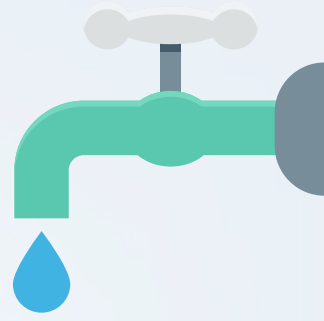


# PFAS FAQs

Learn more about per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances & how to stay safe from possible contamination.



## GENERAL INFORMATION



### Q: What are PFAS & where do they come from?

**A:** Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are human-made chemicals that are found in thousands of consumer products and industrial processes. These "**forever chemicals**" have recently been found in many water sources across the United States and world.

#### Some known sources of PFAS include:

- non-stick cookware (Teflon)
- grease-resistant packaging (popcorn bags)
- stain-resistant & water-repellent clothing
- fire-fighting foam
- water-proof cosmetics



### Q: How can I tell if something has PFAS in it?

**A:** It can be difficult to determine whether products have PFAS in them from looking at them. While you can check the labels on clothing and cosmetics, **the bead test** is a helpful tool to determine if your food packaging contains these forever chemicals.

#### The Bead Test

- Place a drop of olive oil on the surface of any food packaging that you want to test (*take-out containers, pizza boxes, popcorn bags*).
  - If the olive oil forms a **perfect bead**, there may be PFAS in the material.
  - If the olive oil **spreads**, then it is most likely not PFAS.



### Q: What are the current guidelines for PFAS contamination?

**A:** In **June 2022**, the EPA released an updated lifetime drinking water health advisory for PFOA and PFOS (**two of the most common types of PFAS**) at an almost **non-detectable level**.

- These guidelines serve as a recommendations for state limits and are not legal regulations. For more information about your state's PFAS laws, consult with your state or local health department.

# HEALTH INFORMATION



## Q: How can PFAS affect child & maternal health?

**A:** Scientists have questions about the health effects of PFAS, and research continues.

- ***During pregnancy, PFAS may:***
  - Increase blood pressure or the risk of pre-eclampsia
  - Reduce growth and development of the child with potential unknown, long-term health effects
- ***In infants and children, PFAS may:***
  - Disrupt immune system development
  - Cause issues with growth and metabolism



## Q: How can I reduce exposure?

**A:** Some steps you can take to reduce exposure include:

- Use bottled water
  - ***NOTE: Boiling water does not remove PFAS contamination.***
- Stop using microwaveable popcorn bags.
- Consider replacing non-stick “Teflon” dish ware with ***iron or stainless steel***. Dispose of old, damaged, or flaking non-stick cookware. Do not clean non-stick cookware in the dishwasher.
- Discard old, frayed, stain-resistant carpeting and upholstery.



## Q: Should I breastfeed my baby?

**A:** Breastfeeding is highly recommended for infants because of the many benefits to the infant and mother. Although PFAS can be passed to an infant through a mother's breast milk, the advantages of breastfeeding continue to outweigh the potential risks in nearly every case .



## Q: Can I use PFAS-contaminated water to cook, clean, or bathe?

**A:** It is ok to use drinking water from public water systems for most household tasks such as bathing, cooking, cleaning, and laundry. If using a humidifier, it is recommended to use bottled water instead.



## Q: Is there a medication or treatment that can reduce PFAS levels in my body?

**A:** There is ***no current treatment*** to remove PFAS from the body; this means that preventing and/or reducing future exposures is the most important step you can take to protect yourself and your family.

# TESTING INFORMATION



## Q: Should I get my water tested for PFAS?

**A:** If you get your water from public water systems, monitoring should be in place to screen for environmental hazards, including PFAS. If you use well water that is located near a suspected or probable source of PFAS, you may consider testing.



## Q: How can I test my private well for PFAS?

**A:** Check with your local and state public health authorities for recommended laboratory testing for PFAS in your community. Most often, these tests are costly, however, there may be programs and assistances that you can apply for through your state and local authorities to lower costs.



## Q: Should I get my blood tested for PFAS?

**A:** If you are interested in getting your blood tested for PFAS, consult with your primary health care professional and engage in shared decision making based on your individual exposure to PFAS.

## MORE INFORMATION

Learn more about PFAS recommendations throughout your community, state, and nationwide by looking through these resources below.

### 1 LOCAL & STATE

Consult with your **local town or city public health authorities** for public water PFAS levels and more. Your **state's public health department** is also a valuable resource for PFAS recommendations.

[Connecticut](#) - [Rhode Island](#) - [Massachusetts](#) - [Vermont](#) - [New Hampshire](#) - [Maine](#)

### 2 REGIONAL

Consult with your **regional public health units**, such as the Region 1 PEHSU to find recommendations for states in the New England region.

- [Region 1: New England Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit \(PEHSU\)](#)

### 3 NATIONAL

- [Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unity \(PEHSU\)](#)
- [Agency for Toxic Substances & Disease Registry \(ATSDR\)](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention \(CDC\)](#)
- [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)](#)
- [Food & Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#)
- [National Academies of Science, Engineering, & Medicine \(NASEM\)](#)

This document was supported by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and funded (in part) by a cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (CDC/ATSDR). The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) supports the PEHSUs by providing partial funding to CDC/ATSDR through an Inter-Agency Agreement. The findings and conclusions presented have not been formally disseminated by CDC/ATSDR or EPA and should not be construed to represent any agency determination or policy. Use of trade names that may be mentioned is for identification only and does not imply endorsement by the CDC/ATSDR or EPA.



Region 1: New England  
**PEHSU**  
Pediatric Environmental Health  
Specialty Unit

Last updated: 8/2022