



SURPRISING EVERYDAY THINGS THAT CAN DAMAGE YOUR BRAIN

And how to easily remove them

It's easy to feel overwhelmed by all of the ways we come in contact with things daily that can easily damage the brain. But as I tell my patients, "It's the base hits that win the ballgame." So set a goal to apply one thing a week. This list will get you started on some of the most common offenders and what to do about it. Usually, it is a straightforward fix to what does add up to significant health problems if habits are not corrected.



GASOLINE

You know that smell that overtakes you when you're pumping gas? It's benzene, which is a potent carcinogen (something that can cause cancer) and a neurotoxin (something that affects the function of your brain). As you breathe it in, the benzene goes through your permeable lungs, into your bloodstream, and right up to your brain, where it initiates an immune response producing inflammation, which damages your nerve cells.

- *The Fix:* Well, most of us can't entirely avoid gasoline, but we don't have to breathe this stuff in. Next time you are at the gas station, look where you're standing. If you're smelling benzene, that means you're standing downwind. All you have to do is walk around to the other side of the hose. Now you're upwind. That one simple maneuver every time you pump gas, over a lifetime, dramatically reduces the amount of benzene you're exposed to.



TAP WATER

There is a lot of gasoline by-products that you come in contact with not just standing at the pump. The tap water that comes from most municipal systems has gasoline by-products in it because so many corporations have been dumping their waste into our rivers for so many years. Recently there have been guidelines put in place, but it still happens. All of that residue from years past is still in the water.

- *The Fix:*
- BEST:** Get a whole house filtration system that includes charcoal granulation, a two-micron filter and reverse osmosis.
- BETTER:** The next best thing is all of the drinking water is filtered. The best that you can afford. Once again, the same triple criteria: two-micron filter, charcoal granulation, reverse osmosis
- GOOD:** Purchase a countertop unit and get the best countertop unit you can afford. From there the next best thing, determined by resources, would be a Brita-style pitcher you pour water into and it slowly filters the water into the pitcher.



NEW CLOTHES

All new clothes are saturated with chemicals that keep bugs off of them during shipping. What's more concerning is wrinkle-free clothes, the way they get them to stay "wrinkle free" is by their exposure to formaldehyde.

- *The Fix:* Always wash new clothes before you wear them to get as much of those toxic chemicals out as possible. Stay away from anything that is labeled wrinkle free. Learn to iron or embrace a few wrinkles.



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COFFEE CUPS & COFFEE MAKERS

Most of us don't think twice about our morning coffee, but that disposable coffee cup could be putting you in danger. We have all seen the heat from our coffee cause condensation drops on the underside of the lid. You likely just swallowed a little bisphenol-A, more commonly known as BPA. You may not be any safer with your coffee maker at home constructed primarily of plastic parts.

BPA has been found to bind to hormone receptors for estrogen and testosterone, creating a neo-epitope, which drastically interferes with the normal function of that receptor. What does that mean? For guys, low testosterone, erectile dysfunction, low sperm count, unable to impregnate. For ladies, low or high estrogen, low or high progesterone, osteoporosis, breast cancers, and other hormone-related cancers.

- **The Fix:** Bring your own stainless steel thermal coffee mug to the local coffee shop for your morning fill-up. If you make your coffee at home, invest in a plastic-free stainless steel coffee maker or french press.



CREDIT CARD RECEIPTS

BPA is used in cash register receipts issued on thermal paper. Bisphenol-A, better known as BPA, as we have highlighted earlier, can lead to infertility. BPA can also lead to heart disease, vitamin D deficiency, and obesity.

- **The Fix:** Go paperless when possible opting for an electronic emailed receipt. And unless you need it, get into the habit of politely declining the receipt at checkout.



BEDDING

The chemicals used in flame retardant sheets are linked to hormone disruptions, lowered IQ, attention deficit, fertility issues, thyroid disease and cancer. Wrinkle-free sheets are finished with formaldehyde, and the National Toxicology Program tells us that formaldehyde is a direct trigger, it's a human carcinogen. Formaldehyde causes cancer. You're sleeping under cancer-causing sheets when you have wrinkle-free sheets.

- **The Fix:** Buy organic cotton sheets and don't worry if your sheets are wrinkled.



THE SHOWER

Chlorine is such a significant problem. There are only two substances that are needed by every single cell of your body, and one is thyroid hormone. It controls the temperature in every cell, and that is called metabolism. Chlorine is one of only three chemicals that bind onto thyroid receptor sites so the thyroid hormone can't get into the receptor site. If you have a genetic vulnerability to not breaking down these chemicals very well, if your detox pathways are compromised, you will accumulate chlorine, chloride, and bromide in the thyroid receptor sites on every cell of your body.

- **The Fix:** Replace your shower head with a chlorine shower filter for about \$50.

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