



Avoid Flame Retardants

The Consumer Product Safety Commission is warning people to stop buying the following products if they're made with "organohalogen flame retardants" because they contribute to health problems:

1. durable infant or toddler products, children's toys, child care articles and other children's products (other than children's car seats);
2. residential upholstered furniture;
3. mattresses and mattress pads; and
4. plastic electronic casings.

You can read the [whole guidance here](#).

Foam-based products the CPSC guidance covers don't require chemical flame retardants either because they aren't necessary to prevent a fire (as the products aren't primary sources of fires starting) or they can be made with a flame barrier that doesn't contain harmful chemicals.

Tips for avoiding flame retardants:

1. **Furniture:** Look for the label. Thanks to a California law, most companies now label whether foam-based products are made with or without added flame retardants. Not on the label? Ask a salesperson.
2. **Replacing nap mats?** Look for flame retardant (FR)-free options, either FR-free foam or cots. Research shows making this change significantly lowers the levels of FRs in child care settings! Here's some information on child care nap mats from our colleagues at Center for Environmental Health: www.ceh.org/wp-content/uploads/Nap-Mat-Fact-Sheet-rev.pdf
3. Limit **electronics** in spaces children inhabit. This is good for many reasons, including developmental concerns about too much screen time. When you do include televisions or computers, seek out companies that make their casings without harmful FRs. Our colleagues at Toxic Free Future tested televisions for flame retardants and released their findings last fall, in time for the CPSC decision: toxicfreefuture.org/science/research/flame-retardants-tvs/
4. **Children's products:** Foam-based products made for children are not the source of ignition in a fire, there is no fire-safety benefit from adding FR chemicals. However, many foam based items are not labeled one way or the other. The good news is that manufacturers are increasingly making these products without FRs, now that foam made for furniture doesn't have to include FRs. Join the Getting Ready for Baby Campaign's effort to ensure child care retailers screen for FRs and other harmful chemicals. www.gettingready4baby.org

*"Numerous peer-reviewed, published studies show that the vast majority of consumers have measurable quantities of OFRs in their blood. The known adverse health effects of these chemicals to consumers include: Reproductive impairment (e.g., abnormal gonadal development, reduced number of ovarian follicles, reduced sperm count, increased time to pregnancy); neurological impacts (e.g., decreased IQ in children, impaired memory, learning deficits, altered motor behavior, hyperactivity); endocrine disruption and interference with thyroid hormone action (potentially contributing to diabetes and obesity); genotoxicity; cancer; and immune disorders. **These chemicals have a disproportionately negative health effect on vulnerable populations, including children.**"*

- Consumer Product Safety Commission



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