



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



Health Department Announces PFOA Blood Test Results



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BURLINGTON – Lab results are back for the 477 adults and children who participated in PFOA blood draw clinics. The Health Department conducted eight blood test clinics in April, May and June at the Bennington District Office for people whose private drinking water was contaminated with PFOA, or who currently or formerly lived or worked at the former Chemfab site.

Overall, the results for PFOA in blood range from 0.3 to 1125.6 micrograms/Liter ($\mu\text{g/L}$). The geometric mean – a type of average – for the Bennington/North Bennington group is 10.0 $\mu\text{g/L}$, higher than 2.1 $\mu\text{g/L}$ for the U.S. population. PFOA is found in the blood of most Americans.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention tested the blood samples for PFOA. The Health Department mailed results to each person who took part in the blood testing clinics, and mailed a copy to their health provider if requested by the individual. Health care providers in the Rutland and Bennington area have been alerted about the overall results.

"We've been working to keep everyone informed as we get more information," said Health Commissioner Harry Chen, MD. "I understand that seeing the blood test result can renew your worry, and I encourage everyone to talk with their doctor if you have specific concerns about your health as it relates to your test result."

The Health Department has given all health care providers in Vermont a summary of the health outcomes that are most strongly correlated with blood PFOA levels. The test result cannot tell if a person's exposure to PFOA will cause health problems in the future, or if a current health condition was caused by exposure to PFOA.

If a person's drinking water is contaminated with PFOA, the amount of PFOA in their blood is expected to be higher than most Americans. The higher the concentration of PFOA in drinking water, the higher the level of PFOA in blood will likely be.

Repeated studies have shown that when individuals stop drinking contaminated water, their PFOA blood level goes down. It takes about two to four years for PFOA blood levels to reduce by half.

"These results are not unexpected," said Dr. Chen. "What we don't yet know is how the PFOA blood level for an individual correlates with the PFOA level in his or her drinking water. It will take several months for Health Department experts to complete an in-depth analysis which will include drinking water and questionnaire data."

The results of this analysis will be published on the Health Department's website by the end of the year.

For more information about PFOA - visit <http://healthvermont.gov/enviro/pfoa.aspx>

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