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Every Dutch person has 'forever chemicals' in their blood – study

The research has found widespread contamination from man-made products



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Every person in the Netherlands has so-called "forever chemicals" in their blood, often at levels above health safety limits, according to the findings of the first nationwide study on the issue in an EU country, published on Thursday.

PFAS, or per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, are a group of human-made chemicals used in products like plastic food wrappers, non-stick cookware, stain-resistant fabrics, cleaning agents, and personal care items. Due to their durability, they persist in the environment extremely slowly and are found in almost every...

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and living organisms for years, hence the nickname “forever chemicals.”

The survey published on Thursday by the Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM), found that “Everyone in the Netherlands has different types of PFAS in the blood. In almost everyone, the amount of PFAS is higher than the health limit value.”

Human exposure typically occurs through contaminated food, drinking water, household products, air, and soil. Studies have linked certain PFAS compounds to health issues such as high cholesterol, infertility, kidney problems, and some cancers.

Though their presence does not guarantee illness, the chemicals may impair the immune system, with the severity of effects depending on the level and duration of exposure, as well as individual health conditions, the institute noted.



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The study analyzed around 1,500 blood samples collected between 2016 and 2017, and RIVM confirmed it is currently examining samples from 2025 to assess recent exposure trends.

While PFAS are known for persisting in the body, they can gradually disappear over time, the institute noted, stressing the need to reduce daily intake.

Similar studies have been conducted in the US, Canada, and Australia, revealing widespread exposure across various populations.

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