



## Babies are at greater risk of harm from water contaminants

Because children drink more water relative to their body weight than adults, they can have more exposure to harmful drinking water contaminants than adults. Some contaminants can cross the placenta and affect fetal development. Children are particularly vulnerable to harmful drinking water contaminants because their immune system, brain and organs are not fully developed.

## Preparing for your baby's arrival

As you prepare for baby's arrival, you take prenatal vitamins to promote healthy growth of your baby and avoid certain foods or activities to reduce risk of harm to your baby. You also need to test your private well water to make sure it is safe to drink while you are pregnant and for when your baby arrives.

## Resources

**NJDOH Drinking Water Facts – Private Wells:**  
[bit.ly/WellWaterFAQs](http://bit.ly/WellWaterFAQs)

**NJ Arsenic Awareness Website:** You can find more information about arsenic testing and treatment in northern New Jersey, including treatment FAQ and videos at this NJ focused arsenic awareness website:  
<http://tinyurl.com/arsenichelp>

**NJDEP Maps of NJ PWTA data**  
[bit.ly/NJPWTAmaps](http://bit.ly/NJPWTAmaps)

## Acknowledgments

*This brochure was adapted in part from "Well Water and Baby," Minnesota DOH*

## Contact Information

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# Private Well Water and Your Baby's Health



## Testing your private well is an easy step to make sure your baby has a healthy start.

### What contaminants should I have my well tested for?

The following six contaminants found in the table below are important to test for in your water, especially when you are pregnant or have young children or infants at home. In addition, there are other harmful contaminants that have been found in private well water in New Jersey. Private laboratories are certified to test for individual contaminants, or you can have your well water tested for the NJ PWTA contaminant list which includes: 29 different VOCs & SOCs (volatile and synthetic organic compounds), mercury, iron and pH in addition to the six contaminants in the table below. We recommend you ask to have lead tested at your kitchen sink tap.

Contaminant	Health impact for babies and children	How often should I test?
<b>Coliform bacteria</b>	Coliform bacteria are not harmful, but when found in drinking water can indicate the presence of other harmful bacteria such as <i>E.Coli</i> , which can cause severe gastrointestinal illness.	Every year or as needed following well flooding or drought
<b>Arsenic</b>	Can contribute to reduced intelligence in children and increased risk of bladder, lung, liver, or skin cancer as well as diabetes, heart disease and skin problems.	Every 5 years
<b>Lead</b>	Can cause learning, behavioral, and developmental problems in infants and children.	Every 5 years
<b>Gross alpha</b>	Gross alpha is a measure of radioactive elements in water including radium, uranium and radon. Radioactive elements can increase the risk for several types of cancer and other health problems.	At least once
<b>Nitrates</b>	High levels of nitrates in infants can cause "blue baby syndrome," an illness which decreases oxygen in the blood supply.	Every 5 years
<b>Manganese</b>	High levels of manganese can cause problems with memory, attention and motor skills and can cause learning and behavior problems in infants and children.	At least once



### How can I find a lab to test for these contaminants?

NJ Department of Environmental Protection maintains a list of certified laboratories you can find online at:

<https://www13.state.nj.us/DataMiner>

- ❖ Click 'Search by Category'
- ❖ Select 'Certified Laboratories'
- ❖ Scroll to and select 'Laboratories Certified by Parameter' or 'PWTA Laboratories Certified for Sampling'

### What should I do if contaminants are found in my private well water?

First, stop drinking the water by switching to bottled water. Then determine the best approach to obtaining healthy water in your home. You may want to retest your well water to confirm these results. Effective treatment devices will reduce contaminant levels in your drinking water. You should get information and quotes from several local water treatment companies before selecting a treatment plan.