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Nutrition and healthy eating

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The Mayo Clinic Diet

What is your weight-loss goal?

5-10 lbs »

11-25 lbs »

25+ lbs »

What is BPA, and what are the concerns about BPA?

BPA stands for bisphenol A, an industrial chemical that has been used to make certain plastics and resins since the 1950s.

BPA is found in polycarbonate plastics and epoxy resins. Polycarbonate plastics are often used in containers that store food and beverages, such as water bottles. They may also be used in other consumer goods.

Epoxy resins are used to coat the inside of metal products, such as food cans, bottle tops and water supply lines. Some dental sealants and composites also may contain BPA.

Some research has shown that BPA can seep into food or beverages from containers that are made with BPA. Exposure to BPA is a concern because of the possible health effects on the brain and prostate gland of fetuses, infants and children. It can also affect children's behavior. Additional research suggests a possible link between BPA and increased blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

However, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has said that BPA is safe at the very low levels that occur in some foods. This assessment is based on the review of hundreds of studies. The FDA continues to monitor the research.

If you're concerned about BPA, you can take steps to reduce your exposure:

- **Use BPA-free products.** Manufacturers are creating more and more BPA-free products. Look for products labeled as BPA-free. If a product isn't labeled, keep in mind that some, but not all, plastics marked with recycle code 3 or 7 may contain BPA.
- **Avoid heat.** Don't put plastic containers in the microwave or dishwasher, because the heat may break them down over time and allow BPA to leach into foods.
- **Focus on fresh whole foods.** When you can, choose fresh whole fruits and vegetables.

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Feedback

- **Use alternatives.** Use glass, porcelain or stainless-steel containers for hot foods and liquids instead of plastic containers.

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March 24, 2023

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