



Association pour la santé environnementale du Québec
Environmental Health Association of Québec

Information Sheet

PFAS: Protecting Your Health and the Environment

What are PFAS?

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of human-made chemicals that have been widely used in various industries and consumer products. They are known for their resistance to heat, water, and oil, making them useful in applications such as non-stick cookware, waterproof fabrics, firefighting foams, and food packaging.

Why are PFAS a concern?

PFAS are a cause for concern due to their persistence in the environment and potential health risks. They can accumulate in living organisms and have been detected in water, soil, air, and even in the blood of people worldwide. Exposure to PFAS can have adverse effects on human health and wildlife.

Health effects of PFAS:

- Liver, kidney, and thyroid damage
- Immune system impairment
- Nervous system disorders
- Metabolism and bodyweight disruptions
- Reproductive and developmental issues

Environmental effects of PFAS:

- Toxicity to wildlife, affecting immune and nervous systems
- General effects on growth, reproduction, and development
- Bioaccumulation in living organisms

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- Biomagnification in air-breathing organisms, increasing the likelihood of adverse effects

How To Protect Yourself and The Community:

Awareness: Learn about PFAS and their potential sources in everyday products and the environment.

Reduce exposure: Take steps to minimize exposure to PFAS by avoiding products containing PFAS, using alternative non-toxic options, and following safe handling and disposal practices.

Support regulations: Advocate for stronger regulations on the use and release of PFAS by engaging with local and national organizations and authorities to ensure protective measures are in place.

Seek healthcare advice: If you suspect exposure to PFAS or experience health issues related to PFAS exposure, consult with healthcare professionals familiar with environmental health concerns.

Community action: Collaborate with community members, organizations, and government agencies to raise awareness, share information, and promote initiatives that address PFAS contamination and protect public health.

Remember, by staying informed and taking action, you can contribute to a safer and healthier environment for yourself and future generations.

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