What Canada Knows About BPA That You Should Know

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The Canadian government has evaluated the safety of bisphenol A (BPA) through scientific assessments for more than 10 years. As early as 2008, the agencies responsible for management of chemicals in Canada (Environment Canada and Health Canada) jointly released a detailed report with the results of their human health and environmental screening assessment of BPA.

The bottom-line results from this assessment were presented in a fact sheet that was also released in 2008. With regard to human health, the fact sheet stated "*The current research tells us the general public need not be concerned. In general, most Canadians are exposed to very low levels of bisphenol A, therefore, it does not pose a health risk.*"

Since that time, the Canadian government has been focusing on how exposure to BPA affects newborns and young infants as uncertainty raised in some animal studies suggested potential health effects at low doses of BPA. Because infant exposure to BPA is expected to be dietary, the emphasis has been on studying how to minimize exposure through baby bottles and canned infant formula.

As reported in a 2018 risk management performance evaluation report from Health Canada, this approach has been very successful. Exposure to infants from baby bottles and infant formula has been completely eliminated, accounting for a 96% decrease in exposure to BPA.

Similarly, the 2008 fact sheet reported that BPA could enter the environment and, over time, could build up to levels that could harm environmental organisms. As a result, the Canadian government designed a risk management approach to protect environmental

health and subsequently developed Federal Environmental Quality Guidelines (FEQGs) to protect aquatic life.

As described in a recent report on the effectiveness of the risk management measures, the approach has also been quite successful. As reported, "*the current concentration of BPA in surface water is well below the FEQG and generally decreasing overtime*" and "*for these reasons, no further risk management for BPA in surface water is necessary at this time*." In addition, since measured concentrations of BPA are well below the surface water FEQG, "*no further surface water sampling is recommended at this time*."

Likewise for sediment, "*environmental data for sediment also supports the conclusion that no further risk management is necessary*." Since a very small number (1%) of sediment samples taken between 2012 and 2018 exceeded the sediment FEQG, additional monitoring is recommended to ensure that sediment levels continue to decrease.

Overall, the results provided in the recent risk management performance reports are very encouraging. For both human health and the environment, exposure levels have declined to very low levels and show little or no risk of causing harm.