

Fact bite #54



Breast carcinogens in food packaging

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Last year, we published a peer-reviewed paper describing 189 food contact chemicals that are potential or confirmed breast carcinogens. The chemicals were identified by comparing our database on migrating and extractable food contact chemicals (FCCmigex) with chemicals that have breast cancer inducing characteristics according to the Silent Spring Institute.

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In March this year, we updated the FCCmigex database. In honor of breast cancer awareness month, we have now rerun the analysis using the updated data.

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Considering the latest 20 months of published research, the number of FCCs that are potential breast carcinogens increased from 189 to 230. 178 of them (77%) have been detected in food contact materials made of some type of plastic polymer.

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An additional 37 of the identified potential breast carcinogens are classified as ‘highly relevant’, meaning they were detected in migration studies since 2020. 6 of these new highly relevant chemicals are confirmed mammary carcinogens in rodent models.

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“Our findings imply that chronic exposure of the entire population to suspected mammary carcinogens from FCMs is the norm and highlights an important, but currently underappreciated, opportunity for prevention.”

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