Today’s story was prepared by Louisa Mook, MD based on the June 12, 2013 article on CNN.com entitled, “BPA Linked to Obesity in Girls”

<http://thechart.blogs.cnn.com/2013/06/12/bpa-linked-to-obesity-in-young-girls/>

Bisphenol-A (commonly called BPA), a chemical that is used to strengthen polycarbonate plastics, has received a lot of recent attention from both scientists and the media for its ability to mimic natural estrogens and potentially disrupt normal endocrine, reproductive, and developmental processes. This CNN article discusses two recent studies that correlate higher urinary levels of BPA in children with an increased risk for obesity (in the latter study, only in early-adolescence girls).

While the article points out some of the controversy on this hot topic, its implication of BPA as an “obesogen” may be misleading. The cited cross-sectional population studies look at two different variables: urine BPA levels and child obesity. It is impossible to say whether the BPA actually causes obesity based on this type of study design, and the Center for Disease Control has stated this clearly on their website page about BPA. Animal studies find BPA can cause premature maturation and disrupt thyroid function, justly fueling the concern over potential impact on humans.

Major US health and regulatory agencies state that BPA’s risk to humans is unknown and that more research is needed. In 2008 the National Toxicology Program concluded that there is some cause for concern about BPA’s effect on the brain, behavior, and prostate gland in fetuses, infants, and children at current US exposure levels, but minimal concern for its impact on puberty. Despite the unknown effects of BPA, the FDA banned the use of BPA in baby bottles and sippy cups although the FDA’s proposed reason for the ban was not related to concerns of potential harm to children but rather in response to commercial manufacturers having stopped using BPA in their baby/child products in response to popular alarm/fear.

**Resources about BPA research, exposure, and other environmental toxins:**

1. Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease – created by the Center for Disease Control

<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/index.html>

1. Children’s Health Protection – created by the Environmental Protection Agency

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/ochp/ochpweb.nsf/content/homepage.htm>

1. Toxipedia - a Wiki with pages written by multiple authors with oversight for quality

<http://toxipedia.org/display/toxipedia/Toxipedia>