

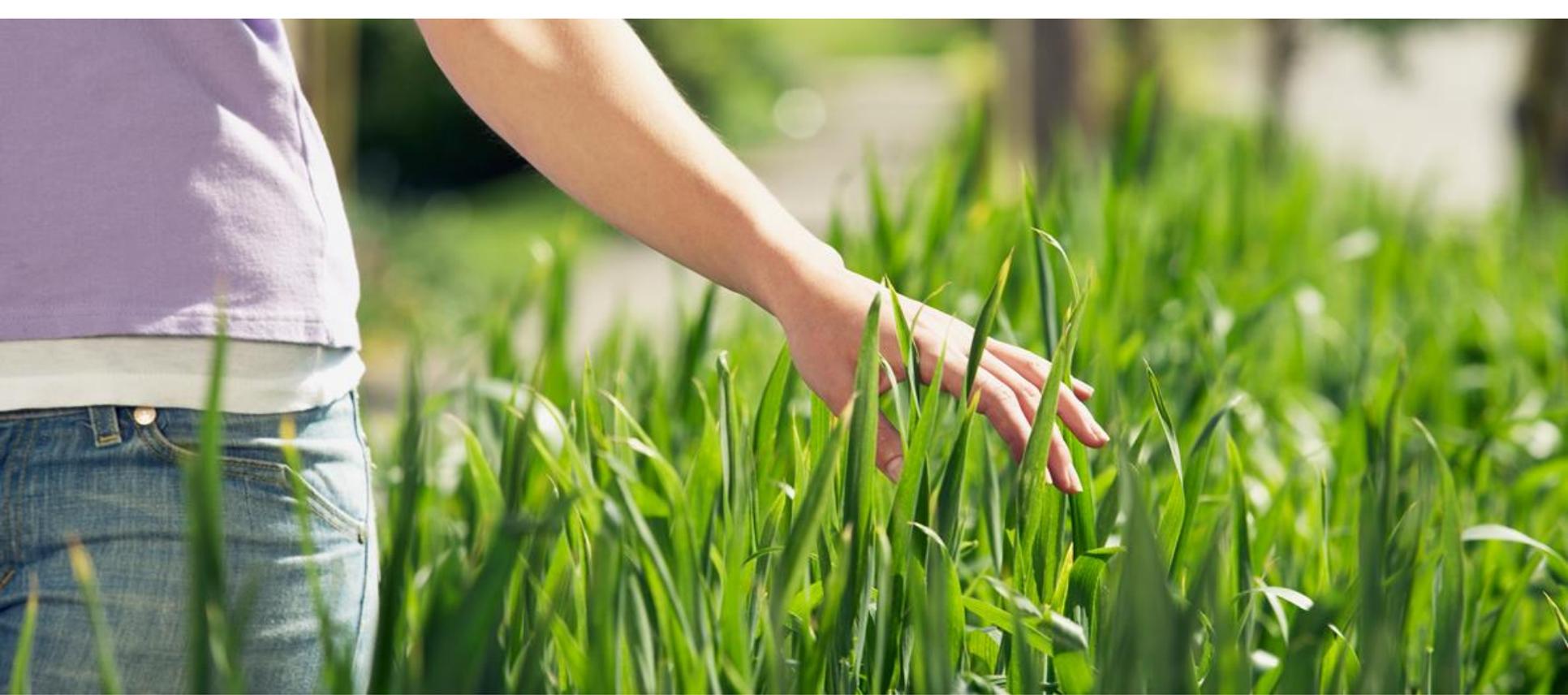
# A Partner Perspective



**Jeanne Conry, MD, PhD**

Past President

The American Congress of Obstetricians  
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# The Ostrich and the OBGYN: A Look at Reproductive Health and the Environment

Jeanne A. Conry, MD, PhD

Past President

The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

2015

**GOAL: Highlight how environmental medicine is being advanced in primary care practice and the role that ATSDR plays with its partners in health care!**

# Disclosures

I have no conflicts of interest to declare.

*Lead in Lipstick*



**ACOG**  
THE AMERICAN CONGRESS  
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AND GYNECOLOGISTS

# Why Do We Not Address Environmental Issues?

## Medical Providers do not discuss environmental impacts on health because:

- A. The research is lacking
- B. We are not comfortable with the topic
- C. There are no data to support the topic historically
- D. We have more important topics to discuss
- E. We follow the ostrich approach: we hide our heads unless we can give a full and complete answer, or solve the problem
- F. We really are unaware that there is a problem
  - We do, we just have not realized it (blood sugar, hypertension)



# Reproductive Health and the Environment

## What is “The Environment”?

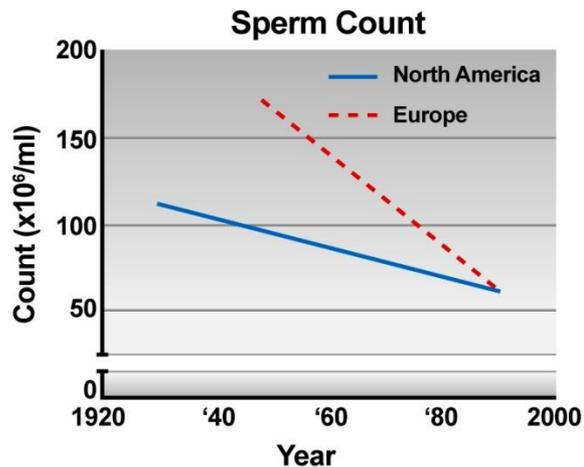
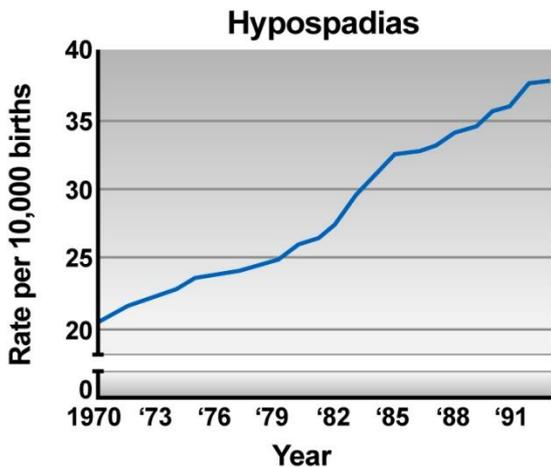
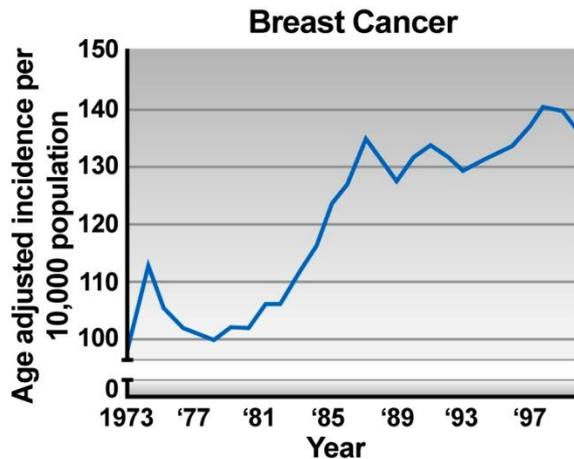
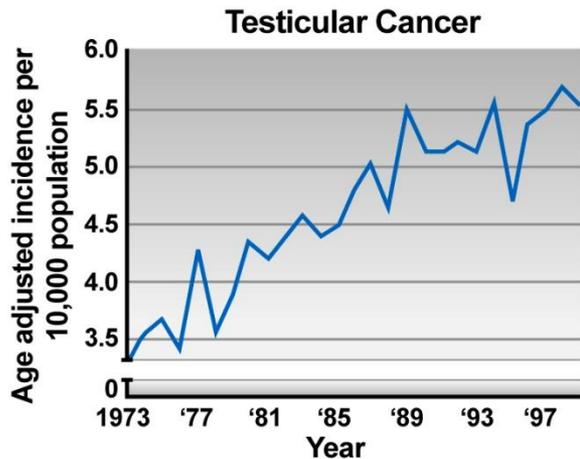


# “ENVIRONMENT” Includes:

- Industrial chemicals
- Agricultural chemicals
- Physical agents  
(heat, radiation)
- By-products of combustion  
and industrial processes  
(dioxin)
- Foods and nutrients
- Prescription drugs
- Lifestyle choices and  
substance abuse
- Social and  
economic factors

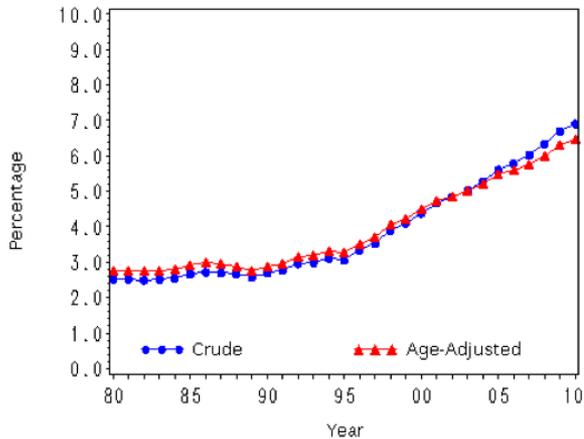


# Should We Be Concerned?

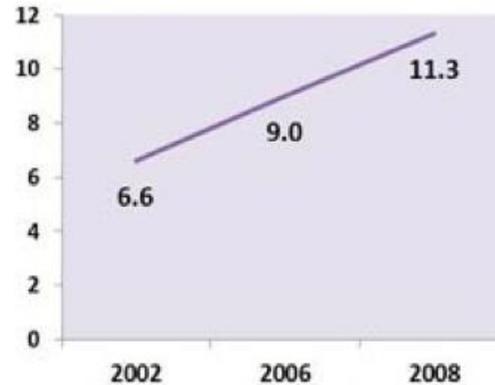


# Should We Be Concerned?

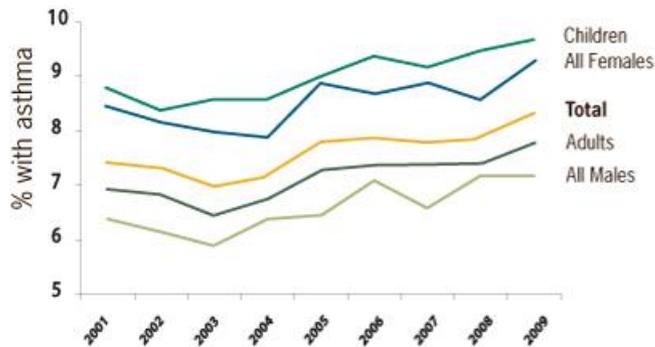
**Increase in Diabetes (1980-2010)**



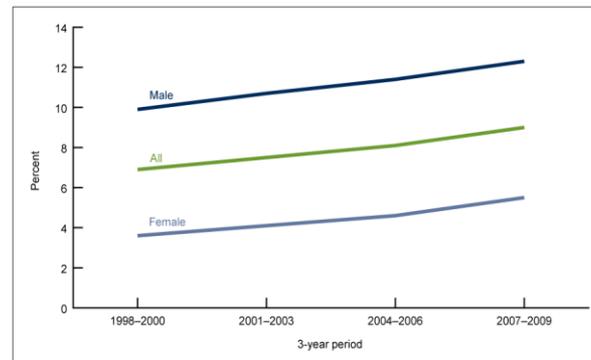
**Increase in Autism Prevalence**



**Increase in Asthma**



**Increase in ADHD**



**Dr. Birnbaum: NIEHS**, Data from CDC / National Center for Health Statistics

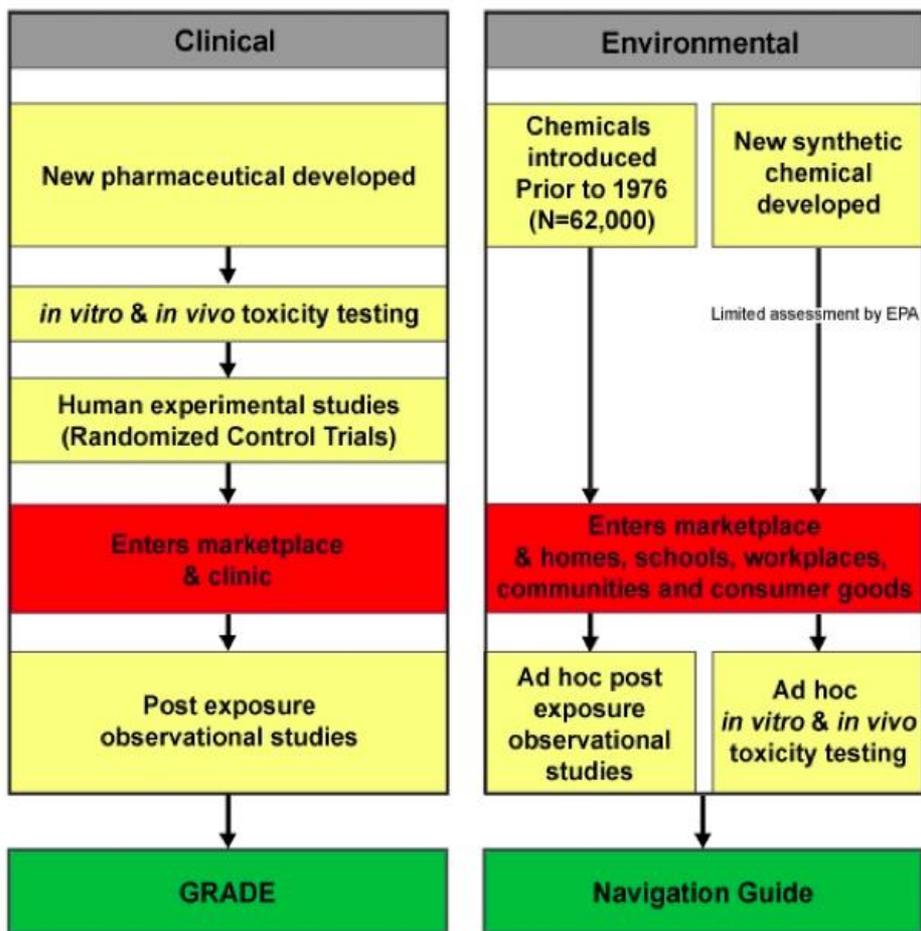
# We have forgotten the history

- Diethylstilbestrol in the 1950's
- Methyl mercury in the 1960's

**...And Endocrine Disruptors of the  
twenty-first century**

# Navigating the Science

Figure 1. Streams of Evidence for Chemical Toxicity Assessment in Clinical and Environmental Health Sciences



Pharmaceuticals must show efficacy and safety *prior to exposing humans*

Manufactured chemicals need to show evidence of harm *prior to removing human exposure*

Woodruff TJ, Sutton P and the Navigation Guide Work Group. An Evidence-Based Medicine Methodology To Bridge The Gap Between Clinical And Environmental Health Sciences *Health Affairs*, 30, no.5 (2011):931-937

# ACOG/ASRM Committee Opinion

## All exposures are not created equal

  
University of California  
San Francisco

### Work Matters

When you work with or around toxic chemicals,  
what you know really matters.

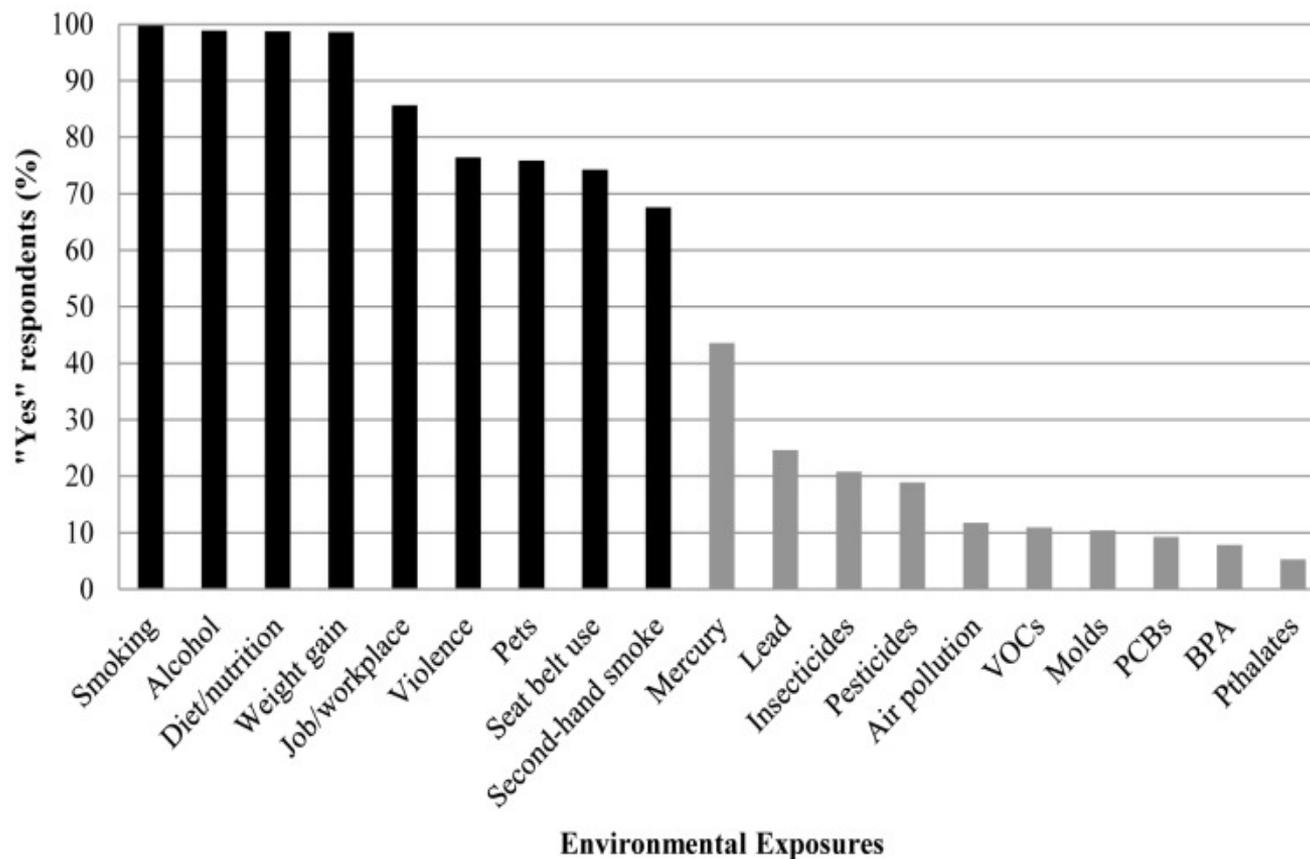


Are you pregnant? Or are you planning to become pregnant?  
Are you exposed to chemicals at work?  
If so, the information in this booklet can help you.

Women of reproductive age  
with occupational exposure to  
toxic chemicals are highly  
vulnerable to adverse  
reproductive health outcomes

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# Reproductive Health Professionals



American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology. [Volume 207, Issue 3](#), Pages 164–173, September 2012



The American College of  
Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
WOMEN'S HEALTH CARE PHYSICIANS



# COMMITTEE OPINION

Number 575, October 2013

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists Committee on Health Care for Underserved Women  
American Society for Reproductive Medicine Practice Committee  
The University of California, San Francisco Program on Reproductive Health and the Environment

*This Committee Opinion was developed by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists Committee on Health Care for Underserved Women and the American Society for Reproductive Medicine Practice Committee with the assistance of the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) Program on Reproductive Health and the Environment. The Program on Reproductive Health and Environment endorses this document. This document reflects emerging clinical and scientific advances as of the date issued and is subject to change. This information should not be construed as dictating an exclusive course of treatment or procedure to be followed.*

## Exposure to Toxic Environmental Agents

**ABSTRACT:** Reducing exposure to toxic environmental agents is a critical area of intervention for obstetricians, gynecologists, and other reproductive health care professionals. Patient exposure to toxic environmental chemicals and other stressors is ubiquitous, and preconception and prenatal exposure to toxic environmental agents can have a lasting effect on reproductive health across the life course. Prenatal exposure to certain chemicals has been shown to increase the risk of cancer in childhood; adult male exposure to pesticides is linked to altered semen quality and prostate cancer; and postnatal exposure to some pesticides can interfere with all developmental stages of function in adult females, including puberty, menstruation and ovulation, fertility and fecundity, and menopause. Environmental factors harmful to reproductive health disproportionately affect vulnerable and underserved populations, including underserved women, more vulnerable to adverse reproductive health outcomes than other populations. The evidence that links exposure to toxic environmental agents and adverse reproductive health outcomes is sufficiently robust, and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American Society for Reproductive Medicine join leading scientists and other clinical practitioners in



Royal College of  
Obstetricians and Gynaecologists  
*Bringing to life the best in women's health care*

Scientific Impact Paper No. 37  
May 2013

## Chemical Exposures During Pregnancy: Dealing with Potential, but Unproven, Risks to Child Health

# ACOG

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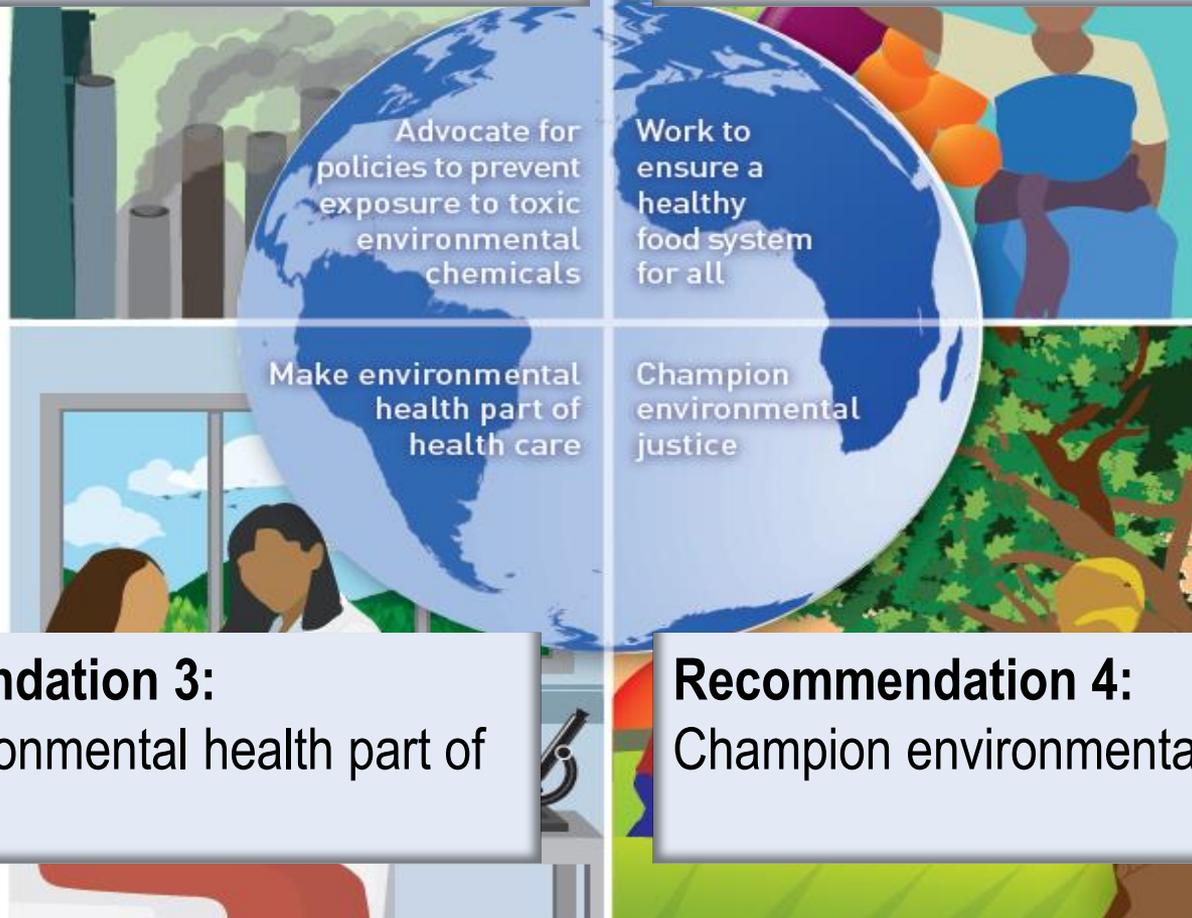


INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF GYNECOLOGY & OBSTETRICS

## Recommendations for Preventing Exposure to Toxic Chemicals

**Recommendation 1:** Advocate for policies to prevent exposure to toxic environmental chemicals

**Recommendation 2:** Work to ensure a healthy food system for all



**Recommendation 3:** Make environmental health part of health care

**Recommendation 4:** Champion environmental justice



# Ob-Gyns & Prevention



## Food Matters: What to Eat?

Your health depends on the food you eat.

The health of communities and the environment we depend on for life are also impacted by how food is grown and how it gets to your dinner plate.

This brochure provides tips for making food choices to protect your health and the health of your family and community.

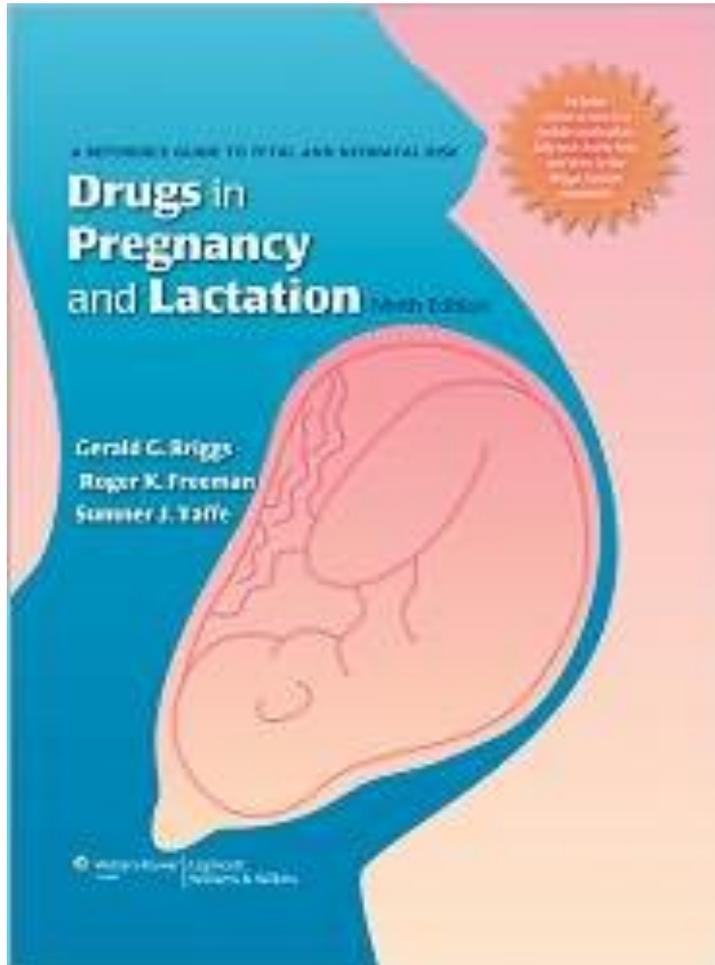
The brochure also provides many more resources to learn more about how the food we eat impacts our health. For more information, visit: <http://www.prhe.ucsf.edu/prhe/foodmatters.html>

There are many ways to make a difference. Here are some suggestions to get started.

Ob-gyns don't need to be experts in environmental health to provide useful information to patients. However, they should:

- Be familiar with their geographic area
- Take an exposure history early
- Provide information about how the food system affects health
- Communicate the science and areas of uncertainties about environmental exposures

# Our Vision



- Open the “environmental equivalent” of *Drugs in Pregnancy and Lactation*
- Have an easy on-line resource, click on bisphenol a and see what to recommend
- Clinicians to KNOW to ask about exposures

# Reproductive Health and the Environment

- PEHSU: Pediatric and Reproductive Health
- ATSDR: partnering with leaders in OBGYN, occupational medicine
- The Endocrine Society
- ACOG
- FIGO: international work group



# Questions?

**Please enter questions in the chat box.**

**Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry**

4770 Buford Highway NE, Atlanta, GA 30341

Telephone: 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)/TTY: 1-888-232-6348

Visit: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) | Contact CDC at: 1-800-CDC-INFO or [www.atsdr.gov](http://www.atsdr.gov)

*This webinar was funded through cooperative agreement U38OT000131 between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Public Health Association. The contents of this webinar are solely the responsibility of the presenters and do not necessarily represent the official views of the American Public Health Association or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*



The fifth and final installment of this webinar series  
will be **December 17, 2015 at 1:30 pm**  
**Working with Tribal Communities**

**Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry**

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