From dawn to dusk, people are exposed to chemicals which may have harmful effects on their hormone system (known as endocrine disrupting chemicals, or EDCs). We inhale these substances, ingest them or absorb them through our skin. Even in tiny amounts, EDCs can increase our risk of developing fertility problems, obesity, neurological disorders, or even cancer.

Here is a look at the multiple ways throughout the day when we are exposed to suspected endocrine disruptors.

**ENDOCRINE DISRUPTORS THROUGHOUT YOUR DAY**

**BABY WIPES**

4 in 21 baby wipes tested in France contained parabens, suspected to harm reproductive health.

**Soda**

8 in 14 soda cans contained different types of bisphenols, including bisphenol A (in the inside coating), as tested in Denmark.

**Pushchairs**

In Denmark, 6 out of 11 pushchairs contained chlorinated paraffins, suspected of having endocrine disrupting properties.

**Anti-aging creams**

1 in 3 anti-aging creams contained methyl-, propyl- and/or ethyl-parabens, as tested in Germany.

**Game controllers**

In Denmark, 4 out of 12 game controllers contained phthalates, chlorinated paraffins and/or an endocrine-disrupting flame retardant.

**Chewing gums**

In Denmark, two thirds of children’s chewing gums contained additives linked to impaired development.

**Children’s jackets**

3 in 6 children’s jackets contained PFOA, a substance linked to cancer, as tested in Norway.

**Beauty balms**

50% of beauty balms tested in Italy contained parabens or propylparaben, suspected to contribute for example to developmental problems or in children.

**Whitening toothpastes**

In France, 2 in 16 whitening toothpastes contained triclosan or propylparaben, chemicals linked to endocrine disruption.

**Food samples**

19% of food samples – mostly fruit – tested across Europe contained one or more residues of endocrine disrupting pesticides.

**Take-away food wrappings**

In France, 1 out of 2 plastic wrap contained fluorinated compounds, a group of suspected EDCs.

**Teddy bears**

In Norway, nonylphenol ethoxylate was found in all the 6 teddy bears tested. This substance may contribute to cancer, impaired fertility, type 2 diabetes, obesity and hyperactivity.

Throughout the day, indoor air and dust may contain lead, brominated flame retardants, phthalates and pesticides. These chemicals are likely to have leached from furniture, electronics, carpets, paints, etc.

None of the examined products may present a health hazard on their own. But, taken together with all other products that surround us, they contribute to a worrisome daily total exposure called the ‘chemical cocktail’. The good news is that our members’ tests found that across product groups, EDCs are present in some but not in all products. Neither price nor brand appears to be a decisive factor, which suggests that using safer alternatives is possible and does not cost an arm and a leg. The EU must remove EDCs from our everyday products.

The EU must remove EDCs from our everyday products.
Sources

(1) Report on Interpretation of knowledge on endocrine disrupting substances (EDs) – what is the risk?, Danish Centre on Endocrine Disrupters, 2019.
(2) Exposure of children and unborn children to selected chemical substances, Danish Environmental Protection Agency, 2017.


Pesticide: Forfattergruppen Tank, ‘Test: Pesticide: These problematic chemicals was found in food’, 2017.


To know more about how chemicals work, visit https://chemicalsinourlife.echa.europa.eu
To know more about the different chemicals, visit https://chemicalsinourlife.echa.europa.eu

To know more about BEUC’s work, visit https://www.beuc.eu/safety/chemicals