



Reporting  
Mary Ann Childers

## New Report Says Most Of Us Have Ingested Toxins

Through Various Sources Including Costmetics And Water Bottles,  
Toxic Chemicals Are Entering Our Bodies

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CHICAGO (CBS)—Toxic toys have had the headlines lately, But the fact is, we're exposed to chemicals in hundreds of things we use in our homes, school and workplaces. As CBS 2 Medical Editor Mary Ann Childers reports, we might not put them in our mouths, but they're still getting inside us.

Results are in from the first-ever multi-state project to test average Americans for toxic chemical contamination from everyday products, and they aren't good. "All 35 participants had at least seven of the 20 different chemicals we tested for," said Max Muller of Environment Illinois.



For the "Is It In Us?" report, five of the test volunteers are from Illinois. Among them are Elaine Nekritz, state representative from Northbrook; Stephanie Felten, a wife and mother from Aurora; and Dorian Breuer, an Internet technology specialist from Pilsen.

"I do try and live a healthy lifestyle, so I thought for sure I would have maybe no traces of some of these chemicals in my body," Breuer said.

*Environment Illinois announced the startling findings of their study, "Is It In Us?", which found that most of us ingest a host of toxic chemicals in our daily lives.*  
CBS

But he did. Breuer and the rest of the volunteers tested positive for Phthalates, which are used in soft vinyl products, cosmetics and air fresheners; bisphenol-a, used in plastic water and baby bottles, and food can linings; and the flame retardants PBDEs found in furniture, textiles, and electronics, including your computer. These chemicals are linked to birth defects, cancer, learning disabilities, infertility and more.

"Any of these chemicals we should not have in our bodies if you take a preventive approach to these matters," said Peter Orris, M.D., of the UIC School of Public Health. Even if you try to avoid certain products, it's difficult to escape exposure because they're such a part of our daily lives.

"It's like somebody's allowed to take a chance with my child's health and I have no control over it," Felten said.

The Environment Illinois report calls for a comprehensive federal policy that would protect people from involuntary toxic exposure, in part by phasing out harmful chemicals, and make the information about toxicity easily available. Read the full report [here](#).

Illinois is one of only 11 states to ban some types of flame retardants.

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