

FDA BPA decision is a step forward, but more needs to happen, says MU expert

January 19 2010

The FDA shifted its stance on bisphenol A (BPA) and said that exposure to the chemical is of "some concern" for infants and children.

Previously, the agency's stance was the chemical posed no risk to humans; this stance was consistent with the chemical industry's stance. Today, FDA officials declared that more research was needed and suggested reasonable steps to reduce exposure to BPA.

Frederick vom Saal, a University of Missouri scientist, says that this stance is a step forward but more steps need to be taken. Since 1997, research from vom Saal and other MU colleagues have shown adverse health effects of BPA at exposure levels below those currently considered safe by the FDA. Vom Saal has received more than \$1 million of the \$30 million that government agencies, including the NIH, have committed in the next 18 to 25 months to study the [health risks](#) of BPA exposure.

"The FDA formally acknowledging concern about BPA and working with NIH to incorporate research from outside of the chemical industry is a huge step forward," said vom Saal, who is a Curator's professor of biological sciences in MU's College of Arts and Science. "The FDA position presented today is consistent with the position that the National Toxicology Program made two years ago. Since then, considerable published research reaffirmed the health dangers of BPA. The FDA says they want to respond more quickly. Now, we will see if they are really able to respond to the huge amount of new science showing dangers not recognized two years ago. They should move quickly to restrict the use

of by BPA in products used by adults as well as infants."

BPA is a one of the world's highest production-volume chemicals and has been used for 40 years to make hard plastic items, such as, drinking glasses, [baby bottles](#), food-storage containers, the lining of food and beverage containers, and dental sealants. Previous studies have shown [adverse health effects](#) of BPA on the brain and [reproductive system](#), as well as metabolic diseases in laboratory animals.

"The Japanese industry voluntarily removed BPA from can linings 10 years ago and thus, were able to reduce exposure to BPA by 50 percent," vom Saal said. "Last year, Congress asked companies in the United States to take similar actions; however, companies have made no move toward compliance. A huge problem facing the FDA is that it does not have the regulatory authority to even determine what products contain BPA, and Congress will have to pass new laws giving the FDA the authority it needs to regulate chemicals such as [BPA](#)."

Provided by University of Missouri-Columbia

Citation: FDA BPA decision is a step forward, but more needs to happen, says MU expert (2010, January 19) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2010-01-fda-bpa-decision-mu-expert.html>

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