

# 12 MONTHS TO A HEALTHIER YOU

## JUNE TOPIC: FOOD CONTAMINATED WITH PLASTIC



# A note from me...

## Food Contaminated with Plastic



As consumers we are so trained to accept our food in plastic without giving it a second thought. To go food in plastic...you bet, your favorite condiment in a plastic squeeze bottle...absolutely, the newest squeezable sour cream and mayo tubes... finally, so convenient!

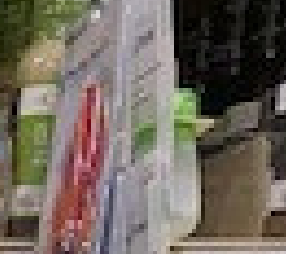
Unfortunately, no one ever considers the packaging as a form of toxicant exposure, but it is...and it's a big one!

This month is devoted to getting the plastic out of your food and if it seems like an impossibility, since EVERYTHING is smothered in plastic, I'm here to tell you it IS possible to clean up your food with a few tweaks and mindset shifts.

My goal this month, is for you to understand exactly how the plastic from packaging, utensils, storage containers, wraps and films ultimately gets into your food, which is known as migration.

Once you know and understand the migration process you'll be on your way to reducing your plastic consumption.

Let's get started!!



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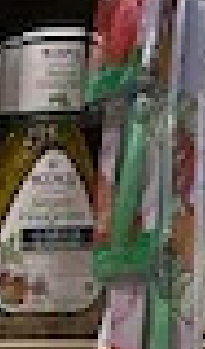
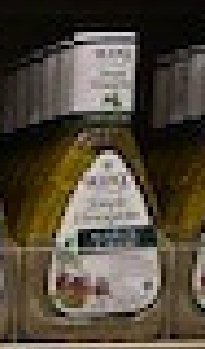
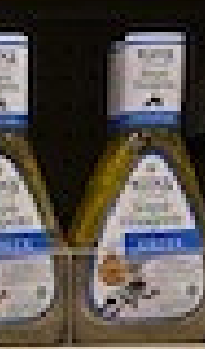
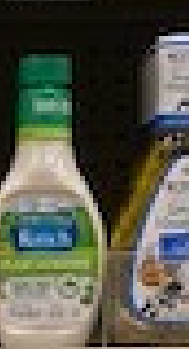
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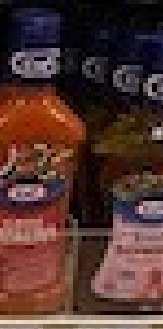
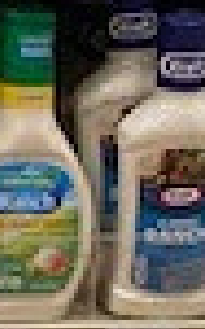
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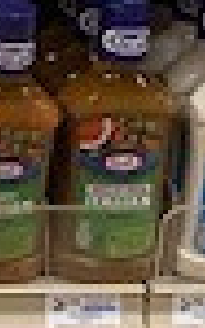
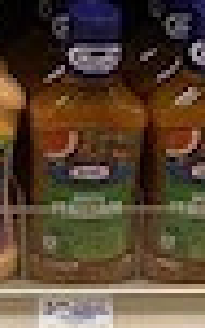
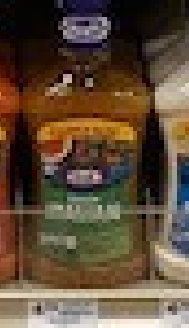
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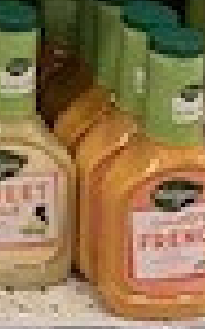
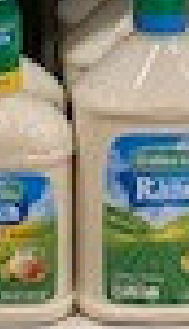
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# Your mission, if you choose to accept: Take the steps necessary to stop consuming food contaminated with endocrine disrupting plastic.

Phthalates are a class of chemicals that are added to plastics to make them more flexible, durable and to add color. This type of plastic is known as Polyethylene Terephthalate or PET/PETE and is categorized as #1 plastic.

They are used in a wide range of consumer products, including food packaging, toys, medical devices, and personal care products.

Phthalates are added to plastics during the manufacturing process as a plasticizer. However, phthalates are not chemically bound to the plastics they are added to, which means they can easily migrate out of the plastic and into the food.

Bisphenols are also endocrine disruptors that make up another class of chemicals that are added to plastics to make them stronger, more durable, and resistant to heat and sunlight. The most well-known bisphenol is bisphenol A (BPA), but recently other bisphenols are being used to replace BPA such as BPS and BPF.

Bisphenols are added to plastics during the manufacturing process as a monomer, which is a small molecule that can link together with other monomers to form a polymer. In the case of bisphenols, the monomers can be combined with other chemicals to create polycarbonate plastics and epoxy resins. Because of the instability, migration easily occurs.

Polycarbonate plastics are used in a wide range of consumer products, including water bottles, food storage containers, and eyeglass lenses. Epoxy resins are used as coatings for food and beverage cans and as adhesives for electronics and other products.

## **During Packaging**

Common plastics used for food packaging can easily migrate into the food during the packaging process, with heat being a major factor. Often, food products are heated before they are packaged, which causes the unstable plasticizers to migrate into the food.

For instance, peanut butter is typically heated prior to filling the plastic jars, this heat can cause plasticizers to migrate into the peanut butter, resulting in the ingestion of endocrine disrupting plasticizers along with the peanut butter.

## **Other Factors of Migration**

The amount of migration can depend on a number of factors, including the temperature of the food, the acidity of the product, and the storage time.

For example, acidic condiments like vinegar and tomato-based sauces can cause higher levels of migration than less acidic condiments like mayonnaise or honey. Peanut butter is another example of constant migration, the peanut oil is so strong it attracts the plastic to constantly migrate (plastic is made of petroleum which is an oil, and oils attract to each other).

Bottled products are often subject to temperature variations during storage and shipping. Cases of products may be kept in warehouses without temperature controls, experiencing cold temperatures in the winter and hot temperatures in the summer. During transportation, the cases may be stored in the back of a truck, where temperatures can become very hot, particularly in warm weather.

An example would be plastic bottled water, soft drinks, etc, the plastic migrates into the drinks during storage and transportation.

## **Other Ways Plastic gets into your food**

Plastic kitchen utensils will migrate into hot foods as you use them during cooking. If you look at old plastic utensils you can see them breakdown and melt with years of use.

Plastic food storage containers migrate into foods during storage and heating. For example, using plastics in the microwave to heat up foods, will break it down allowing for migration into your food at that time as well as putting hot food into a plastic container.



Plastic food containers can begin to degrade after use, as evidenced by lines and areas of thinning plastic. This is a clear indication that the containers should be recycled and no longer used for storing food.

Plastic cling wraps also migrate when used on hot foods.

I hope you're seeing a trend. Heated food causes the plastic to migrate.

Also, the length of time that the item is stored in plastic will determine how much migration will occur.

## **How to Keep Plastic Out of Your Food**

Now that you know how plastic is migrating into the food that you eat, you'll have a better understanding of how to prevent it. Listed below are important shifts to make:

- Don't just grab products off the shelf subconsciously, when grocery shopping. Seek out the products sold in glass. I know sometimes this is not possible, you may need to go to other stores that sell brands sold in glass.
- Switch your plastic cooking utensils to wood, bamboo, stainless steel or platinum silicon.
- Replace all of your plastic food storage containers with glass or stainless steel, it's okay if the lid is plastic as long as your food isn't touching it. The initial investment might seem high, but the containers will last you decades.
- Switch to other options over using plastic films and zip bags. Check out my list.
- If you have plastic plates, only put cold food on them, and never put them in the microwave.
- It's okay to freeze in plastic bags IF the food is cold when added to the bag, then put right into the freezer. Thaw completely, never put the bag in the microwave.
- Purchasing water or sodas in bottles at a convenience store might be convenient, but there is so much plastic in those drinks plus they are way over priced, and add to our landfill problem. Plan ahead and Switch to reusable glass or stainless steel water bottles and coffee cups.

Making these changes will take some mindset shifts, our society has made plastics so easy and prolific. Unfortunately, if you look at how many times you are exposing your body to plastic in a given day, everyday...it adds up and is significant.





## Some Brands to Make it Easy

Start moving your kitchen away from plastic and into more stable materials such as wood, stainless steel and silicone.

When purchasing silicone, make sure to look for platinum silicone, many manufacturers will add plastic to their silicone and still say its 100% silicone. Same is true for bamboo, many companies will add plastic to bamboo bowls and plates to make them more user friendly. Sometimes you need to investigate a brand further, and even reach out to customer service to clear up any questions.

To make things super easy, the brands listed below are ALL clean brands that I use and recommend to my clients:

- Spurtles are wooden utensils with amazing shapes that make them perfect for cooking and replacing plastic spatulas. PLUS its super fun to say (like turtles but with an sp).
- Walfos silicone utensils use 100% platinum silicone and look great.
- Zip Top makes silicone storage containers, easy to use and clean. I've had my original Zip Top containers for several years and they look brand new.
- Stasher Bags is another replacement for plastic food containers and storage bags. They are a little more difficult to fill (unless you get the stand up bags), but they have a gallon size perfect for freezing soups, stews, etc. I've had my Stasher Bags for 6+ years and they're still in perfect condition.
- Jace Box are great stainless steel food storage containers. I like them for storing veggies and leftover. They aren't as heavy as glass containers.
- Snapwear Pyrex are glass food storage containers perfect for all of your food storage needs. They have a set that is safe in the microwave, dishwasher and last for years. I've had my original set since 2003. Stay clear of glass containers with designs painted on the outside, most likely they were made abroad where leaded paints are still being used...yes on products sold in the US.
- Bee's Wrap is a nontoxic alternative to plastic wrap.
- Vejibag is great alternative to storing your veggies in plastic. These bags keep your veggies fresh for an amazingly long time.

# In conclusion...

You may think that plastic food packaging is benign, but the data shows a different story. Every day exposures to endocrine disruptors contribute to these health epidemics: lower IQ, hyperactivity/ADHD, asthma, obesity, early puberty, breast cancer, thyroid disorders, low birth weight, diabetes, infertility, and prostate cancer and more.

It will never be possible to avoid all plastic exposure, but by minimizing it as much as possible, particularly in your home, you can make significant strides towards better health. While you may not notice an immediate difference, your body will have the opportunity to heal each day, leading to gradual improvements in your overall well-being.

If you're interested in further information, below are a few resources and articles on endocrine disruptors.

Here is a blog post I wrote that dives deeper into phthalates, [you can read it here](#).

Resources: [Infographic](#), Health and Environmental Alliance

[BPA](#), Breast Cancer Prevention Partners

[Phthalates](#), Breast Cancer Prevention Partners

[Low Tox life Podcast #56](#)

Wow, this month is packed with information, but I know you're up for the challenge. You don't have to make all the changes at once. Start small by focusing on one area at a time and gradually work your way up. For instance, you could begin by switching to glass containers for items such as peanut butter and mustard during your next grocery trip,

Remember, awareness is everything! Now you know what to look for so you can start to make informed decisions about your purchases and exposures!

Sending big hugs!!!

xoxo,

Annette

[The Sage Hearth](#)