



# Toxic Matters

Ways to Protect You and Your Family  
From Harmful Exposures

## Chemicals to Avoid

Everyday products often contain harmful chemicals that are linked to health problems or birth defects.



**BISPHENOLS** (BPA and substitutes)  
In plastics and processed foods – can harm male and female fertility, puberty, brains, and lead to tumors



**PESTICIDES**  
Sprayed on food crops – many have been linked to cancer, asthma, lower IQ



**DRY-CLEANING CHEMICALS** (PERC, TCE) Can cause cancer, damage liver and kidneys, affect memory and nervous system, and linked to birth defects in children exposed before they are born



**PFAS/PFOA**  
In non-stick pans, rain gear, carpeting, pizza boxes, etc. – can lead to kidney and testicular cancer, high blood pressure, pre-eclampsia, low birthweight



**FLAME RETARDANTS**  
Found in furniture, electronics, and firefighter uniforms – these endocrine disruptors can harm the immune, reproductive, and nervous systems



**PHthalates**  
In plastics, solvents, personal care products and cosmetics – can affect sexual development and harm immune systems



**LEAD**  
In paint in older homes and contaminated water – linked to heart problems, high blood pressure, lower IQ, delayed growth and development, learning problems



**PLASTICIZERS**  
Used to make plastics – can leach out and lower fertility and contribute to weight gain



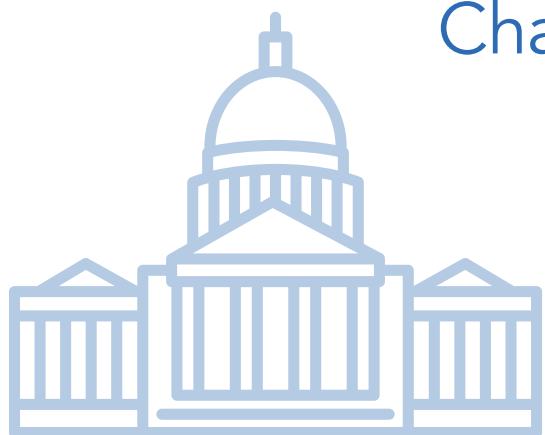
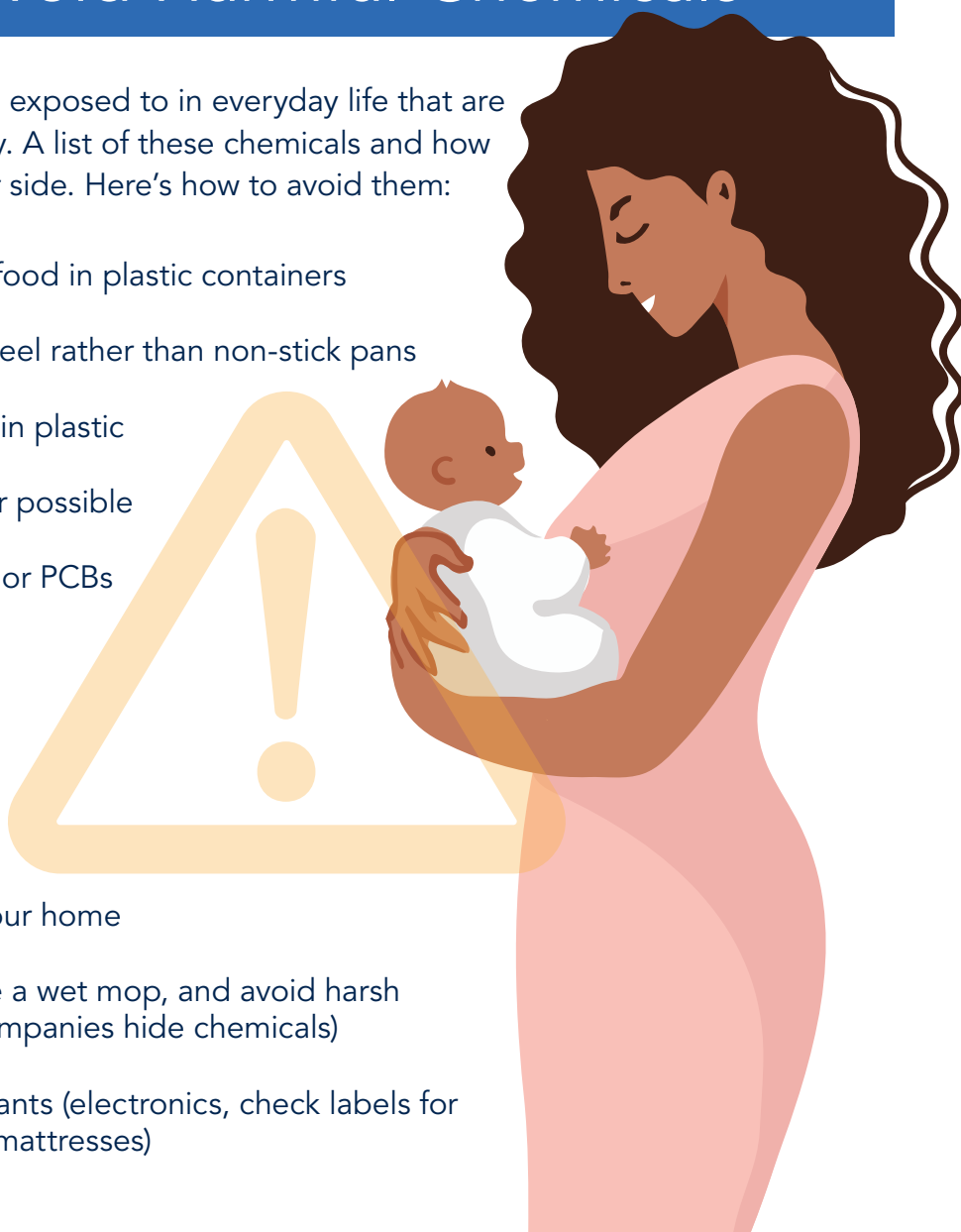
**MERCURY**  
Neurotoxin in large fish and other sources – can lower IQ and affect fine motor skills when a child is exposed before birth

**There is no safe level of exposure to these chemicals**

# 10 Ways to Avoid Harmful Chemicals

There are many chemicals that we are exposed to in everyday life that are harmful, particularly during pregnancy. A list of these chemicals and how they impact our health is on the other side. Here's how to avoid them:

- 1 Avoid eating, drinking or storing food in plastic containers
- 2 Cook with cast iron or stainless steel rather than non-stick pans
- 3 Do not microwave food or drinks in plastic
- 4 Eat fresh, organic foods whenever possible
- 5 Avoid eating fish high in mercury or PCBs like tuna and swordfish
- 6 Limit cosmetics use and opt for fragrance-free products
- 7 Avoid dry cleaning or stain treating clothes
- 8 Remove shoes before entering your home
- 9 Clean with water and vinegar, use a wet mop, and avoid harsh cleaners and fragrance (where companies hide chemicals)
- 10 Avoid products with flame retardants (electronics, check labels for flame retardants in furniture and mattresses)



## Change Policy + Products

- ✓ Support policies to prevent exposure to toxic environmental chemicals
- ✓ Call companies whose products you like and ask them to remove harmful chemicals and plastic packaging
- ✓ Use your purchasing power and avoid buying products with harmful chemicals or plastics