

ARSENIC IN DRINKING WATER



A Critical Risk for Prenatal and Child Health

Arsenic is found in soil and rocks and can contaminate groundwater, the source of drinking water for anyone using a private well. As a known carcinogen, **chronic exposure to arsenic through contaminated drinking water can lead to severe long-term health issues.**

Long-Term Health Risks of Early-Life Exposure



Premature birth or pregnancy loss

Arsenic can impact growing babies, resulting in **miscarriage, low birth weight, and birth defects.**



Brain and nerve development

Arsenic interferes with rapid brain growth, leading to **lower IQ scores, attention problems, and memory difficulties.**



Lifetime cancer risk

Arsenic **increases the risk of cancers later in life,** particularly skin, bladder, and lung cancer.



Immune system

Arsenic weakens the immune response, causing **more frequent respiratory infections** and possibly **altered vaccine response.**



Growth disruption

Arsenic can interfere with cell growth, leading to **stunted growth** and disruption of **thyroid hormones.**

If your child is experiencing any of these symptoms, consult with their primary care physician and ask about arsenic exposure.

Prevent and Reduce Arsenic Exposure in Children

1

Test your water if you live in a rural area.

2

Use filters certified for arsenic removal (look for NSF/ANSI Standard 53 or 58).

3

Offer a variety of foods — rotate grains and limit rice-based products for toddlers.

4

Wash fruits and vegetables well to remove soil residues.

5

Encourage clean hand habits, especially before eating.

6

Spread the word — encourage friends and family to test their water for arsenic.

Information provided by the Mayo Clinic.



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WATER



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