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# News Release

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Report available at <http://contaminatedwithoutconsent.org/nosilverlining.php>

## **New Study: US Families Routinely Exposed to Hidden Toxic Chemical BPA in Canned Foods**

### **Report reveals highest levels ever found of sex hormone linked to cancer, infertility in canned food from 19 states, including Connecticut**

*Coalition Calls On Government, Manufacturers To Halt Use of BPA in Food and Beverage Containers*

Hartford, CT-- Eating common canned foods is exposing consumers to levels of bisphenol A (BPA) equal to levels shown to cause health problems in laboratory animals, according to a new study released today by The National Work Group for Safe Markets, a coalition of public health and environmental health groups including the Coalition for a Safe & Healthy Connecticut. The study, **No Silver Lining**, tested food from 50 cans from 19 US states and one Canadian province. Over 90% of the cans tested had detectable levels of BPA, some at higher levels than have been detected in previous studies.

The canned foods tested were brand name fish, fruits, vegetables, beans, soups, tomato products, sodas, and milks, which together represent “real-life” meal options for a wide range of North American consumers. The cans were purchased from retail stores and were chosen from report participants’ pantry shelves, and sent to an independent laboratory for testing. One can of DelMonte green beans had the highest levels of BPA ever found in canned food, at 1,140 parts per billion.

“We found that just one canned food item per meal can expose an individual to levels of BPA that have been shown to cause adverse health effects in laboratory animal studies,” says **Sarah Uhl, coordinator of the Coalition for a Safe & Healthy CT**. “We are asking Congress to phase-out BPA from all food and beverage containers.”

In 2009, the Coalition advocated for the passage of Public Act 09-103, which became the nation’s most health-protective state or local policy on BPA in food and beverage containers. Starting on October 1, 2011, no reusable food or beverage containers or infant formula or baby food cans or jars that contain BPA will be permitted in Connecticut. But while Connecticut’s law is a strong step toward solving this problem, No Silver Lining demonstrates that broader policies that include the full range of food cans are

needed to protect public health. The Coalition is working with U.S. Senator Christopher Dodd to include a BPA phase-out in the Food Safety Modernization Act that will soon be considered by his committee.

“My pantry contains fewer cans now that I know about the problem of BPA in these items,” said **Anne Hulick, RN, JD, MS, of Southington**, who donated canned broth for the investigation. “And as a nurse, I am particularly concerned about the issue of prenatal exposure to BPA through canned foods consumed by mothers, especially when there is evidence that even small amounts of this chemical can cross the placenta and impact development.”

BPA is in the inside lining of most canned foods in North America, and in other polycarbonate containers, like water bottles and baby bottles. BPA has been found in the urine of over 90% of Americans by the Center for Disease Control, and in the cord blood of newborn babies. Exposure to low doses of BPA have been linked to illnesses that are on the rise in the US, including breast and prostate cancer, abnormal behavior, diabetes and heart disease, infertility, developmental and reproductive harm, and obesity, which raises the risk of early puberty, a known risk factor for breast cancer.

**No Silver Lining** test results show there is no consistency in the amount of BPA in specific food brands or in types of food, which prevents consumers from being able to avoid BPA canned foods just by looking at a label. For example, two different cans of the same brand of peas with two separate “lot numbers” were drastically different: one had six parts per billion of BPA, while the other had over 300 parts per billion of BPA.

“BPA is a bad actor chemical that should not be in contact with food we eat,” says **Laura Vandenberg, PhD, Tufts University**, a leading BPA researcher. “Hundreds of independent peer-reviewed scientific studies have found harm from low doses of BPA. The levels found in this study are definitely concerning, and indicate that the time has come to remove this chemical from food cans.”

**Dr. George Lundgren**, a Minnesota family physician who was biomonitoring for a separate study and who knows that he had BPA in his own body, has seen an increase in BPA-linked health effects in his patients. “The cases of diabetes and obesity are increasing at such a rate in my own practice that diet and lack of exercise alone just can’t explain it. And the fact that there are no labels on the products that are exposing us to a chemical that may be linked to these serious health problems and other illness is disturbing,” said Lundgren.

General Mills recently announced that it is removing BPA from its organic tomato cans, so we know that companies that want to do the right thing will. Still, we need the FDA to ensure a basic level of protection for all consumers.

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**The National Work Group for Safe Markets is a coalition of U.S. public health and environmental NGOs including:**

Alliance for a Healthy Tomorrow  
Breast Cancer Fund  
Center for Health, Environment and Justice  
Clean New York  
Clean Water Action  
Coalition for a Safety & Healthy Connecticut  
Environmental Defence (Canada)  
Environmental Health Fund

Environmental Health Strategy Center  
Healthy Legacy  
Learning Disabilities Association of America  
Oregon Environmental Council  
US PIRG  
Washington Toxics Coalition  
Women’s Voices for the Earth