

High Levels of Toxic Chemicals Found in Cats

An Environmental Working Group study found that pets carry a high level of pollutants.

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A new study suggests that cats are exposed to industrial chemicals in furniture, carpeting, contaminated dust and some pet foods. A new study indicates that dogs and cats are exposed to complex mixtures of industrial chemicals, often at levels higher than humans.

The Environmental Working Group, a nonprofit research organization based in Washington D.C., undertook the study, "Polluted Pets," to investigate how much exposure pets have to contaminants found in homes and outdoor environments.

"Like humans, pets are also exposed to toxic chemicals on a daily basis, and as this investigation found, are contaminated at higher levels," said Jane Houlihan, vice president for Research at EWG.

"The presence of chemicals in dogs and cats sounds a cautionary warning for the present and future health of children as well. This study demonstrating the chemical body burden of dogs and cats is a wake-up call for stronger safety standards from industrial chemical exposures that will protect all members of our families, including our pets."

The study, which analyzed blood and urine from 20 dogs and 40 cats, found that the dogs and cats were contaminated with 48 of 70 industrial chemicals tested, including 43 chemicals at levels higher than those typically found in people.

Forty-six chemicals were detected in the cat group, 96 percent of which were at higher levels than people. The chemicals included 9 carcinogens, 40 chemicals toxic to the reproductive system, 34 neurotoxins and 15 chemicals toxic to the endocrine system.

Relative to people, cats showed very high levels of neurotoxic fire retardants and methyl mercury, a pollutant from coal power plants and a common seafood contaminant, according to the study.

For example, levels of fire retardants were 23 times higher in cats than people. Cats also had more than 5 times the amounts of mercury.

Possible sources of exposure include foam furniture and bedding manufactured before 2005, contaminated air and house dust, and food contaminated with flame-retardant polybrominated diphenyl ethers, or PBDEs.

For the full report, [click here](#).