

Xenoestrogens

You may have heard the warnings about plastics and their correlation to breast cancer and glandular cancers due to xenoestrogens. We've been cautioned not to heat or reheat food in plastic or with plastic wrap. But, is the warning to not radiate food in plastic really an adequate precaution? Xenoestrogens are found in countless sources. And, the effects of xenoestrogens are far more extensive than breast and glandular cancer (although these are definitely enough to put us on high alert).

What are Xenoestrogens?

Xeno means foreign, not natural to the body or created in the body. So, xeno or foreign estrogens are unnatural chemicals that mimic the estrogen our body would make. These xenoestrogens are endocrine disruptors, meaning they disrupt the normal function of endocrine glands and hormones. This disruption of hormonal/chemical balance has the potential to create some serious diseases, including breast cancer, ovarian cancer, prostate cancer, uterine cancer, tumors, birth defects, fertility problems, miscarriages, endometriosis, premenstrual syndrome, liver cysts, fibrocystic breast disease, thyroid dysfunction, obesity and many more diseases and dysfunctions.

Where are Xenoestrogens Found?

They're found just about everywhere. They come from chemicals, and chemicals are a huge part of modern living. Over 70,000 chemicals are known to be hormone disruptors, and these are part of our everyday lives. Plastics come in many forms and so their chemical makeup will vary depending on use. One of the strongest warnings is to avoid exposure to heated plastics. Heated plastic gasses off the chemi-

cals that are xenoestrogenic. So, it's important to air out a hot car upon entering, avoid eating or drinking hot food or beverages in plastic containers, avoid putting plastics in the dishwasher, and avoid heating up food in plastic. I cringe when I see someone heat up their infant's milk in the microwave in a plastic bottle. A double whammy! Give the child a chance!... but I digress. For reheating foods a good option is in a glass container in a toaster oven or similar. Plus, the time it takes to heat up will release aromas into the room, which will get your saliva and digestive juices revved up and ready for better digestion.

Xenoestrogens are also found in herbicides, insecticides, cookware and processed foods containing certain kinds of preservatives. According to Scientific America and European studies, the difficulty in testing all the chemicals for hormone disrupting effects lies partially in the overwhelming amount of chemicals in use. Although there are tens of thousands in use, only about 2,000 have toxicology reports. Additionally, these were studied individually. We are not exposed to individual chemicals. We are exposed to mixtures of chemicals, many mixtures every second of every day. And there is also the cumulative effect to consider.

Xenoestrogens contribute to estrogen dominance disease. Both phytoestrogens (from food and plants) and xenoestrogens mimic the action of estrogen produced in the body, and can alter hormonal activity. Considering the risks and dangers of xenoestrogens, it is very important we take all precautions we can to avoid these (to the best of our ability), and to cleanse the body of these on a regular basis. ♦