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A Study Links Kids' Cholesterol and Nonstick Coating on Cookware

Posted by SORA SONG

Tuesday, September 7, 2010 at 7:21 pm

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Chemicals in nonstick cookware and waterproof fabrics could be raising cholesterol levels in children and teens, according to a **new study** appearing in the Sept. issue of the *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*. The study found that kids with the highest blood levels of the chemicals also had measurably higher total cholesterol levels and higher LDL, or "bad cholesterol," than kids with the lowest chemical exposure.

The compounds targeted by the new report are known as perfluoroalkyl acids — including perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctanesulfonate (PFOS) — which are used in the manufacture of chemicals that give nonstick heat resistance to pots and pans and render fabrics waterproof and breathable. According to background information in the article, we're surrounded by the stuff. Exposure to these compounds occurs through all manner of sources: drinking water, dust, food packaging, breast milk, cord blood, microwave popcorn, air and environmental sources. And recent surveys have detected the chemicals in almost all human blood samples.

Study author Stephanie J. Frisbee of West Virginia University School of Medicine, Morgantown, and colleagues looked at 12,476 children and teens in the mid-Ohio River Valley between 2005 or 2006. Among teens aged 12 to 19, blood tests showed they had PFOA concentrations that were higher than the national average; PFOS concentrations were similar to the norm. The higher the chemical exposure, the higher the kids' cholesterol — which is in line with similar findings in adults.

Previous research in animals has found that perfluoroalkyl acid-exposure mainly affects the liver, according to the paper, so the potential effects in human could include changes to cholesterol. But while the new data don't prove that exposure to the compounds directly affects cholesterol, the authors say their findings suggest an association and warrant further study.

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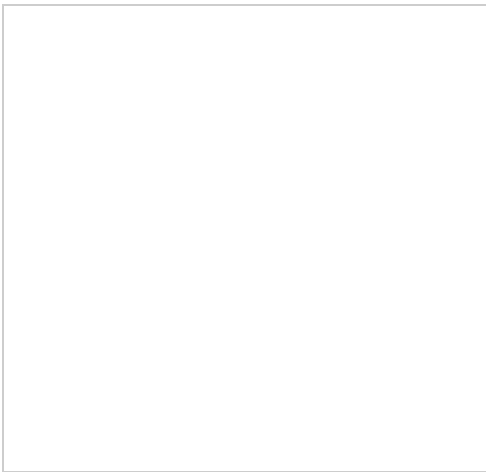
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