

Press Release

5 June 2013

Breast Cancer UK's Response to the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists pregnancy safety advice

London: Breast Cancer UK welcomed today's advice from The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists for pregnant women to "play it safe" and avoid chemicals found in many common household products.

Lynn Ladbrook, Campaigns Manager, Breast Cancer UK, said: "Mums-to-be have the right to know that many every day products contain chemicals that are linked to breast cancer and other diseases. We know that the timing of exposure to chemicals is critical and scientific studies have found that exposure during development may lead to health problems in adulthood.

"These chemicals should not be used in our products in the first place. Until the Government responds to the overwhelming amount of scientific evidence that raises serious concerns over the safety of our exposure to Bisphenol A (BPA) and other chemicals and tightens regulation, pregnant women should be given all the information they need to make informed choices about which products they might prefer to avoid in order to give their child the best chance of living a full and healthy life."

Breast Cancer UK published a report last month '*Body of Evidence: An Overview of the Low Dose effects of Bisphenol A in relation to breast cancer*', (1) that draws together some of the latest science on Bisphenol A (BPA), routinely used in a wide range of products including food and drinks packaging.

The report 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. It also stresses that there is evidence that the unborn child is particularly vulnerable to exposure to endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs), like BPA, because they are unable to excrete it from their systems as quickly as adults.

"It's time the Government stopped sweeping this issue under the carpet. It must acknowledged that our routine exposure to hazardous and carcinogenic chemicals is a glaring gap in its cancer and public health strategies, and one which it must bridge to protect the health of future generations," added Ladbrook.

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 EDCs as preventable risk factors for breast cancer in the UK Strategy for Cancer.

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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

For more information about which chemicals to avoid, see:

http://www.nomorebreastcancer.org.uk/assets/BCUK_Chemicals_LeafletA4_web.pdf

For more toxic free tips, see:

<http://www.breastcanceruk.org.uk/whatyoucando/>