

BPA in plastic

What bisphenol A (BPA) is and the research and evidence that supports our understanding of BPA.

BPA is a chemical used to make rigid plastics, including food storage containers and refillable drinks bottles. It is also used to make some protective coatings and linings for food and drinks cans. It cannot be used on items intended to be used by infants and young children such as infant feeding bottles and beakers due to legal restrictions.

Where it is allowed to be used, tiny amounts of the chemical may be transferred from some packaging into food and drinks, however the level of BPA detected in food to date in the UK is not currently considered to be harmful.

BPA safety assessments

Some people are concerned about BPA because it's one of a large number of substances that could possibly interfere with our hormone systems (endocrine disruptors). Extensive assessments have been carried out on BPA in the past and new data is now being reviewed.

Food contact material legislation currently sets restrictions on BPA which manufacturers are obliged to meet. Under the precautionary principle, more stringent conditions have been set in that BPA should not transfer into foods from articles intended for infants and young children.

[The Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer products and the Environment \(COT\)](#) reviewed the scientific basis and implications for risk management of the new European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) tolerable daily intake (TDI) for BPA, and the subsequent assessment by the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR). [The COT published an updated Position Statement](#) agreeing to adopt the TDI that was originally derived by the BfR.

The Committee will publish a supplementary statement in due course, providing detail on their discussions of the EFS opinion and BfR assessment, their evaluation of the evidence base, and deliberations that lead to adopt the TDI derived by the BfR. The FSA will consider next steps, which will likely include updating current restrictions in relation to BPA once the evaluation has been completed.

FSA Explains

Scientists estimate how much of a chemical people can consume daily over their lifetime without being harmed by it. This is known as the chemical's tolerable daily intake (TDI). In the UK, the COT has agreed to adopt the TDI of 0.2 ug/kg bw (micrograms per kilogram body weight) per day.

More information

See the latest updates from the [Committee on Toxicity \(COT\) of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment](#).