

# 8 Simple Ways to Protect Your Family from Arsenic Contamination in Rice and Other Foods

## ABOUT ARSENIC

- Often found in soil, water, and food
- Health risks include cancer and decreased learning ability for children
- Rice-based foods are most people's top arsenic source - rice naturally absorbs a lot of arsenic from the environment
- There are easy ways to cut down on the arsenic in your family's diet



## YOUR BABY'S CEREAL

### Avoid infant rice cereal.

It has 6 times more arsenic than other kinds of infant cereal, on average, and is the #1 source of arsenic in infant's diets.

### Choose infant cereals that are naturally low in arsenic.

Oatmeal, multi-grain, and other non-rice cereals are the best options. They are consistently low in arsenic and are a healthy choice for babies.

#### FACT:

Studies show low arsenic in all brands tested for these infant cereal types: barley, buckwheat, oatmeal, multi-grain, quinoa, and wheat.



### Pick the best low-arsenic cereals for your baby.

- **Go easy on your budget:** Oatmeal and multi-grain cereals can be as affordable as infant rice cereal.
- **Consider cereals that are iron-fortified.** Ask your pediatrician which iron-rich foods are best for your baby. The American Academy of Pediatrics says foods high in iron are especially important for exclusively breast-fed babies who don't get extra iron from formula.
- **Introduce your baby to a variety of grains.** This gives them a variety of nutrients, too.

#### FACT:

Even multi-grain cereals with rice as an ingredient are good options. They have less than one-third as much arsenic as rice cereals.

For your baby's first solid food, less arsenic is best. Good news – rice cereal doesn't need to be your baby's first food, according to U.S. FDA. Good low-arsenic cereals for a first food include oatmeal, barley, and multi-grain cereals, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics.



## THE RICE YOUR FAMILY EATS

### Choose and prepare wisely.

Does your family love rice? Risks from arsenic in rice add up over a lifetime. Making simple changes today will make a difference. Here are 3 essential tips:

- Cook rice in extra water that you pour off before eating. This can cut the arsenic levels by up to 60 percent, according to U.S. FDA studies.
- For the lowest levels, buy basmati rice grown in California, India, and Pakistan. White rice has less arsenic than brown rice. Rice from Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas, or simply "U.S." has the highest levels, according to testing by Consumer Reports.
- Eat other grains like quinoa and farro instead of rice to help cut your family's exposures.

### Eating gluten-free? Cut down on rice-based ingredients.

Rice flour is common in gluten-free foods, and adds extra arsenic. A gluten-free diet may increase children's exposures 14-fold, according to research focused on children with Celiac disease. Read ingredient labels and choose products made from other grains.

To find out more about the safety of your baby's cereal, read our full report on the test results from our study of 42 cereal products from 9 popular brands of infant cereals.

Download the report at [healthybabycereals.org](http://healthybabycereals.org)



## OTHER FOODS FOR INFANTS AND CHILDREN

### Serve whole fruit instead of juice.

Apple, pear, and grape juices also have arsenic. Serve whole or pureed fruits (like applesauce) instead. A diversity of soft fruits and vegetables like bananas and sweet potatoes is best. For your baby, that means less arsenic and sugar and more healthy fiber and nutrients.

### Choose healthy, rice-free snacks.

Snacks likely to be high in arsenic include puffed rice, rice cakes, and cereal bars and other snacks sweetened with brown rice syrup. Choose rice-free snacks instead.

### Don't choose rice milk.

Rice milk also has high arsenic levels. Ask your pediatrician about other options, if your child needs a substitute for cow's milk.



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