

Dispatch: More Junk on Chemicals and Early Puberty

By ACSH Staff — April 20, 2010

A study published this month in *Environmental Health Perspectives* ^[1] ties chemicals found in consumer products and other sources to the early onset of puberty in girls. Researchers from Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York tested the urine of 1,151 American girls over two years to measure their exposure to phenols, phthalates and phytoestrogens -- so-called "endocrine disrupters."

ACSH's Dr. Elizabeth Whelan says the study seems well-designed, but notes a well-done study can still be junk. "The question the authors posed before beginning the study -- does exposure to these trace levels of chemicals affect the timing of the onset of puberty -- is without any scientific merit," she says. "It just absolutely defies common sense. The hypothesis is noncredible. The level of exposure to these chemicals -- compared to the body's natural level of estrogen -- is so minute, how could they possibly affect puberty?"

ACSH's Dr. Gilbert Ross points out the study's author's had to use phrases like "weakly associated," "small associations" and "small inverse associations" to make their case. "The theory is junk and it's based on nonscience, but this gets published in *Environmental Health Perspectives* ," he laments. "People have been trying for 15 years to prove this endocrine disruptor theory, and there's no such thing."

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