




## Biomonitoring: Measuring Levels of Chemicals in People – and What the Results Mean

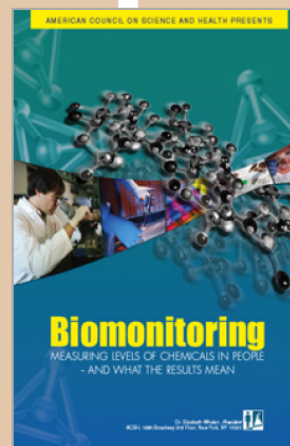
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 [Click here to see our Video News Release summarizing the implications of biomonitoring.](#)

 [Dr. Whelan speaks about biomonitoring on WCBS TV in New York.](#)

In the simplest terms, biomonitoring is the sampling and measurement of specific chemicals in biological tissue. The concentration of a chemical in human tissues or the total amount of a chemical in the body is sometimes referred to as the “body burden” of an individual. Due to the constant relationship we have with our environment, we are exposed to thousands of natural and man-made chemicals every day. This exposure occurs from air, food, and water, as well as many consumer products with which we come into contact on a daily basis. In addition to tens of thousands of chemicals that naturally occur in foods, there are also natural sources of chemical exposure, including minerals leaching into ground water from soils, dioxins from forest fires or volcanic eruptions, and biological processes (as with pollen, hormones, and hydrogen sulfide). Of course, virtually everyone is also exposed to many man-made chemicals, such as those in paints, cosmetics, pesticides, drugs, plastics, household cleaners, carpeting and fuels. Each of us has ingested, inhaled, or absorbed most of these chemicals, many of which are easily measured in blood or urine.

Biomonitoring data can indicate the amount of a substance actually absorbed into the body. Because of technological advancements, it is now possible to detect extraordinarily low concentrations of chemicals in human tissue. Data from both toxicology (the study of the



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