

Exposure to Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

Most people in the United States and other developed countries have probably been exposed to PFAS and have PFAS in their blood.

How can my family and I be exposed to PFAS?

PFAS may be present in drinking water, food, indoor dust, some consumer products, and in some workplaces. Most non-worker exposures occur through drinking contaminated water or eating food that contains PFAS.

- Some food packaging materials may contain PFAS.
- Locally caught fish from PFAS contaminated lakes and rivers may contain PFAS.



Can I be exposed to PFAS while swimming, bathing, or showering?

- Very little PFAS exposure occurs during swimming, bathing, or showering.
- Only a very small amount of PFAS can get into your body through the skin.

What happens to PFAS in my body?

- Some (but not all) PFAS can build up in your body.
- Some PFAS leave the body slowly over time through urine.
- In women, some PFAS also leave the body through breastmilk and the menstrual cycle.
- The levels of PFAS go down slowly after exposure stops.
- Scientists are studying how different amounts of PFAS in the body over time may affect people's health.

How can unborn babies and breastfeeding infants be exposed to PFAS?

Mothers exposed to PFAS

- can pass them to their unborn baby.
- transfer PFAS to their breast milk, and can expose their babies through breastfeeding.

Nursing mothers should continue to breastfeed.

- Based on current science the benefits of breastfeeding appear to outweigh the risks for infants exposed to PFAS in breast milk.
- Breastfeeding is good for the health of both infants and mothers.
- While we do not know a lot about the health effects of PFAS in breast milk, we do know that the benefits of breastfeeding are well documented.
- Scientists continue to do research in this area.
- To weigh the risks and benefits of breastfeeding, mothers should talk to their doctors.