Dodging Endocrine Disruptors
Want to reduce your exposure? Here are some tips.

- Check the recycling number on the bottom of plastic bottles and containers.
  Avoid:
  - No. 3—Vinyl or Polyvinyl chloride (PVC). It can contain phthalates.
  - No. 6—Polystyrene foam. (Styrofoam is one popular brand.) It contains styrene, a chemical that the International Agency for Research on Cancer calls a possible human carcinogen.
  - No. 7—Other. It’s mostly polycarbonate, which contains BPA.

- If it’s convenient, wash plastic containers by hand, to avoid the harsh detergents and high heat of the dishwasher. If you run them through the dishwasher, put them on the top shelf.

- Use fewer canned foods. The insides of most metal cans are coated with an epoxy resin that contains BPA. The resins used in most “BPA-free” cans may be no safer.

- When possible, microwave in glass or ceramic. If you microwave in plastic, try to avoid using polycarbonate (recycling number 7). And cover the food with a paper towel or a plate, not cling wrap.

- If you keep food in plastic, you’re better off with:
  - Try not to put very hot liquids or foods into plastic containers.
  - Toss scratched plastic containers. They may be more likely to leach harmful chemicals.
  - Avoid thermal paper. Thermal printers use heat instead of ink. The paper has a slick, slightly shiny coating that contains BPA. So handle credit card and ATM receipts as little as possible.

Sources: National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, Environmental Working Group.

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