

Involuntary Exposures That May Harm Your Health - Ten Things You May Not Know

1. **Fertilizer** you purchase may contain toxic waste. Hazardous and other industrial wastes are disposed in fertilizer, soil amendments and animal feeds, contaminating food, air, and water supplies. Over 100 billion pounds of fertilizer is used annually in the U.S. and approximately half is non-nutrient and potentially toxic.
2. **Agent Orange** - Viet Nam Veterans are now eligible for medical care for 14 diseases associated with Agent Orange. These include: Diabetes Mellitus, Type 2, Parkinson's disease, Chronic B-Cell Leukemias, Hodgkin's disease, Peripheral Neuropathy, Acute and Subacute, Prostate Cancer, Respiratory Cancers, Soft Tissue Sarcomas, Ischemic Heart Disease, and Multiple Myeloma. 2,4,D, an active ingredient in Agent Orange, is still in use in lawn products in the U.S. <http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/shiplist/index.asp>

Coffee – The U.S. has become Viet Nam's second largest coffee importer with a total turnover of \$257 million in 2009. Since 2007, Congress has allocated a total of \$6 million to help address **Agent Orange** issues there.

3. **Gas and Oil Well Contamination** – Is there an “orphan well” or active gas and oil well in your neighborhood that may be affecting your health? An Ohio gas and oil well aerial map at www.ohiodnr.gov shows where these wells are, and whether they are active or plugged.
4. **Mercury** – Is in spiral shaped light bulbs, many vaccines, some prescription ear medications (labeled as thimerosal), and shoes that glow in the dark (batteries contain mercury). Read product labels and call manufacturers before purchasing to learn if mercury is in the products. Dispose of mercury properly.
5. **Lead** – California law requires disclosure on labels when products contain ingredients known to cause cancer – if you see this warning, lead may be in the product. Old and new plumbing fixtures may have lead in them.
6. **Triclosan** - Your shoes and many other products, including sanitizing hand wipes, may contain triclosan, a disinfectant which can be absorbed into your bloodstream. All disinfectants are pesticides and must be registered with the U.S. EPA Pesticide Division. Pesticides may not be sufficiently selective about what they kill.
7. **Genetically Modified Food** – Educate yourself about the reasons other countries have banned it. At the least, these foods need to be labeled so the consumer can make a choice of whether or not to eat them.
8. **Pharmaceuticals** - Most physicians are not trained to know if a pharmaceutical is “right for you”. To “Just Ask Your Doctor” can be dangerous. Pharmaceutical manufacturers train physicians to use their products, some of which are addictive, and do not warn about the dangers of reactions to the additives including dyes, preservatives, toxic metals (including aluminum and mercury), synergistic effects, and much more. Research a prescription's active and inactive ingredients before you take it. Keep records of any past drug reactions you've had. Then talk to your pharmacist and do what you think is right for you.

Pharmaceuticals cannot be completely filtered out of our drinking water. Water may contain pharmaceutical waste including estrogens, antibiotics, and pain medication ingredients.

9. **Bisphenol A (BPA)** - Many grocery, gas, and other store receipts contain BPA. It is also used in the linings of cans and many plastics. If you get a funny chemical taste in your mouth, a skin rash, a red face, or other unusual symptoms when handling products treated with BPA you are most likely experiencing a chemical reaction. To be safe, don't microwave any plastic (use glass), store food in it, drink from it, or wash it in a dishwasher.
10. Warning: **Perfume-free** products may contain fragrances. Check the back label for “masking fragrance.”

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