

# Pollution in People, Health Problems on the Rise

## Reasons to Make Chemicals Kid-Safe

### THE U.S. HAS THE WORLD'S HIGHEST CANCER RATE

EWG studies found 252 chemicals linked to cancer in 160 people tested (EWG 2008). Environmental Protection Agency studies show that infants up to age 2 are, on average, 10 times more vulnerable to carcinogens than adults (EWG 2003).

- The United States leads the world in cancer incidence, with an estimated 17.7 percent of the U.S. population expected to develop cancer before the age of 65 (ACS 2006).
- The U.S. has the world's highest incidence of breast cancer. (ACS 2006). At current rates one in 8 women will develop breast cancer in her lifetime (NCI 2006).
- Incidence of childhood cancers increased by 28 percent from 1974 to 1998. (Woodruff et al. 2007).
- When people migrate as children from places with little prostate and breast cancer, their prostate cancer risk quadruples, and their breast cancer risk soars by close to 240 percent. (Grover and Martin 2002).

### ONE IN SIX CHILDREN HAS A DEVELOPMENTAL DISORDER

Developmental disabilities affect 17 percent of children. Scientists believe that industrial chemicals play a role in this "silent pandemic" (Grandjean and Landrigan 2006).

- EWG testing has found 242 chemicals in people linked to brain and nervous system damage
- Developmental disorders, most involving the brain and nervous system, affect 1 in 6 children in the U.S. (Grandjean and Landrigan 2006).
- The incidence of autism increased 10-fold from the 1970's to the 1990's (Blaxill 2004). One in 150 American children is autistic (CDC 2007b).
- One in 15 U.S. children is diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) (Woodruff et al. 2004).

### CHILDHOOD ASTHMA MORE THAN DOUBLED IN 20 YEARS

Many diseases of the immune system are on the rise. EWG tests of 160 people have found 241 chemicals that can affect the immune system, including 130 chemicals in 10 newborn babies (EWG 2008, EWG 2005).

- Prevalence of childhood asthma more than doubled between 1980 and 2001 (EPA 2007). Nearly 10 percent of children ages 5 to 17 suffer from asthma, according to the American Lung Association (ALA 2007).
- Autoimmune diseases occur in 5 to 8 percent of the U.S. population, more frequently in women (NIH 1998).
- Multiple sclerosis (MS) diagnoses among women increased by 50 percent between the 1980's and the 1990's (Noonan et al. 2002).



- The incidence of Type 1 diabetes among U.S. children climbs 5 percent a year (Diamond 2006).

### ONE IN EVERY EIGHT BABIES IS BORN PREMATURELY

From 1981 to 2004 the preterm birth rate increased 33 percent. One in 8 U.S. infants is born prematurely, with higher risks for cerebral palsy, mental retardation, chronic lung disease, and vision and hearing loss (March of Dimes 2006).

- The CDC reports that one in 33 babies is born with a major birth defect (CDC 2007a). The cause of 70 percent of birth defects is unknown (March of Dimes 2006).
- The incidence of a penis deformity called hypospadias doubled between 1968 and 1993 and now affects 1 in 125 boys (CDC 2008, Paulozzi 1999). Three percent of full-term baby boys have undescended testicles and face greater risks for testicular cancer (Dogra 2007, Paulozzi 1999).
- EWG tests of 160 people have identified 237 chemicals linked to birth defects and developmental problems (EWG 2008), including 151 chemicals in 10 cord blood samples. (EWG 2005).

### ONE IN EIGHT WOMEN HAS FERTILITY PROBLEMS

Although scientists do not fully understand the role of industrial chemicals in infertility, many studies now link common pollutants to reproductive system disorders, including low sperm count, sperm damage and harm to ovaries and uterus.

- About 12 percent of American women reporting difficulty in getting pregnant or carrying a baby to full term in 2002, an increase of 20 percent over 1995 (Barrett 2006).
- The age at which girls enter puberty decreased by 6 to 12 months from the 1960's to the 1990's (BCF 2007). Average sperm counts in industrialized countries are declining at a rate of about 1 percent each year (Swan et al 2000).
- EWG studies find 149 chemicals that can damage the delicate cycles of the reproductive system in 160 people tested (EWG 2008).