

Baby Products

Top Tips for Healthy Kids



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Protect the Minnesota you love.

Baby and children's products may contain potentially harmful chemicals.

Flame-retardants are often added to baby products with including breastfeeding pillows, changing table pads, crib mattresses, napmats, furniture, car seats and others. Flame-retardants, formaldehyde and phthalates are frequently added to children's clothing and footwear. Used toys and baby products may contain lead or phthalates, which federal law bans in newer products.

Exposure to hormone disrupting phthalates and toxic flame-retardants is associated with increased risk for reproductive and developmental problems. Formaldehyde is a sensitizer that can affect breathing and cause skin rashes and long-term exposure increases cancer risk. Lead is a potent brain toxin.

Many companies are responding to consumer demand for safer baby products, so they are starting to phase out flame-retardants and formaldehyde. However, accurate labeling is often lacking, making a parent's job that much harder.

The good news is there are safer products on the market and some companies are committed to full product labeling.



Careful choices can keep chemicals out of the nursery.

- Look for baby products labeled "flame retardant free." If the label says: "This article meets the flammability requirements of California technical bulletin 117," it likely contains added flame-retardants. This includes breastfeeding pillows, furniture, crib mattresses and changing table pads.
- Avoid products made with polyurethane foam, which are likely to contain added flame-retardants. Crib mattress made from wool, natural latex or organic cotton are safer choices.
- Limit plastic products and avoid vinyl (PVC #3) plastic, which can contain phthalates or lead. Buy cloth and wood toys.
- Avoid older (pre-2009) secondhand toys and baby products, which might contain lead or phthalates banned in new products.
- Most baby bottles and sippy cups are BPA-free, but be sure to look for "BPA-free" plastic or glass baby bottles.
- Purchase baby clothing free of added flame-retardants. Look for sleepwear labeled, "For child's safety, garment should fit snugly. This garment is not flame resistant" or "... is not intended for use as sleepwear."
- Avoid children's clothing and bedding labeled "wrinkle free" as it might contain formaldehyde. Contact the company if you're not sure.
- Avoid baby clothing with plastisol prints, known to contain phthalates. Plastisol is basically vinyl or PVC and recognizable as shiny plastic-like decorative designs on clothing.