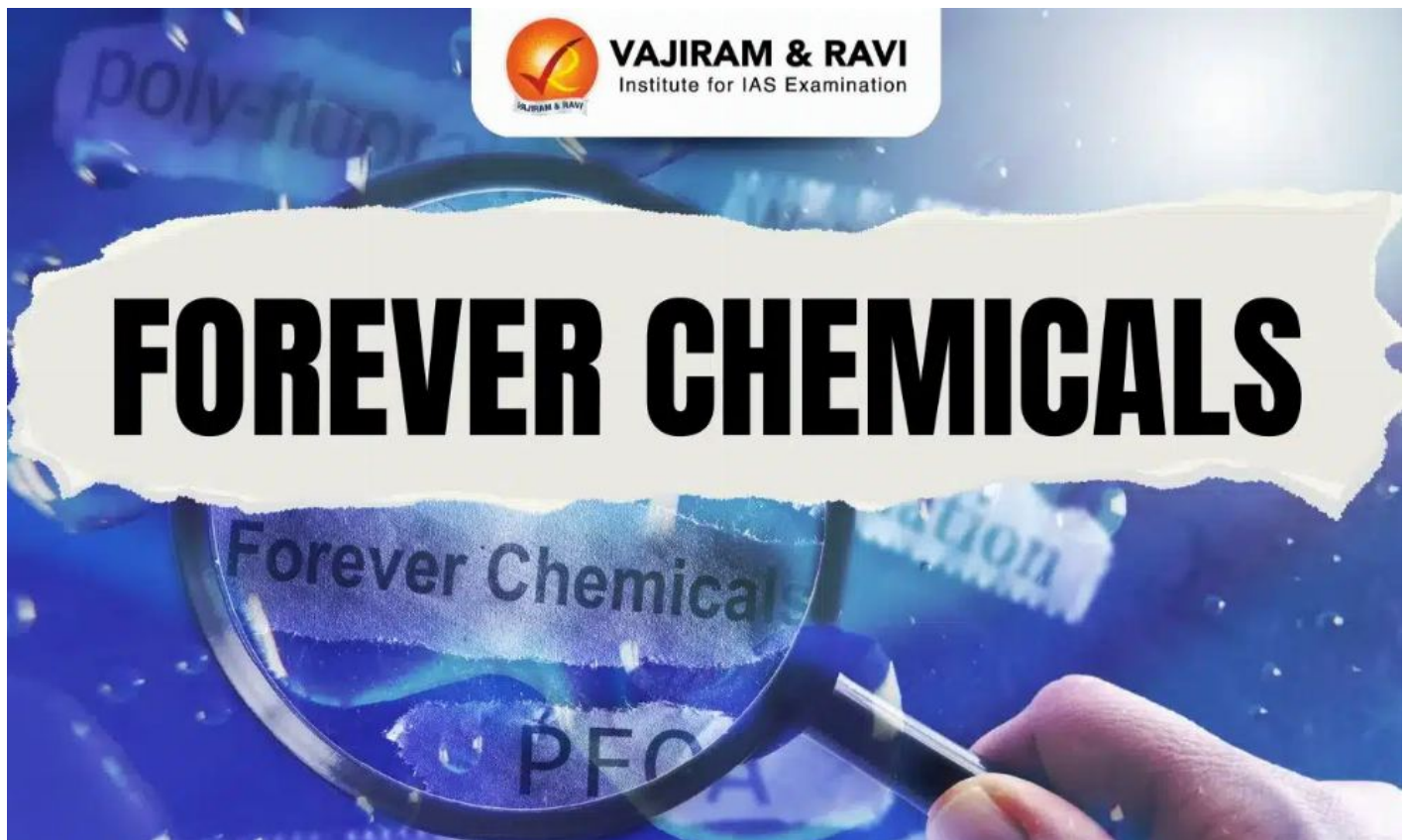


Forever Chemicals

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When scientists tested human blood samples collected from 2003 to 2021, they found that levels of older PFAS, a.k.a. “Forever chemicals” dropped by 86% because manufacturers stopped producing them.

About Forever Chemicals

- Forever chemicals, or **PFAS (per- and poly- fluoroalkyl substances)**, are a large chemical family of thousands of **highly persistent, toxic, man-made, hazardous chemicals**.
- PFAS molecules have a **chain of linked carbon and fluorine atoms**. Because the **carbon-fluorine bond** is **one of the strongest**, these chemicals **do not degrade easily** in the environment.
- The name ‘forever chemicals’ comes from the fact that they **remain in the environment without breaking down for generations**, if ever.
- **In manufacturing**, PFAS are **favoured for their durability** and useful **properties** such as **non-stick, water repellence, and anti-grease**.
- PFAS are used in the manufacture of many **domestic products**, including:

- **skin creams and cosmetics,**
- car and floor **polish,**
- rinse aid for dishwashers,
- **textile** and fabric treatments,
- **food packaging and microwave popcorn bags,**
- baking equipment,
- **frying pans,**
- outdoor clothing and shoes.
- They also have many and widespread **uses in industry, including in firefighting foam.**
- Over time, PFAS may **leak into the soil, water, and air.**
- **People** are most likely **exposed** to these chemicals **by consuming PFAS-contaminated water or food, using products made with PFAS, or breathing air containing PFAS.**
- Because PFAS breaks down slowly, if at all, people and animals are **repeatedly exposed** to them, and **blood levels of some PFAS can build up** over time.
- **Impacts of PFAS on Human Health:** Forever chemicals have been linked to multiple health problems, including **compromised immune systems, liver damage,** thyroid diseases, **increased cholesterol levels, hypertension, developmental delays in infants,** and increased certain **cancers** such as kidney and testicular.
- **Regulation:** The **Stockholm Convention** has **listed some PFAS, such as Perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) and Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), as persistent organic pollutants (POPs).**

Source: TH

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/forever-chemicals/>

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