



By Leslie Smith Jr., USA TODAY

BPA-free: Several products, including baby bottles, address consumer concerns about the chemical.

FDA: Products with BPA are safe to use

The Food and Drug Administration said Wednesday that it sees no reason to tell consumers to stop using products such as baby bottles made with a controversial chemical found in many plastic items. Norris Alderson, the FDA's associate commissioner for science, said that although the regulatory agency is reviewing safety concerns about the chemical bisphenol A, also known as BPA, "a large body of available evidence" shows that products such as liquid or food containers made with it are safe. In testimony before a Senate subcommittee, Alderson also defended the FDA's reliance on two industry-funded studies in determining that products containing BPA are safe. Many other studies have found a variety of health problems in laboratory animals exposed to BPA.

Guidelines issued for heart-device patients

People with implanted heart devices need closer follow-up care, an international panel of heart specialists said Wednesday, recommending the first guidelines for monitoring this rapidly growing group of patients. Nearly 2 million people worldwide have pacemakers, defibrillators or other machines to help their hearts beat faster, slower or more regularly. Among the guidelines suggested: checkups every three to 12 months, at least once a year in person, and giving each patient an "ID card" with details on the device to help resolve safety questions and guide emergency workers. The guidelines were announced in San Francisco at a meeting of the Heart Rhythm Society, an association of doctors who treat heartbeat problems.