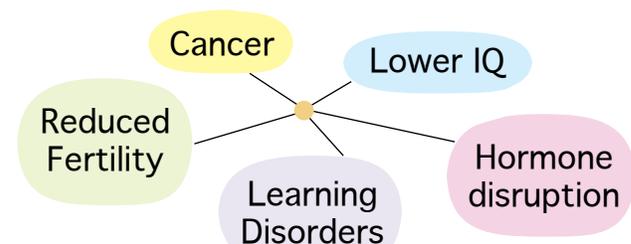
Toddlers have the highest levels of exposure because of their hand-to-mouth behavior and proximity to the floor where dusts settle.

Babies and young children are most vulnerable to the toxic effects of these chemicals since their bodies and brains are still developing.

Why should I be concerned?

Americans have some of the highest measured levels in the world of flame retardants in their blood. Toddlers have 3 to 4 times the flame retardants in their bodies when compared with their moms.

Flame retardants are linked with:



Tips to keep your family safe

Tips to Reduce Toxics in Your Home

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1. REDUCE DUST

Make sure you and your kids wash your hands frequently, especially before eating.

Wet mop and damp dust.

Vacuum with a HEPA filter.



2. READ LABELS

Avoid foam-filled products with a TB117 label.

Look for a TB117-2013 label on furniture and be sure to ask the retailer or manufacturer if flame retardants have been added to the product.

Beware of claims that a product is "PBDE free." It could still contain other harmful flame retardants.

VISIT www.greensciencepolicy.org for tips on buying flame-retardant-free products

3. SPEAK UP

Tell retailers and manufacturers that you don't want flame retardants in your furniture and children's products. Your voice matters.

The Green Science Policy Institute provides unbiased scientific information to facilitate more informed decision-making about chemicals used in consumer products to protect health and the environment worldwide.



**Green Science
Policy Institute**

www.greensciencepolicy.org
info@greensciencepolicy.org