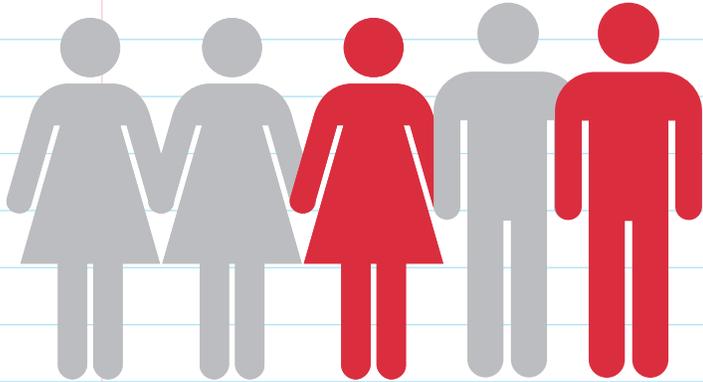


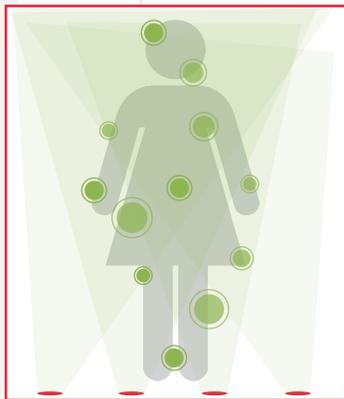
# Environmental Health 101

How much can your environment impact your health? The answer: A lot. Over the past 30 years, research has revealed that exposures to toxic chemicals we encounter in daily life may play a role in the increase in serious health problems. **The good news: The more you know about these harmful chemicals, the more you can take action to safeguard against them.**



## 1 in 3 Women 1 in 2 Men will be diagnosed with cancer in their lifetimes

In addition, learning and developmental disabilities, including autism and ADHD, affect nearly one in six U.S. children. Kids are experiencing puberty much earlier than ever before. And more young couples are having trouble conceiving.



## What Is Happening?

Toxic chemicals have been linked to the growing incidence of health issues in the United States, including those mentioned above. We are exposed to harmful chemicals through our environment every day – in our houses, workplaces and parks, in our food, air, water, cleaning supplies, furniture, electronics and cosmetics. Many ingredients in these products have never been tested for their impact on our health.



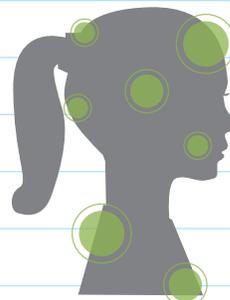
DAILY EXPOSURE

## Chemicals & You

For the most part, a single chemical exposure is unlikely to cause serious harm. But as we have established, the lipstick we wear, the food we eat and the soap we use to clean our children's hands often contain harmful chemicals. The load adds up quickly, day after day. And as we swallow, breathe in and lather up, toxins enter our bodies and may have lasting impacts.



## RESEARCH HAS FOUND:



An average of **13** hormone-altering cosmetics chemicals in the bodies of teenage girls



**100s** of synthetic chemicals in the umbilical cord blood of newborn babies, which illustrates that whatever mom is exposed to, so is her baby

# Chemical Impacts

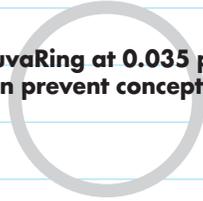
Not all chemicals are harmful – our bodies are made up of chemicals, water is a chemical and some chemicals improve our health. Whether they are harmful or beneficial, chemicals affect health in many different ways.

Adding to the complexity:

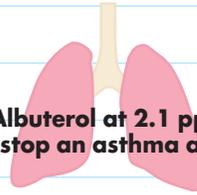
- Some chemicals accumulate in our bodies over time
- Impacts may show up long after exposure
- Some chemicals can become harmful or more toxic in combination with other chemicals
- Chemicals can have more impact during certain periods of development (like in the womb, during infancy or puberty)
- Even tiny doses can be very potent

The active chemicals in the drugs below are present in the parts per billion range (ppb), but the drugs have big effects:

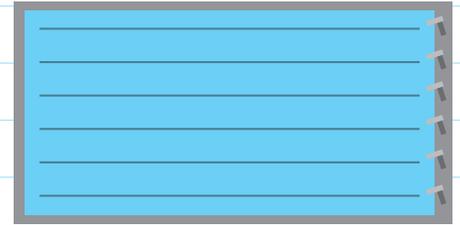
NuvaRing at 0.035 ppb can prevent conception



Albuterol at 2.1 ppb can stop an asthma attack



What does a part per billion look like? Imagine half a teaspoon of red food coloring poured into an Olympic-size swimming pool.



## The Result

In communities exposed to high amounts of toxins in the air, water and soil, researchers can often see patterns of negative health impacts. But the impacts from exposures across the board are nearly impossible to track since we are all exposed, and we usually don't know to what or when. And, every individual is unique, so it is difficult to predict how the daily dose we each face will impact our near- and long-term health. In some people, chemicals may:

- Prove to be carcinogenic
- Function as endocrine disruptors, mimicking or blocking important hormone signals in our bodies
- Act as neurotoxins, allergens, or learning and developmental toxins



## What Can I Do To Protect Myself?

Environmental Health is a topic that will become increasingly familiar as studies continue to reveal the impact of toxic chemicals on humans and ecosystems. The really good news: We can prevent harm to health by reducing the toxic chemicals in the products sold and manufactured in the United States. To that end, we support a growing body of research, advocate for health-protective legislation and empower consumers to make safer choices.

**For now, reduce exposures to toxic chemicals where you can by learning some of the ingredients to avoid (check out the resources below). Read ingredient labels and ask companies about the safety of the ingredients in their products. By making a few simple changes, you can lead your family down a safer path while we work together to ensure a healthier future for generations to come.**

### RESOURCES :

- Healthy Child Healthy World ([www.healthychild.org](http://www.healthychild.org))
- Environmental Working Group ([www.ewg.org](http://www.ewg.org))
- Campaign for Safe Cosmetics ([www.safecosmetics.org](http://www.safecosmetics.org))
- Safer Chemicals Healthy Families ([www.saferchemicals.org](http://www.saferchemicals.org))

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