

Gender-bending chemicals 'triggering early puberty in girls and putting them at risk of diabetes and cancer'

By DAVID DERBYSHIRE Last updated at 4:39 PM on 7th April 2010

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Gender-bending chemicals used in food cans, shower curtains and toys may be triggering early puberty in girls - and putting them at greater risk of cancer and diabetes, researchers say

A study has found evidence that three classes of hormone-mimicking chemicals disrupt the bodies of girls approaching adolescence.

Although the association is 'weak', the scientists say it raises serious questions about the causes of early puberty.

The average age of puberty in girls - ten years and three months - has fallen by more than a year in a single generation.

Doctors say improved diet and higher body weights of children is mostly to blame.

But some researchers believe environmental chemicals that mimic the sex hormone oestrogen could also be a factor.

The latest study found that exposure to three chemical classes - phthalates, phenols and phytoestrogens - can disrupt the timing of pubertal development in young girls.

Phthalates are banned in cosmetics in Europe, but are allowed in the US.

Phenols include the widely used chemical Bisphenol A - which is used in the lining of food cans and shatter-proof baby bottles. Phytoestrogens are naturally occurring chemicals found in soya, bread, cereals and nuts.

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In tests, girls with the highest concentrations of some of the substances in their bodies tended to develop breasts and pubic hair earlier than those with the lowest levels.

A 'GENDER-BENDING SHOPPING LIST'

BISPHENOL A is found in the plastic in baby bottles and the lining of food cans, including these products:

- Baby bottles - Mothercare and Boots
Oven-brand tuna - Tesco, Sainsbury, Asda
Oven-brand sardines - ...

Other chemicals appeared to delay puberty.

Research has shown that early pubertal development in girls can have adverse social and medical effects, including cancer and diabetes later in life,' said Dr Mary Wolff, of Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York.

Our research shows a connection between chemicals that girls are exposed to on a daily basis and either delayed or early development. While more research is needed, these data are an important first step in evaluating the impact of these common environmental agents in putting girls at risk.

The findings come from a study of 1,151 American girls. The girls were aged between six and eight at the start of the study and were monitored for up to two years.

The scientists found that all three chemicals were widely detectable in the girls' urine samples.

High exposure to some of the hormone-mimicking chemicals was 'weakly associated' with early signs of puberty. Exposure to others appeared to delay puberty.

The strongest links were seen with phthalates and phytoestrogens.

We believe that there are certain periods of vulnerability in the development of the mammary gland, and exposure to these chemicals may influence breast cancer risk in adulthood,' Dr Wolff said.

Around a third of the girls in the study were showing signs of early puberty.

Hormone-disrupting chemicals can interfere with the body by mimicking oestrogen - or by blocking it. Their impact depends on the dose and their location in the body.

British puberty expert Professor Fran Ebling, of Nottingham University, said: 'Most of the associations in this study were weak and we know that weight is a much better predictor of early puberty. But this is a very well-designed study.'

'There really is evidence that the average age girls are starting to develop breasts and pubic hair is getting lower so there's a lot of controversy as to why this is.'

Most of the evidence points at body, but there's a faint suspicion that environmental chemicals could be playing a role too.'

For more information on Phthalates please visit: http://www.thefactsabout.co.uk/content.asp?menuid=40&pageid=40&menuname=What%27s+in+my+cosmetics%3F&menu=main#np

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'We have heard about the effect of these chemicals on the fertility of men, but no action has been taken, because "it's only men"....'

Yet another example of the sexist double standards in NuLab's Feminist Gulag."

- Chris, Wokingham, 07/4/2010

Couldn't have said it better my self Chris. NOT A WORD ABOUT MEN IN THE ARTICLE. Second class citizenship as usual. Men DIE and its not worth bothering about but if it affects women or "Women and children" then we must act immediately to stop this travesty!!!!

- Jimmy, Leith, 09/4/2010 21:45

to: - Charles, Rockville, MD USA

100 years ago a simple infection would kill you as would industrial accidents that are prevented today by better knowledge and protective attitudes.

From theweightoftheevidence.com:

Prior to 1950, increasing life expectancy was mainly due to more children surviving childhood, a greater understanding of proper hygiene and improvements in the workplace for young adults which resulted in fewer accidental deaths. Since 1950, life expectancy increases are due to better healthcare, especially care of adults who reach 40 years or older - basically medical screening and treatment is undeniably better now than it was 60 years ago - and there is a much broader access to healthcare across the population. The greatest advance in longevity is really in those who reach age 90...but this longer life expectancy trend levels off pretty much the same once one lives to 80 as it has in the past.

- Paul, Denver, USA, 07/4/2010 22:34

For those of you that say all this is rubbish:

For tens of thousands of years, mankind has lived WITHOUT shower gels, 100's cosmetic chemicals, daily teeth brushing with fluoride, preservatives, additives, plastics, smoking, shampoos...the list goes on.

It is hard for us to imagine that the rise in cancer rates (particularly breastcancer), genetic/organic abnormalities, diabetes etc we have witnessed over the last couple of generations has something to do with the chemical world we live in today, as we are born into an abundant market where products are tested only to their legal requirements. This is the tallest generation in Germany, ever, mainly due to the rise in growth hormone used in the beef industry. The reason risks are patchy in the scientific community due to government funding and corporate profit pressure.

How many people know what the Codex Alimentarius is? Things are about to get MUCH worse and we are powerless to defend ourselves due to ignorance.

- FlipVicious, AfterworldORRawHumaneMotion, 07/4/2010 19:39

I do wonder when people will realise that unless we move away from a PROFIT-DRIVEN society then none of this will ever change. EVER. It cannot. Why? Well let's put it the test in as simple a way as possible.

Is it more profitable for a pharmaceutical company to cure the symptoms of a disease or cure the disease itself?

Would the makers of anti-dandruff shampoo want people to be totally rid of dandruff or continually needing to buy their product in order to rid of it for a short time?

When a hospital says they are 'treating more patients than ever' why do people assume this must be a good thing? Doesn't it just mean more people are ill?

Nature has been curing disease in humans successfully for over four millenniums, whilst pharmaceutical companies have been in big business for a little over 6 decades, who do you think has the better chance of success in curing any illness?

Problems arise of course because people are too ignorant and are therefore deceived swifly.

- Jimbobly, west midlands, 07/4/2010 18:58

To: - Charles, Rockville, MD USA, (1st post).

I am suprised the obvious reason has eluded you. So much for qualifications. I know all about this stuff, have done for ages. I research things I don't just accept what I am told. A lot of what so called professionals say is just what they were taught, did they ever check the information? no just suck it up... Anyway re your point: People live longer now than years ago accepted (nutrition) but there is far more chronic illness physical and mental than then. So a longer life but not a healthier one... I'd rather have 60 years of great health and then pop my clogs than have bad health most of my life and then a long lingering death at 75 or 80. I avoid as many man made products as possible. (Nothing wrong with frozen whole produce BTW). Use organic or non chemical products. Use glass stainless steel and various forms of pottery as containers. All are inert, plastics, no thank you. And you too will have rude health!

- Tim Smith, Wokingham UK., 07/4/2010 14:06

More scaremongering CODSWALLOP. Just what DOESNT cause cancer???? Sorry all, but I now ignore it ALL. One week we have a 'team of scientists' saying that something is 'bad', the next week another 'team of scientists' says it's good. So if you will excuse me, I will take absolutely no notice of this constant background noise of scares and wail-crying.

eat what you like (in moderation), a balanced diet. The rare NO BAD FOODS. NONE. It is overindulgence and lack of balance tha is the problem.

The biggest killer is the stress and worry with all of this band-wagon jumping codswallop. Oh and whatever you do, DO NOT BREATHE AIR, as everyone who has done this DIES. It is 100% FATAL.

- Chr Jeremy Zeid (Con), Harrow, HMP-Looneybin-England, 07/4/2010 13:43

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Dancing With The Stars: Baby's back, but Jennifer Grey's in tears as she breaks down over Patrick Swayze. She performed the Viennese waltz.



Chantelle determined to get in shape ahead of love talks with Preston. Ultimate Big Brother star was put through her paces by a personal trainer.



X Factor call girl arrested 140 times but show's bosses STILL refuse to axe controversial contestant Simon Cowell is sticking by Chloe Heald



Never wear stilets to church! Fashion muse Daphne Guinness takes a tumble at Alexander McQueen's memorial. Naomi and Kate also at St Paul's



Nice moon boots! Cheryl Cole steps out in some eye-popping footwear. Quirky Adidas shoes designed by Tony Yamamoto



What to wear?: Victoria Beckham has a wardrobe crisis before Brooklyn's football game. She settled on jeans, a T-shirt and a practical pair of flip flops



Smouldering Kate Winslet debuts her model new man on red carpet. Actress wore stunning LBD at San Sebastian film festival



The mothers are as much to blame as the 'reckless father' of 15 children by 14 women. BEL MCKENNEY on 'weasel-faced' Keith MacDonald



Halle Berry reveals her sheer beauty in a very daring little black dress. Actress, 44, wore a Roberto Cavalli number to charity auction



Kylie Minogue's battle to block repeats of her Old Neighbours episodes. Pop princess is ashamed of her past as Charlene Mitchell in long-running soap



I was never drunk on air, insists former Radio 2 DJ Sarah Kennedy. The 60-year-old left the BBC earlier this month after 20 years



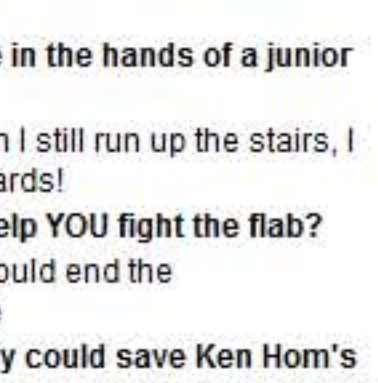
Kim Kardashian dusts herself off after break-up for a night out in Milan. Reality TV star split from Miles Austin this week



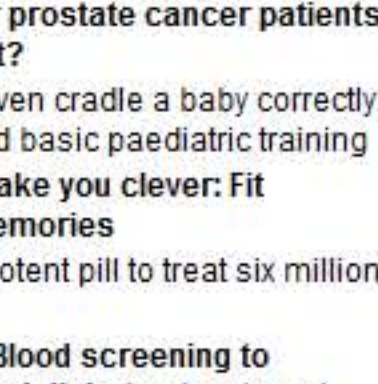
Brave Michael Douglas gets a kiss from his leading lady Catherine Zeta Jones at Wall Street sequel premiere. The 65-year-old continuing promo duties



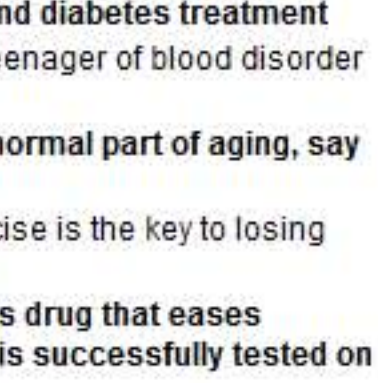
Barefoot Bond girl Rosamund Pike indulges in some dirty darts with Dominic Cooper at Made in Dagenham party. Stars posed with vintage Ford on red carpet earlier



Katy Perry falls for Elmo's charm on a visit to Sesame Street. She chided him around to a child-friendly version of her hit Hot N Cold



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Lady Gaga the angry activist takes to the stage at political rally. She's taking the military's Don't Ask Don't Tell policy



Seventies classic Hawaii Five-O returns with a big-budget makeover. Bikini-clad criminals meet shirtless cops in pilot episode



Danni Minogue and Kris Smith bring baby Ethan back to London. The 38-year-old arrived with very precious cargo ahead of X Factor live shows



I love my love handles - and so should every woman! ARABELLA WEIR remains deliciously defiant as scientists say they can freeze fat



Agness Deyn gets a spiky new haircut. The model, 27, even found a dinosaur handbag to match her new locks



Forget the facelifts, go for a footlift, says Sandie Shaw. Barbed princess orpop has had cosmetic surgery to transform her ugly feet



Ouch, that's got to hurt! Pete Burns covers his face in piercings. Cosmetically altered star had eyebrows, forehead and cheeks pierced last week



I had a baby on Twitter! Mother gives Tweet-by-Tweet account of her 13-hour home birth. Fi Star-Stone had drug free labour



A mother's last gift of love: Cancer victim leaves hospice to see her son's first day at school... and dies the next day



Don't worry Mr President... you have Katie Price's full support. Model wears Barack Obama T-shirt for Stateside arrival



That's one way to climb the charts! Nadine Coyle flashes her very long legs in new video. She wears a high-slimming number in Instabile clip



VAG Claudia Keane models for Ultra... as she plans to launch her own fashion range. Motherhood has 'given her extra curves'



At 62, Hillary Clinton goes back to her roots. Scraped back style is the talk of the UN General Assembly in New York



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The terrifying face of plastic surgery: Alicia Douvall is swollen and bruised after going under the knife. AGAI! Former glamour model can't resist it



Orlando Bloom checks his Blackberry... while in full 17th Century costume on set of Three Musketeers. No ink and parchment these days



Model mother Heidi Klum takes adorable daughter Lou for a paddle. Older children Leni, Henry and Johan were also on fun day out



George Clooney is in with the in-Jaws as he gets a lift to the airport from his girlfriend's dad. He got warm reception from Elizabeth's family



I missed my family too much! Baltazar Getty on why he returned to his wife after Sienna Miller affair. Mother-of-four Rosetta is understanding



It's Christine versus Alex as Daybreak takes on The One Show at National Television Awards. Both shows are up for gongs



Heroes' Hayden Panettiere cast as sexy Knoxy in film of Meredith Kercher story. The Amanda Knox Story is due for release next year



Nice work if you can get it! Blake Lively films a steamy scene with co-star. Bizarre costume involved ballygown and Uggs



Short skirt! Julia Roberts raises her helmine for Egi, P'ray, Love d'ides in Spain. The 42-year-old joined by Javier Bardem



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