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## *National Report on Human Exposure to Environmental Chemicals*

### **Spotlight on Triclosan**

Triclosan is a chemical with antibacterial properties that has been used widely in many consumer products for at least the past 20 years. It is an ingredient in many detergents, soaps, skin cleansers, deodorants, lotions, creams, toothpastes, and dishwashing liquids. Triclosan is also added to various plastics and to textiles such as underwear and socks.

#### **How People Are Exposed to Triclosan**

People are most likely exposed to Triclosan by absorption through the skin or through the lining (called the mucosa) of the mouth.

#### **How Triclosan Affects People's Health**

The health effects of triclosan in people are unknown. Few adverse effects are seen in animal studies. More research is needed to determine whether exposure to this chemical, especially at levels found in the U.S. population, actually affects human health.

#### **Levels of Triclosan in the U.S. Population**

CDC scientists tested the urine of 2,517 people ages six years and older who took part in a nationwide survey, called the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), during 2003-2004.

- Triclosan was detected in the urine of nearly 75 percent of the people tested.
- Triclosan levels were greater among people in the highest income bracket than among those in either the middle or lower income brackets.
- Scientists found no differences in Triclosan levels either by sex or race/ethnicity.

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The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) protects people's health and safety by preventing and controlling diseases and injuries; enhances health decisions by providing credible information on critical health issues; and promotes healthy living through strong partnerships with local, national, and international organizations.