

Press Release

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Breast cancer charity lays down gauntlet to Government in National Cancer Prevention Week

New report highlights damning evidence on chemical used in food and drinks packaging

London: A new report, published today by Breast Cancer UK, reveals that contrary to claims by the Government, there is a wealth of peer reviewed, scientific evidence that raises serious concerns over the safety of our exposure to Bisphenol A (BPA), a chemical that is known to disrupt our hormones and is linked to breast cancer.

'Body of Evidence: An Overview of the Low Dose effects of Bisphenol A in relation to breast cancer', (1) draws together some of the latest science on BPA and highlights just how much evidence there is that the chemical affects the structure and development of the mammary gland, increases breast density, and disrupts DNA. All of these factors are known to increase the risk of developing breast cancer.

Dr. Philippa Darbre, a Senior Lecturer in Oncology at the University of Reading, said: "This review demonstrates that addressing our exposure to BPA would be a springboard for reducing the chemical burdens of the human breast. Breast cancer rates are escalating and there is a mountain of solid, scientific evidence that warns us that the use of oestrogenic chemicals, like BPA, in our everyday products could be one reason why."

The health impacts of exposure to BPA have been disputed for many years. However, over the past decade, significantly more data has been published which provides compelling evidence that BPA has a range of adverse health effects.

In spite of this, the Government and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) continue to cite a few, very limited, scientific studies to support their opinion that BPA is safe to use in food and drinks packaging. This is in contrast to the French, Belgium, Danish and Swedish governments, all of which are taking unilateral action to either fully or partially ban its use in food packaging.

Lynn Ladbrook, Breast Cancer UK Campaigns Manager, said: "The Government can no longer sweep this sort of overwhelming evidence under the carpet. It must acknowledge that our routine exposure to chemicals, like BPA, is a key part of the cancer prevention

puzzle, one that is currently missing from its cancer and public health strategies. We must redress this gap if we are to begin to help protect the health of future generations.”

Breast Cancer UK is calling on the EU to extend its ban on the use of BPA in baby bottles, introduced in 2010, to include all food and drinks packaging. It is also calling on the UK Government to include hormone disrupting chemicals as preventable risk factors for breast cancer in the UK Strategy for Cancer.

Notes to Editors:

(1) Read *'Body of Evidence: An Overview of the Low Dose effects of Bisphenol A in relation to breast cancer'* at:

www.breastcanceruk.org.uk/reports/Body_of_Evidence.pdf

Read the Executive Summary at:

www.breastcanceruk.org.uk/reports/Body_of_Evidence_Exec_Summary.pdf

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