

# FLAME RETARDANTS | WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

## 1 Possible sources of exposure

- Food (fish, meat, and dairy products)
- Household dust & dust particles
- Transplacental transfer
- Contaminated breast milk
- Electronics and electrical devices
- Occupational exposure (firefighters, electronics repair and recycling, carpet installation)
- Contaminated air
- Baby and children's products\* (carseats, crib mattresses, changing pads, & some toys)
- Indoor air and dust:
  - Transportation products
  - Insulation materials
  - Furnishings

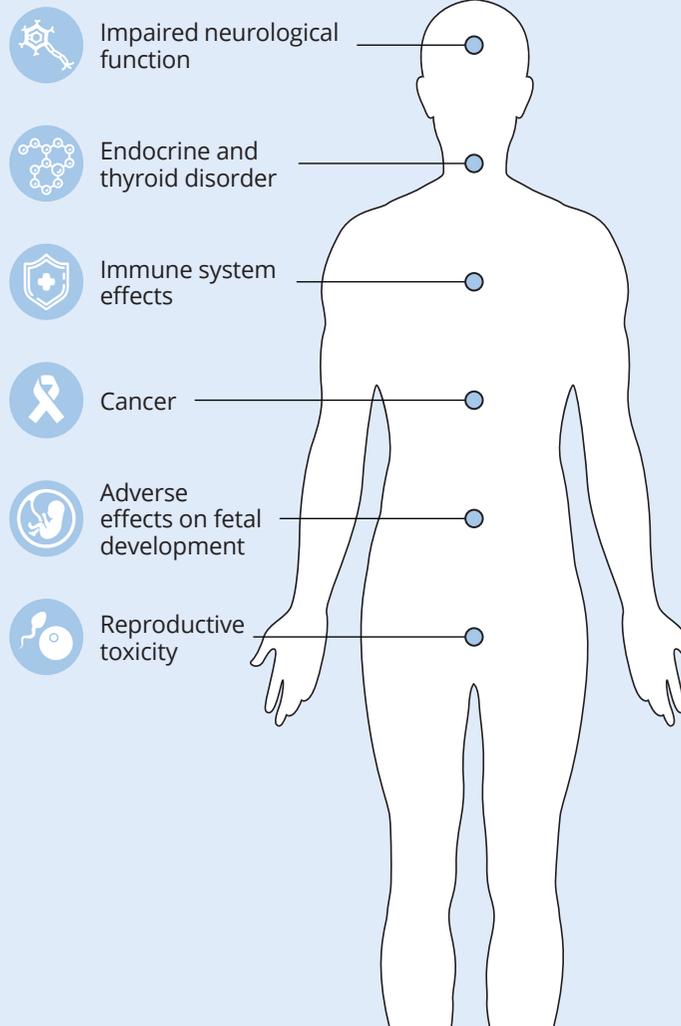
## 2 How can flame retardants enter your body?

Via ingestion

Via maternal ingestion

Via inhalation

## 3 How might flame retardants affect your health?



## 4 How can you reduce your exposure to flame retardants?

- ✓ Keep household dust levels down, by wet mopping and vacuuming with a high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter
- ✓ Wash your hands often
- ✓ Try to **purchase** baby products and wooden furniture filled with cotton, polyester, or wool, instead of polyurethane foam
- ✓ **Ventilate** your house properly to reduce dust
- ✓ Use a minimum of carpeting and draperies
- ✓ **Look** for furniture labelled "Flame Retardant Free" or "Free of Halogenated Flame Retardants"

### Where can they possibly be found?

Flame retardants can be found in food including fish, meat and dairy products, as well as other items such as furniture, carpets, curtains and other textiles, paints, food packaging, surfboards, home insulation materials, mattresses, carpets, curtains, appliances, electronics (laptops, televisions, phones, cables, wires, and circuit boards), car seats, overhead compartments and other automotive parts, many baby and children's products including toys.

The **European Union** has taken measures to prevent citizen exposure to some hazardous flame retardants, as well as to reduce exposure to others by restricting and/or banning some and regulating them under the various EU chemicals and food legislations.

For further information on how the European Union is protecting citizens read the **HBM4EU Flame Retardants Factsheet**.