

Ten Toxic Habits (*you are doing everyday*) Proven to Damage Your Brain & Memory- Part 3

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This is the third in a series looking at ten surprisingly simple habits that are most toxic to the brain. (See past posts to catch yourself up.) In this episode we begin to cover the final, # 10 Toxic Habit, which is **CHRONIC EXPOSURE TO TOXINS**. I kind of like talking about this topic as it relates to health & wellness. Other topics, like diet, exercise, sleep can make the reader feel as though their poor health is all their fault... based on personal weakness, lack of will power, etc. They are basically habits one is doing to oneself. But toxins are a damaging force being done TO you. We count on the FDA, EPA, our leaders to protect us from damaging products. If it was bad for people or the environment, it wouldn't be allowed, right? Wrong. The reality is that the chemicals in household cleaners, for example, are both unregulated and untested. Companies can use whatever chemicals they want, and they don't have to

test them for safety, or list all the ingredients on the label.

It is surprising how many ways we are exposed to damaging toxins. They are in our household & personal cleaners, cosmetics, cooking utensils, food storage containers, pesticides for lawn & flowers, clothing, carpets, water bottles, in our food & in our air. Studies have proven environmental toxicity can impair cognitive performance, brain development in children & contribute to brain aging in adults. Mercury, for example, found in large fish, dental fillings & in the airborne toxins & pollutants from coal burning plants, is a neurotoxin that disrupts the nervous system & destroys brain cells. Yikes, right? The good news is, once you take the time to learn what chemicals are in what & the damage they can do, you can begin to replace them with safe ones or avoid them. A good way to start is to attack them in categories: bathroom products (mostly personal care), laundry (soaps, softeners, dryer sheets), kitchen (so many) & then garage/lawn. They can also be

tackled by chemical category. For this post, I am going to do that. Let's just look at BPA, aka bisphenol-A.

Bisphenol-a was first developed as a synthetic estrogen and has been used in the manufacture of plastics since the 1950's. So what effect do you think a synthetic estrogen may have on the body? Duh. It is an endocrine disrupter – effects menstrual cycles, fertility, thyroid & adrenal function. It is linked to weight gain, obesity, diabetes, insulin resistance, heart disease, breast & prostate cancers, developmental & behavioral issues in children (ADHD, impaired learning) ulcerative colitis & Crohn's disease (IBD). Where is it found? It is in plastics: water bottles, baby bottles, food storage containers, plastic dishes, in the lining of some canned goods & interestingly in thermal cash register receipts! Can it be avoided? Certainly. Get a stainless water vessel & use a silicone, metal, or glass straw. Use glasses in the house, not plastic cups. Only drink water from a plastic bottle if you absolutely have to. Another factor that enhances the leaching of the BPA is heat & we all know those water bottles have not been forever refrigerated. Buy

glass storage containers for your food. Use the Tupperware for dry goods only & never microwave anything in plastic. Buy your pasta sauces, soups in glass or cardboard or better still, eat unpackaged foods... like found in the produce & fresh protein sections. Can you avoid it entirely? This is unlikely, but now that you are aware, you can severely cut back on it & every little bit eases the load on your body. Now, you wonder, what about those “BPA free” labels on plastic containers? Once the awareness of BPA became prevalent, the producers created BPF & BPE which, it turns out can be even worse. Think glass, stainless, cardboard – for everything.

Is it overwhelming? Yes, at first. So just go at it slowly. Learn a little, do a little. I am here to help. I have taken multiple toxins courses, switched out MANY products & have devised swap out spread sheets in the categories of personal care, household cleaning, laundry & kitchen. Any of you can have any or all of them & I am happy to answer questions. Or I can just go back to passing on brain tips like do crossword puzzles & sudoku. When we

realize that the brain is part of the body & that everything we do to enhance the health of one, enhances the health of all, it is kind of exciting, isn't it? The possibilities are endless!

Stay tuned for next time, when probably other toxins affecting brain function will be discussed. Meanwhile, here are some interesting facts:

- *350,000 - number of chemicals & chemical mixtures registered for use globally, many of which have toxic effects*
- *1,938 - last time a federal law regulating cosmetics was passed*
- *1996 - last time EPA added a standard to the Safe Drinking Water Act.*
- *232 - average number of chemicals found in umbilical cord blood*

*Information taken from an e-book on brain health published by Zonia.com & from the Teaching Toxins

coursework taught by Lara Adler. More helpful information can be found on at - laraadler.com.