

1 in 5 children have levels of 'forever chemicals' above safety limits, finds study

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Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of synthetic chemicals found in everyday consumer products, including clothes, cosmetics, paint and non-stick kitchenware. Due to their high resistance

to degradation, several PFAS accumulate in nature and in humans. Contaminated food and drinking water are the main sources of PFAS exposure in humans.

Several [negative health effects](#) have been associated with PFAS exposure, including reduced vaccine response in children, reduced birth weight, and certain types of cancers. Reduced [vaccine response](#) in children was the basis for the safety limit set by the European Food and Safety Authority (EFSA) in 2020. Several European countries are now working together to restrict the production and use of all PFAS in Europe.

As part of "the Bergen Growth Study 2" from 2016, researchers at the University of Bergen collected blood samples from children aged 6-16 years for PFAS analyzes. Four PFAS were present in all children. In addition, 22% of the children had PFAS levels above the safety limits set by EFSA, indicating a potential risk of negative health effects. This is in line with findings in other European and Norwegian studies. The findings are published in the *International Journal of Hygiene and Environmental Health*.

More information: Ingvild Halsør Forthun et al, Levels of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in Norwegian children stratified by age and sex—Data from the Bergen Growth Study 2, *International Journal of Hygiene and Environmental Health* (2023). [DOI: 10.1016/j.ijheh.2023.114199](#)

Provided by University of Bergen

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