

Viewpoint: No, the data do not show that using sex toys release cancer-causing phthalate microplastics into your body

Microplastics are a kernel of biological concern that gets magnified by hype, like endocrine “disrupting” chemicals or weedkillers detectable in breast milk. In modern times, we can detect anything in anything, so the ‘zero’ levels of the 1960s no longer exist, because testing is 1,000,000 times more sensitive than it was in the past.

The presence of something does not mean real risk. There are sharks in the ocean but people in Montana are smart enough to know that hazard does not translate into their risk. That’s why [concern about microplastics in sex toys are overblown](#). It posits that phthalates are endocrine disruptors, though science says that is not true, and because they are harmful – though only using correlation – their presence means disease.

Everything is an endocrine disruptor. I often drink coffee while writing and the changes in my hormones are detectable. As is the case with every other food. But placed in the hands of an activist, like happened when environmental lawyers wanted to go after BPA despite it being used for 70 years without any harm, and ‘the presence of any pathogen becomes pathology’ logic gets published despite it being biologically impossible at even an order of magnitude above real-world levels.

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The trolling for attention is clear, since they state that on surveys a majority of Americans have reported using a sex toy. Once? Monthly? Daily? They don’t know and it doesn’t matter, the reason Americans no longer trust epidemiology is because when they are sorting through surveys they will happily include 10,000 doses of something in analyses with one. And declare a hazard despite such sloppy methodology.

The authors declared that microplastics were more likely from one of the four sex toy types, an that sounds bad, but if I tell you that orange juice shortens your lifespan, which someone else notes it only shortens it by one second per lifetime – you’ll be angry at me, you won’t insist the other person is a shill for Big Orange.

Yet that is common in modern culture. Activists scare people and any academic crazy enough to note that biology, toxicology, and chemistry don’t work that, they get insinuations they are being paid off.

Knowing how slippery the correlation is, the authors still feel the need to tout “the potential risks of sex toys” so consumers can “make informed decisions.”

I know nothing about sex toys but if I knew so little about chemistry I thought there was real risk, I’d find a new career.

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