

HOW TOXIC? IS YOUR KITCHEN?

Chemicals
Pots and Pans
Microwave

You depend on your kitchen to be a place where healthy food is prepared and stored to provide energy and nutrition for your family. Many people don't realize the amount of toxins lurking in their kitchen, contaminating the food that should be nourishing their family.

Ask yourself the following questions to assess your kitchen's level of toxicity.

- **What materials are your pots and pans made of?**
- **How often do you use a microwave?**
- **Do you store food in, drink from, or eat on plastic dishware or containers?**
- **Where do you store your nuts and oils?**
- **Is your water unfiltered?**
- **Do you use conventional, store-bought cleaners in your kitchen?**

Simple Ways to Detoxify Your Kitchen

I. Practice minimal use of the microwave oven, or get rid of your microwave altogether. Using a microwave to cook your food is of three main concerns.

1. Harmful and cancer-causing chemicals can leak into your food from heated plastic and paper containers.

2. Microwaving alters the molecular structure of food, damaging nutrients and even generating harmful compounds. For example, broccoli cooked in the microwave loses 97% of its antioxidants versus 11% when steamed.

3. Microwaves emit radiation. Although it is controversial as to how much radiation, studies have shown correlations between microwave radiation in the home and effects on the heart and blood sugar.

Heat your food in the oven, on the stove-top or in a toaster oven. If you do use the microwave, let it be the exception and not the rule, and be sure to stand back at least 20 inches.

Some scientists claim using a cell phone is like holding a microwave oven up to your head.

II. Store nuts and oils properly. Nuts and oils go bad quickly with exposure to heat, light and air. Rancid nuts smell and taste bad, and can be carcinogenic. Rancid nuts are linked to headaches and digestive upset. Roasted, chopped, and ground nuts go rancid much more quickly than whole raw ones. Nuts should be stored in the refrigerator.

Look for oils that are sold in dark tinted bottles since the packaging will help protect the oil from oxidation caused by exposure to light. Glass bottles are best to prevent contamination from plastic containers. Oils should be stored in a cool, dark place like a cabinet or pantry. Oil should be used within 1-2 months to ensure its quality remains intact, even when stored properly.

III. Do not use non-stick cookware. Pots, pans and baking dishes should be stainless steel, glass or cast iron with no non-stick agent. A very dangerous chemical, perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), is known to cause cancer and other developmental problems. When non-stick cookware is heated, this chemical, and others, are released into the air and into your food.

PFOA can be found in 95% of American adults and children. It is believed the largest concentrations of PFOA are found in stain-resistant and grease-repellent coatings for fast food containers, clothing, and carpeting.

IV. Get rid of all plastics including storage bags, cups, plates, silverware and containers. Dishes made of glass are ideal. Harmful chemicals in plastics can leach into foods, especially when heated or if the food item is acidic. A common chemical found in plastic products is bisphenol A (BPA). BPA is associated with increased risk of breast cancer, heart disease and diabetes. More and more plastic products are appearing with a "BPA Free" label. This is a good start, but BPA is not the only harmful chemical in plastics.

A recent study found BPA in 96 percent of pregnant women in the United States.

V. Filter your water, especially for drinking and cooking. Your water must be clean in order for you to stay healthy. Tap water is likely not clean enough. It often contains a myriad of toxins from industrial chemicals to pesticides to pharmaceutical products to viruses and parasites.

VI. Use natural cleaners for the dishes, appliances, floor and counters. The ingredients in mainstream cleaning products can be unsafe. For example, the majority of laundry detergents contain formaldehyde, which is associated with cancer, developmental and reproductive toxicity, allergies, and more. More safe cleaning products are becoming available

"Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made."

- John 1:3 (NIV)