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## **Congressional Study Based on Healthy Babies Bright Futures' 2019 Report Confirms "Significant Levels of Toxic Heavy Metals" in Commercial Baby Food**

WASHINGTON, DC — Top baby foods are contaminated with dangerous levels of toxic heavy metals, with amounts of arsenic, lead, cadmium, and mercury routinely found in excess of recommended limits, according to a [new review](#) of baby-food companies' internal testing by the House Committee on Oversight and Reform.

The Congressional study was launched after [Healthy Babies Bright Futures' \(HBBF\) 2019 study found heavy metals in 95% of baby foods](#) and drew widespread attention to the problem.

The 2019 study tested 168 baby foods spanning 61 brands and found that 95% of baby foods tested are contaminated with one or more of four toxic heavy metals—arsenic, lead, cadmium and mercury. All but nine of the 168 tested baby foods contained at least one of these four toxic metals. And 87% of foods tested contained more than one toxic heavy metal. All four toxic heavy metals were detected in one out of every four foods tested.

The new Congressional report finds that companies routinely ignore internal standards and fail to test their finished, processed products, leading to the use of contaminated ingredients and additives and unknown amounts of heavy metals in the final mixtures that babies eat.

According to internal company documents and test results obtained by the Subcommittee, commercial baby foods are tainted with significant levels of toxic heavy metals, including arsenic, lead, cadmium, and mercury. One in six children in America has a developmental disability, and exposure to toxic heavy metals causes permanent decreases in IQ, diminished future economic productivity, and increased risk of future criminal and antisocial behavior in children. Toxic heavy metals endanger infant neurological development and long-term brain function.

"This compelling new evidence lays bare FDA's clear failure to protect babies from the toxic heavy metals in their food," says Charlotte Brody, National Director of Healthy Babies Bright Futures. "While FDA studies the problem and companies set lax internal standards, millions of



babies are exposed to these contaminants every day. It is time to step up and finally take clear action.”

“The science on these toxic metals is clear: there is no question of the harm they cause to babies’ developing brains,” added Jane Houlihan, HBBF’s Research Director. “Parents can only do so much to shop their way out of this problem. We need fast action by FDA and baby-food companies to protect our vulnerable infants.”

As part of our commitment to the health and safety of baby food, HBBF is a member of the Baby Food Council. [The Baby Food Council](#) is a group of infant and toddler food companies, supported by key stakeholders, that has begun development of a Baby Food Standard and Certification Program aimed at reducing heavy metals in baby foods to as low as reasonably achievable.

To learn what parents can do to keep babies safe, [visit our fact sheet here](#).

ABOUT HEALTHY BABIES BRIGHT FUTURES: [Healthy Babies Bright Futures](#) (HBBF) is an alliance of scientists, nonprofit organizations and donors working to create and support initiatives that measurably reduce exposures to neurotoxic chemicals in the first one thousand days of development. Our efforts are inspired and supported by science and data, and designed to help restore the chance for a full life to children who would otherwise face brain-diminishing exposures to toxic chemicals beginning in utero.