



# PFAS Exposure and Your Health

Are you concerned about your health because you may have been exposed to high amounts of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)? This fact sheet answers some of the questions you may have.

## How can exposure to high amounts of PFAS affect my health?



Research is on-going to understand the effects PFAS might have on health. Having PFAS exposure or PFAS in your body does not mean you will necessarily have health problems now or in the future. Most people in health studies do not have health effects, even when exposed to high amounts of PFAS. Some health studies have found health effects linked to some PFAS such as:

- Decreased chance of a woman getting pregnant
- Increased chance of high blood pressure in pregnant women
- Increased chance of thyroid disease
- Changed immune response
- Increased cholesterol levels
- Increased chance of cancer, especially kidney and testicular cancers



Animal studies have been done to understand what might happen in people. Some animals given high amounts of PFOA and PFOS (two types of PFAS), showed:

- Birth defects, slow growth, and newborn pup deaths
- Harm to the liver
- Changed immune response

## What should I do if I have health concerns related to PFAS exposure?

Talk to your doctor about your health concerns. It is always good to have regular check-ups for possible health problems.

Although some PFAS are no longer used, almost everyone has been exposed to PFAS. Common ways people are exposed include food or food packaging and household products such as carpet treatments and upholstery.



## Should I have my blood tested for PFAS?

PFAS blood test results can only tell you the amount of PFAS in your blood at the time of the test. The test will not tell you if PFAS has affected your health or if it will in the future.

PFAS blood testing is not a routine test. If you have been exposed to high amounts of PFAS and want or need to know the amount of PFAS in your blood, talk to your doctor.

## I am pregnant. How will my PFAS exposure affect my pregnancy?

Exposure to PFAS in drinking water may be associated with high blood pressure in pregnancy. Checking a woman's blood pressure is common during prenatal checkups. If you are concerned about your exposure to PFAS, it is important that you go to all your prenatal visits and discuss any health concerns with the doctor.

## Can I breastfeed my baby if I have been exposed to PFAS?

PFAS can be passed to your baby through breast milk. Research on PFAS in breast milk is on-going. Breastfeeding is linked to many benefits for babies and nursing mothers. Current research shows that the health benefits of breastfeeding outweigh health risks from PFAS, so moms are encouraged to breastfeed. Parents should talk to their doctors if they have concerns about breastfeeding and PFAS.

## For more information about PFAS:

Visit [www.michigan.gov/pfasresponse](http://www.michigan.gov/pfasresponse)

Visit [www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfas)

Call MDHHS at 1-800-648-6942

