

# PFAS Exposure and Your Health

## How can exposure to high amounts of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) affect my health?



Research is on-going to understand the effects PFAS might have on health. **Being exposed to PFAS or having PFAS in your body does not mean you will have health problems now or in the future.**

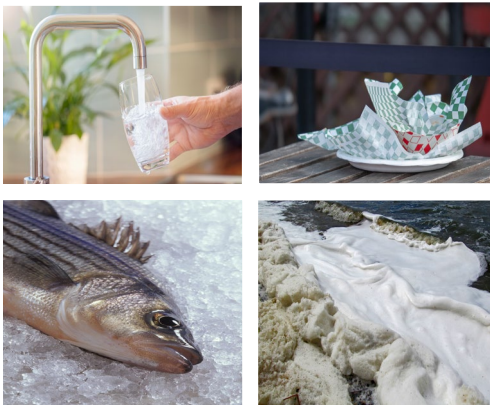
Some studies have shown that certain PFAS may increase the risk of health effects, such as:

- High blood pressure or pre-eclampsia in pregnant people.
- Thyroid disease.
- Decreased immune system response to vaccines in children.
- Reduced fertility.
- Liver damage.
- High cholesterol, especially total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol.
- Small decreases in infant birth weight.
- Developing certain types of cancer, in particular kidney and testicular cancer.

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

**Talk to your doctor about your health concerns.** It is always good to have regular check-ups for possible health problems. If you feel stress regarding potential PFAS exposure, read the [Coping with Stress from Environmental Contamination fact sheet](https://eh.michigan.gov/Stress) (URL: Eh.Michigan.gov/Stress).

## How can I be exposed to PFAS?



Almost everyone has been exposed to PFAS. The most common way people are exposed to PFAS is by swallowing them. You can swallow PFAS when you drink water, swallow foam or eat food with PFAS in them, such as eating fish from PFAS-contaminated water.

PFAS can also be found in some consumer products\* that have the following functions:

- Waterproof (such as shoes and coats).
- Stain-resistant (such as carpet and textiles).
- Non-stick (such as cookware).
- Oil or grease-proof (such as fast food-packaging and food-wrappers).

\*Please note that manufacturers are not typically required to identify PFAS in their products.

For more information about sources of PFAS exposure, read our [PFAS Sources and Tips to Reduce Exposure fact sheet](https://eh.michigan.gov/SourcesofPFAS) (URL: Eh.Michigan.gov/SourcesofPFAS).

## Should I have my blood tested for PFAS?



**Results from a blood test for PFAS can only tell you the amount of PFAS in your blood at the time of the test.**

- A blood test for PFAS will not identify a current or future health problem or provide information on treatment.
- Health insurance policies may not cover blood tests for PFAS.
- If you have been exposed to high amounts of PFAS and want to know the amount of PFAS in your blood, talk to your health care provider about the limitations, risks and benefits of testing.

For more information about blood testing for PFAS, read our [Blood Testing for PFAS fact sheet](#) (URL: [Eh.Michigan.gov/PFASBloodTest](http://Eh.Michigan.gov/PFASBloodTest)).

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



Exposure to high amounts of certain PFAS may be associated with high blood pressure in pregnancy and small decreases in infant birth weights. If you are concerned about your blood pressure, speak with your doctor and attend all of your prenatal checkups.

If you are concerned about your exposure to PFAS, it is important to go to all your prenatal visits and discuss any health concerns with your doctor.

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



Currently, experts believe that **the health benefits of breastfeeding outweigh health risks from PFAS, so most parents are encouraged to breastfeed.** Parents should talk to their doctors if they have concerns about breastfeeding and PFAS.

PFAS can be passed to your baby through breast milk or through the water used to make formula. Research on PFAS in breast milk is on-going. However, breastfeeding is linked to many benefits for babies and nursing parents and is shown to be the best source of nutrition for most infants.

## For more information about PFAS:

- Call the MDHHS Environmental Health hotline at 800-648-6942.
- Visit [ATSDR.cdc.gov/PFAS](https://www.ATSDR.cdc.gov/PFAS).
- Visit [Michigan.gov/PFASResponse](https://Michigan.gov/PFASResponse).