

## Toxic Chemicals in us all

A number of toxic man-made chemicals were found in the blood of every person tested during a survey by an environmental pressure group, WWF. Their Contamination study discovered traces of chemicals ranging from pesticides to the chemicals added to some paints and fire retardants.

The tests commissioned by WWF looked for the presence of 77 different chemicals in 155 people tested across the UK. **An average of 27 was found in the blood of each person tested across the UK, with readings ranging from nine to 49.**

Chemicals that were looked for included pesticides like DDT and lindane and PCB's from plastics, for example. Another group studied was PDBE's commonly found in the home as flame retardants. **70 out of the 77 studied were found.** Worryingly women who had had children and breast fed them had lower levels of certain chemical toxins indicating that they seem to be passed on to babies via breast feeding.

Global production of chemicals has grown from 1 million tones in 1930 to over 400 million tones today without too many checks on toxicity to humans and animals. The analysis was conducted by Lancaster University.

Interestingly two MSPs were among those tested and now Green MSPs want a debate on the issue in the Scottish Parliament. Labour MSP Sarah Boyack and the Scottish National Party's Christine Grahame underwent the blood tests. Green MSPs have lodged a motion at Holyrood calling for a parliamentary inquiry.

Dr Richard Dixon, head of policy for WWF Scotland said, "***There is very little information available about the safety and health risks posed by the vast majority of chemicals in use***". One Scot was found to have the second highest level of PCB contamination in the UK.

Dr Dixon said some of the chemicals came from everyday materials such as paints, glues, toys, electrical goods, furniture, carpets and clothes. "***Our contaminated blood is proof that it's time for the government and chemical companies to phase out the production and use of these chemicals and develop new safe alternatives***" he said.

Health spokeswoman Eleanor Scott said, "***What is so alarming is that it is everyday products, things people find it almost impossible to avoid, as well as a legacy from the past that is contaminating people.***"

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