

PERCHLORATE IN YOUR WATER?

Protecting yourself when there is Perchlorate in your water.

Perchlorate is an industrial chemical found in rocket fuel, fireworks, and matches. It can also be found in hypochlorite solutions used to treat drinking water. As well as in nitrate salts used in some fertilizers.

Surface and ground water surrounding military bases or factories are at a greater risk of contamination. Perchlorate easily moves through water and can last for many years.



Children and pregnant people are at greatest risk of the effects of perchlorate exposure.

How can I be exposed?

There are many ways that people can be exposed to perchlorate:

- Drinking water that is contaminated with perchlorate
- Cooking foods with water that is contaminated with perchlorate
- Eating crops that have been fed with water containing perchlorate
- Infants can be exposed to perchlorate through breast milk

What are the health impacts?

Exposure to perchlorate impacts the ability of the thyroid to take up iodine. Longterm exposure to high levels of perchlorate can have negative health impacts including:

- Impaired metabolism in adults
- Delayed growth and development in fetuses and young children



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How to reduce exposure

- Test well water for perchlorate
- Use bottled water if perchlorate is found in your drinking water
- Install reverse osmosis filters for drinking water, if possible

What are the guidelines?

The MCL is an enforceable standard set by the EPA that limits the amount of a contaminant that can be present in a public water system. These guidelines are used to keep consumers safe. The MassDEP has set an MCL for Perchlorate which can be found on our website.

Resources

- MassDEP. Perchlorate Frequently Asked Questions.
 - <https://www.mass.gov/guides/perchlorate-frequently-asked-questions>
- FDA. Perchlorate Questions and Answers.
 - <https://www.fda.gov/food/environmental-contaminants-food/perchlorate-questions-and-answers>
- EWG. Perchlorate.
 - <https://www.ewg.org/tapwater/reviewed-perchlorate.php>
- EPA. Perchlorate in Drinking Water Frequent Questions.
 - <https://www.epa.gov/sdwa/perchlorate-drinking-water-frequent-questions>



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