

WHAT ARE PHTHALATES?

Phthalates (pronounced THAL-ates) are chemicals used to soften vinyl products. They are also used in consumer products to make the scent last longer or mask the scent.

WHERE ARE THEY FOUND?

- Soft toys like rubber ducks
- Perfumes
- Personal care products like shampoos and lotions
- Vinyl flooring, tablecloths and shower curtains
- Air fresheners and candles
- Indoor air
- House dust (from the wear and tear of consumer products)

THE GREATEST CHANCE FOR PHTHALATE EXPOSURE HAPPENS WHEN A CHILD SUCKS OR CHEWS ON A TOY.

WHY ARE CHILDREN MOST AT RISK?

- Unborn babies can be exposed to phthalates during many important stages of development because the chemicals can cross the placenta.
- Small children eat, drink and breathe more than adults. They crawl and put objects in their mouths.
- Chemicals, like phthalates, may interfere with important hormone changes that teenagers experience.



For toy safety information visit:

TBDHU.COM/HBHF

healthyenvironmentforkids.ca

healthycanadians.gc.ca



Phthalates & Your Child's Health



PHTHALATES IN CANADA

Since 1998, some limits have been placed on three phthalates found in teething, soothers and baby rattles.

Health Canada's new phthalates regulations (June 2011) will limit the amount of six different phthalates in child care items including teething or soothers for use by children under 4 years old, and all toys intended for children under 14 years of age.

BE AWARE:

Phthalates can be found in many other products such as vinyl table cloths and shower curtains. These types of products are not meant for children and are not regulated under the new 2011 phthalates regulation.

PHTHALATES AND YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH

- Phthalates are hormone disruptors.
- Phthalates can enter the body through the mouth especially if a child sucks or chews on a toy.
- Research suggests exposure to phthalates may be linked to health problems like asthma, cancer and birth defects.

TIPS: WHAT YOU CAN DO?

- The regulation covers NEW toys, but you probably have OLD toys at home as well.
- With old toys, try to limit or stop children from putting them in their mouths.
- Throw away damaged or scratched toys.
- To recognize PVC products, first look for the recycling symbol. If "V," "PVC" or "3" is written inside or around the symbol, the product is made of PVC.
- Smell the toy. If it has a strong odor, this usually means many chemicals may have been used to make the toy.
- Look for "phthalate free" on the product or packaging.
- Call the company's phone number (usually listed on product packaging) if no other information is available.



- Try not to buy things with phthalates in them. If you do, let them air-out before bringing them in the house.
- Limit your use of scented products like body lotions and other personal care products.
- Avoid using candles and air fresheners in your home.
- Dust with a damp cloth.