

A healthy baby starts with healthy parents.

DETOXIFICATION PRIOR TO CONCEPTION

Environmental health research has identified the presence of numerous toxic chemicals in pregnant women. Many of the chemicals found have been banned since the 1970's but are still abundantly present in our environment. For this reason alone, it is imperative to ensure your body is free of [chemicals](#) and heavy metals PRIOR to conceiving a child. This applies to both parents – not only the mother.

In the US, researchers analysing data for more than 160 chemicals detected polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), organochlorine pesticides, perfluorinated compounds (PFCs), phenols, polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs), phthalates, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and perchlorate in 99 to 100 percent of pregnant women.

On 16th January 2011, Science Daily reported: *Among the chemicals found in the study group were PBDEs, compounds used as flame retardants now banned in many states including California, and dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT), an organochlorine pesticide banned in the United States in 1972.*

Over 100,000 chemicals manufactured and used by industries worldwide. These chemicals enter our food, water, air, personal care products and direct environments including our homes and workplaces. Toxins are everywhere and we are all exposed. Therefore, every effort should be made to avoid as many as possible and help our bodies to [detoxify](#) those we cannot avoid.

Never is this more important than prior and during pregnancy. The placenta concentrates heavy metals and toxic substances only to have them enter the innocent unborn. During the formation of the foetus, there are what is known as critical windows of development. This relates to the development of certain tissue that, when disturbed by toxins or lack of nutrients, will never form properly resulting in permanent damage. You can read more about these in my report on [Drug Induced Birth Defects](#).

If a baby is exposed to numerous toxic compounds in the uterus, changes which may either cause cancer, or make the child more susceptible to cancer, and other diseases, later in life. Many of these chemicals also damage other body systems that can impact development, reproduction, brain function, immune system function and more.

Chronic childhood diseases linked to exposure to toxic chemicals in the environment have been surging upward for years, and experts believe rising rates of birth defects, asthma, neuro-developmental disorders and other serious diseases in U.S. children are a result of these early chemical exposures.

It is also directly a result of the mother's toxic load that newborn babies are being born "toxic." One study by the Environmental Working Group (EWG) found that blood samples from newborns contained an average of 287 toxins, including mercury, fire retardants, pesticides, and teflon chemicals.

How to prevent damaging your unborn child

If you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant, you will want to pay particular attention to reducing your chemical exposure as much as possible. Here's a starter list of practical measures you can take to protect yourself and your children from common toxic substances:

- **Store your food in glass containers** whenever possible, as it is the most inert container you can use.
- Only use **natural cleaning products** in your home. Most health food stores will have these available or you can search online for them.
- Buy and **eat organic produce** and free-range, organic foods to reduce your exposure to pesticides, genetic modification and fertilizers. This also applies to milk, which is frequently contaminated with bovine growth hormone.
- **Avoid** conventional or **farm-raised fish**, which are often heavily contaminated with PCBs and mercury. It is safer to supplement with quality* beneficial omega-3 fats.
- **Avoid processed foods, and artificial food additives** of all kinds, including [artificial sweeteners](#) and MSG.
- **Throw out your Teflon pots and pans** and instead use safer materials like ceramic and glass.
- Use an appropriate **water filter** on taps (including those in your shower or bath) or invest in a free-standing model.
- **Avoid using artificial air fresheners**, dryer sheets, fabric softeners or other synthetic fragrances.
- Switch to [natural brands of toiletries](#), including shampoo, toothpaste, antiperspirants and cosmetics. Skin care products are notorious for containing a slew of dangerous chemicals, which was the major reason for creating my own truly natural [Baby care range](#).
- When redoing your home, look for "green," toxin-free alternatives in lieu of regular paint and vinyl floor coverings.
- Limit your use of drugs (prescription and over-the-counter) as much as possible. Drugs are chemicals too, and they will leave residues and accumulate in your body over time.
- **Avoid spraying pesticides** around your home or insect repellents that contain DEET on your body. There are safe, effective and natural alternatives out there.

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