



NAMPA Encourages Sound Science to Guide Policy on BPA

Recently there has been extensive media attention on the chemical Bisphenol A (BPA). BPA is used to make polycarbonate plastic and epoxy can coatings. These materials are approved for use in direct contact with food by regulatory bodies around the world and have been used safely in food contact applications for over 60 years. BPA is also one of the most extensively studied chemicals in use today, and its safety continues to be reaffirmed by risk assessments from around the world.

Over the last two years comprehensive risk assessments have been performed by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), the U.S. National Toxicology Program's Center for the Evaluation of Risks to Human Reproduction, and the Japanese National Institute for Advanced Industrial Science and Technology. Each of these assessments supports the use of BPA in direct contact with food. In fact the European Food Safety Authority found appropriate evidence of safety to support a five fold increase in allowable BPA level in food. All of these reviews were conducted by independent expert panels who review all of the relevant science on BPA. The reviewers use the most modern criteria for scientific evaluation to judge published studies on BPA. These Risk Assessments continue to support the safety of BPA when used in food contact applications.

Much of the recent media coverage has stated that there is scientific uncertainty about the safety of BPA. In fact, the science on the safety of BPA has very little uncertainty; expert independent panels have confirmed that fact. Some researchers have proposed the hypothesis of a low dose effect from BPA exposure. They have also stated that the expert panel risk assessments have not taken this hypothesis into account. In contrast, the expert EFSA panel addressed the low dose hypothesis by stating that none of the studies that support this hypothesis were performed to the standards required to be considered for review.¹ The CERHR panel noted, "The lack of reproducibility of the low dose effects, the absence of toxicity in those low-dose-affected tissues at high doses, and the uncertain adversity of the reported effects led the panel to express "minimal" concern for reproductive effects".² The researchers proposing this low dose hypothesis have also stated that these panels did not take into consideration infant exposure to BPA, again this is incorrect. The EFSA expert panel stated "In its evaluation the Panel gave special attention to infants and children".³ In their report the panel noted that infants would need to consume hundreds of times the amount of BPA found in canned food to approach any safety concerns.

The North American Metal Packaging Alliance takes very seriously any safety issues related to metal packaging and we have continued to follow the science around this issue. We strongly feel that the science on the issues related to canned food safety is not in question and we fully support the established scientific review process that has served the public for decades. We also strongly encourage the scientists who have proposed hypotheses suggesting there are safety issues related to BPA to engage that scientific process and allow science to guide public safety policy, instead of media accusations. The low dose hypothesis has been considered by the established scientific community and dismissed. We encourage all new and relevant information to be brought forward to the established scientific review processes for a fair judgment of its scientific validity. This review process has and must be followed to allow the public to have confidence in the safety of the nation's food supply.

¹ http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/science/afc/afc_opinions/bisphenol_a.html

² <http://cerhr.niehs.nih.gov/chemicals/bisphenol/BPAFinalEPVF112607.pdf>

³ http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_BisphenolAFAQs.htm