

The truth about phthalates

By ACSH Staff — May 23, 2010

We're witnessing an assault on science, as activists attack phthalates and other chemicals that have been used in household products for decades without evidence of human harm, ACSH's Dr. Elizabeth Whelan argues in a commentary published in the [Daily Caller](#) [1]:

But in spite of their safety record, phthalates have been targeted by a well-orchestrated scare campaign run by special interest groups. Last year the activists successfully inserted their anti-phthalate agenda into the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act, which placed restrictions on how the chemicals could be used in children's products. Congress did not evaluate the safety of phthalates in its decision, instead implementing a precautionary principle approach. Activist groups based their campaigns on flawed research and preliminary (or even rodent) studies, conveniently ignoring government research supporting the safety of phthalates studies by accredited evaluators including the European Union, Consumer Product Safety Commission, and the National Toxicology Program's Center for Evaluation of Risks to Human Reproduction.

Instead of reviewing the scientific facts, many lawmakers caved to propaganda and media hype. The most frequently cited studies attacking phthalates don't account for risk or exposure, trying to establish cause and effect without regard to accepted scientific precepts. One scientist whose entire career has been devoted to a crusade against phthalates is the statistician Dr. Shanna Swan, director of the Center for Reproductive Epidemiology at the Rochester University School of Medicine and Dentistry. Swan has attempted to show reproductive and developmental effects from phthalate exposure but despite the publicity surrounding her studies, she has yet to prove a direct link between phthalates and the health effects she claims. Moreover, none of her research has been reproduced by other scientists and her conclusions have been called into question by the scientific community.

Read the full article [here](#) [1].

COPYRIGHT © 1978-2016 BY THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON SCIENCE AND HEALTH

Source URL: <https://www.acsh.org/news/2010/05/23/the-truth-about-phthalates>

Links

[1] <http://dailycaller.com/2010/05/23/the-truth-about-chemicals/>