**Forever Chemicals**

The U.S. Public Interest Research Group, a nonprofit known as U.S. PIRG, warns that: “PFAS, nicknamed *forever chemicals* due to the way they stick around in our bodies and our environment,are present in nearly half of all tap water in the United States, and they're a hazard to our health.1 The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently set limits on six forever chemicals present in tap water across the country.2

“PFAS, or per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, are a class of 15,000 synthetic chemicals used to make products waterproof as well as heat or stain resistant.3 PFAS are used in consumer products and they don't break down in the environment. PFAS have been found in a number of food products and in the blood and urine of humans around the globe.4

“The EPA says PFAS exposure, even in small amounts, is linked to serious health problems over time, including cancer, thyroid disruption and reduced vaccine response.

“The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences found that some PFAS ‘altered metabolism and body weight regulation,’ put children at an increased risk for obesity, increased the risk of some cancers, and reduced the ability of the immune system to ward off illnesses.5

“The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says evidence suggests i exposure to some PFAS had associations with increased cholesterol levels, changes in liver function, decreased infant birth weight, pregnancy-induced hypertension, as well as kidney and testicular cancer.

To reduce your exposure:

* Use a water filter in your home that reduces PFAS—and be aware that bottled water isn't necessarily PFAS-free.
* Be thoughtful about products that market themselves as waterproof, stain proof or fire-resistant including non-stick pans, rugs and carpets, and outdoor gear.
* Consider using glass instead of plastic containers, and research labels for non-toxic products that may signify lower PFAS use.

US PIRG is working to convince state and national leaders to pass laws phasing out PFAS completely to protect public health from these lifelong, toxic chemicals. PIRG is also working to hold the chemical industry responsible for the harm it's caused to our health and environment.

You can donate to PIRG [here](https://pirg.org/take-action/donate-today-to-help-phase-out-toxic-forever-chemicals/).

1. "[Tap water study detects PFAS 'forever chemicals' across the US](http://pin.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=n3tipCJN%2F0uSZzTzvCh9t57zXm8lIr%2Fs)," U.S. Geological Survey, July 5, 2023.   
2. "[STATEMENT: EPA restricts toxic 'forever chemicals' in drinking water](http://pin.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=NniC2ftahH60erG9BTuzZJ7zXm8lIr%2Fs)," PIRG, April 11, 2024.   
3. [Per- and Polyfluorinated Substances (PFAS) Factsheet](http://pin.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=fN43NUQe0Blvjy2XkPbUgJ7zXm8lIr%2Fs)," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, May 2, 2022.   
4. "[PFAS Explained](http://pin.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=C5KTwQfxDB%2BE2CxNeJ6eL57zXm8lIr%2Fs)," Environmental Protection Agency, last updated October 25, 2023.   
5. "[Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)](http://pin.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=%2BhC%2FDD%2B%2B9K9guRNbmcgyB57zXm8lIr%2Fs)," National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, April 2, 2024.