

Communication 004/2026

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What exactly are PFAS? BfR provides information on “forever chemicals” with new formats such as podcasts, videos and graphics

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are long-lasting industrially manufactured compounds that can accumulate in the environment and in organisms. They have recently become the subject of public debate due to possible health risks. Nevertheless, many people are unfamiliar with PFAS (“forever chemicals”). The Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) is now using images and sound alongside tried-and-tested text formats such as press releases, statements and FAQs in order to inform the public about this topic: An [interview with BfR expert Dr Janine Kowalczyk](#), a [video report from the PFAS conference at the BfR](#), [recordings of the presentations](#), a podcast on “PFAS in the frying pan” with BfR biologist Dr Claudia Lorenz, and an [infographic on PFAS](#) explaining how they enter the body and the environment all broaden public knowledge on these chemicals.

The BfR also uses a variety ways to share information on other topics. The [children’s book “Luis’ and Maya’s Adventure in the Shrinking Lab”](#) is about kitchen hygiene, while [BfR science comics](#) deal with microplastics, e-cigarettes and tattoo inks. The institute is also breaking new ground with its “Research Perspectives”: scientist interviews on current issues such as alternative protein sources, fungal toxins (mycotoxins) and food hygiene. The magazine “BfR2GO” has been published twice a year since 2017, featuring background reports, articles and interviews on the BfR’s scientific topics.

While the media types and formats vary, scientific content remains crucial for the BfR.

Further information on PFAS is available on the BfR website

Questions and answers about PFAS

<https://www.bfr.bund.de/en/service/frequently-asked-questions/topic/here-to-stay-per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfas-in-food-and-in-the-environment/>

BfR communication on various PFAS compounds

<https://www.bfr.bund.de/en/notification/pfas-not-all-forever-chemicals-are-persisting-in-the-body-1/>

About the BfR

The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) is a scientifically independent institution within the portfolio of the German Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Regional Identity (BMELH). It protects people's health preventively in the fields of public health and veterinary public health. The BfR provides advice to the Federal Government as well as the Federal States ('Laender') on questions related to food, feed, chemical and product safety. The BfR conducts its own research on topics closely related to its assessment tasks.

This text version is a translation of the original German text which is the only legally binding version.

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