

TIPS FOR INFANTS



Thinking about planning for or even welcoming a new baby into your family? Every new parent wants to make the best preparations for their baby's healthy development and growth.

Here's one more suggestion: check out possible exposure to **PFAS chemicals** – think nonstick, stain resistant, and waterproof/resistant.



BEFORE PREGNANCY:

- ✓ TEST WATER SUPPLY FOR PFAS
- ✓ INSTALL A WATER FILTER IF NEEDED
- ✓ AVOID PFAS-CONTAINING PRODUCTS



DURING PREGNANCY:

- ✓ LIMIT USE OF NONSTICK, STAIN RESISTANT, WATERPROOF, AND GREASEPROOF ITEMS
- ✓ CHECK INFANT BEDDING, CLOTHES, AND TOY LABELS



POSTNATAL:

- ✓ FOLLOW CDC BREASTFEEDING GUIDELINES
- ✓ USE FILTERED WATER WITH FORMULA
- ✓ KEEP BABY AND FAMILY UP TO DATE ON VACCINES
- ✓ CONTROL DUST: VACUUM REGULARLY

WHAT ARE PFAS AND WHERE DO WE FIND THEM?

98% of Americans have PFAS – manufactured chemicals – in their blood. Some have them at low levels while others may have heightened exposure through drinking water. This is particularly likely if water sources are near PFAS-producing industrial plants, military bases, firefighting training areas, or municipal airports that use PFAS-containing foam as a fire suppressant.



HOW ARE BABIES EXPOSED?

Mom has some level of PFAS in her blood. So babies are exposed both prenatally through the placenta and umbilical cord and postnatally through mom's breast milk or PFAS-contaminated water used in formula. Some bedding, clothes, and toys may contain PFAS so check labels or company websites. Vacuum regularly to reduce dust generated from PFAS-containing products like stain-resistant furniture or carpets.

WHY DON'T BABIES AND PFAS MIX?

One impact on babies with elevated PFAS levels in their blood is reduced effectiveness of vaccines. However, reduced effectiveness is better than no vaccines at all so listen to your pediatrician and follow that vaccination schedule! And it's all the more important for the whole family to be up to date on their vaccines to form a circle of protection around the baby.

IF EXPOSED TO PFAS, SHOULD I BREASTFEED?

Breastfeeding may expose your baby to some PFAS, but the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advises mothers to breastfeed exclusively for six months followed by breastfeeding supplemented with other food for up to one year. If you choose to breastfeed for a shorter time than the CDC recommends, then be mindful that the most benefit to your child occurs in the first three to four months. Using formula? Consider making the formula with filtered or even bottled water to reduce your child's PFAS exposure.



MORE QUESTIONS? VISIT WWW.URI.EDU/STEEP