



What are Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs)?

Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, known also as PAHs, are a class of chemicals found in coal, crude oil, and gasoline. PAHs have been linked to cancer, as well as reproductive toxicity and damage to pulmonary, gastrointestinal, renal, and dermatologic systems.

Where are Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) Found?

PAHs are produced when **coal, oil, gas, wood, garbage, tobacco, and foods** are burned. PAHs usually occur in combinations of many different chemicals within the class. Certain PAHs have been found as contaminants of **drinking water**.

For a safer option, avoid breathing in smoke of all types, including wood smoke and vehicular exhaust. Avoid charring meat and other food on the grill as much as possible.

Why are Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) Concerning?

Some PAHs, such as benzo[a]pyrene, have been classified as **carcinogenic to humans** by the International Agency For Research on Cancer (IARC), and **reasonably anticipated to be human carcinogens** by the National Toxicology Program (NTP).

Where can I find more information about Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs)?

To learn more about this hazardous chemical, please visit the following organization's websites:

Scientific Government Resources:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) Factsheet
- Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry: ToxFAQs™ for Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs)
- National Cancer Institute: Chemicals in Meat Cooked at High Temperatures and Cancer Risk

Consumer Support Information:

- Environmental Working Group: Benzo[a]pyrene