

CHEMICALS AND LATINA HEALTH



Reproductive health problems are on the rise for women all across the country. Conditions such as early puberty and infertility have a significant impact on Latina women and their families, and scientists believe that some chemicals found in everyday products may be playing a role.

How do these conditions impact me and my family?

Early puberty The age of puberty has been falling in the United States over the last several decades, and 15% of Latina girls start to develop breasts before the age of seven. Early puberty has been linked to an increased risk of breast cancer in adulthood, as well as anxiety, depression and risky behavior during adolescence.



Impaired fertility and infertility Latina women report higher rates of infertility than white women.

Breast cancer Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer and the leading cause of cancer-related deaths among Latina women.

Premature births Pre-term birth rates among Latinas increase with length of residency in the US. American-born Latinas are almost 3 times as likely as foreign-born Latinas to give birth to premature babies. Infants born prematurely are at greater risk for numerous health and developmental problems.

Is there a chemical connection?

Scientists have identified many chemicals used in everyday products that can interfere with hormones. Hormones are chemical messengers that deliver information governing growth, development, mood, reproduction and weight regulation. Disruptions to normal hormonal signaling can lead to reproductive health problems, among other complications. Some examples of these “hormone disrupting” chemicals include:

Bisphenol-A (BPA): found in plastic products, can linings and receipt paper

Phthalates: found in scented cosmetics (including lotions, shampoos and deodorants), perfumes, plastic wrap, vinyl tiles and plastic toys

Parabens: found in a wide array of personal care products, including cosmetics, shampoo, conditioner, shower gels and lotions

Triclosan: found in toothpaste, cosmetics, cleaning supplies and antibacterial soaps

