

Exposure to BPA chemical far less than thought: EU watchdog

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The European Union's food safety watchdog said Thursday that human exposure to bisphenol A (BPA), a chemical that has triggered health fears and a ban on baby feeding bottles, is far lower than thought.

Preliminary investigations have led to "a considerable refinement of exposure estimates compared to 2006," the year of its last major study into BPA, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) announced.

The new estimates show people are exposed to "less than one percent of the current Tolerable Daily Intake (TDI) for BPA (0.05 milligrams/kg bw/day) established by EFSA in 2006," a statement said.

An EFSA spokesman cautioned, though, that it was too early to draw judgement on risk.

"It doesn't follow that because the exposure is less, the risk is also lower—there is no causal link," the spokesman said.

Further work into risk will be published early in 2014.

BPA is a common component of plastic bottles and the linings of food cans.

But some studies have found it disrupts hormones, and tests on laboratory animals have linked it to brain and nervous system problems, reproductive disorders and obesity.

It has been banned for use in [baby bottles](#) in a number of economies, including the European Union, United States and Canada.

The EFSA scientists found dietary exposure to BPA to be the highest among children aged three to 10, with canned food and non-canned meat and meat products identified as major contributors for all age groups.

The scientific advisory panel is now seeking feedback before deciding whether the risk levels have also changed.

If that turns out to be the case, the baby-bottle ban could theoretically be reversed.

In March 2012, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) rejected an appeal by environmental groups to ban BPA, saying there was no scientific evidence of harm to humans.

Actual BPA exposure to infants was 84-92 percent less than previously estimated, the US agency said.

It said, though, that this was not the final word on the issue, and voiced support for further research on safety.

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