

DISCOVERING PFAS IN NEW HAMPSHIRE: RISKS AND REMEDIATION

PROBLEMATIC PFAS

What are they?

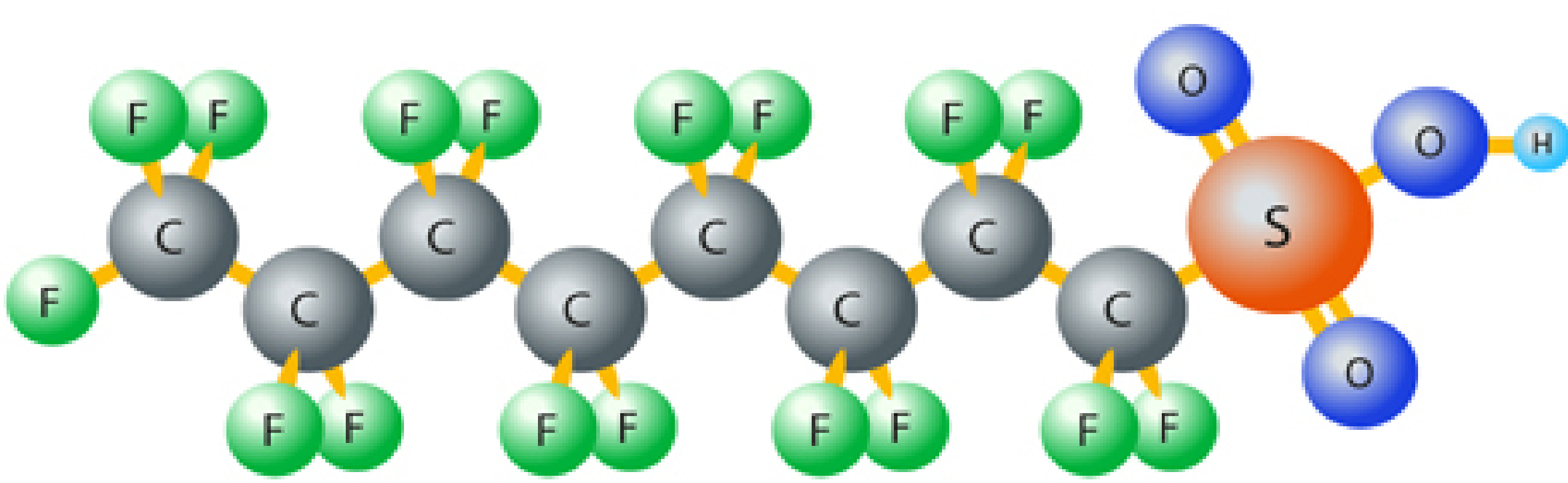
- Chemically known as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances
- A group of over 5,000 human made compounds; short- and long-chain
- Used for their ability to resist heat, water, and oil

Origin

- Originally produced in U.S. during 1940s
- First developed into Teflon, chemical coating for non-stick/stain products

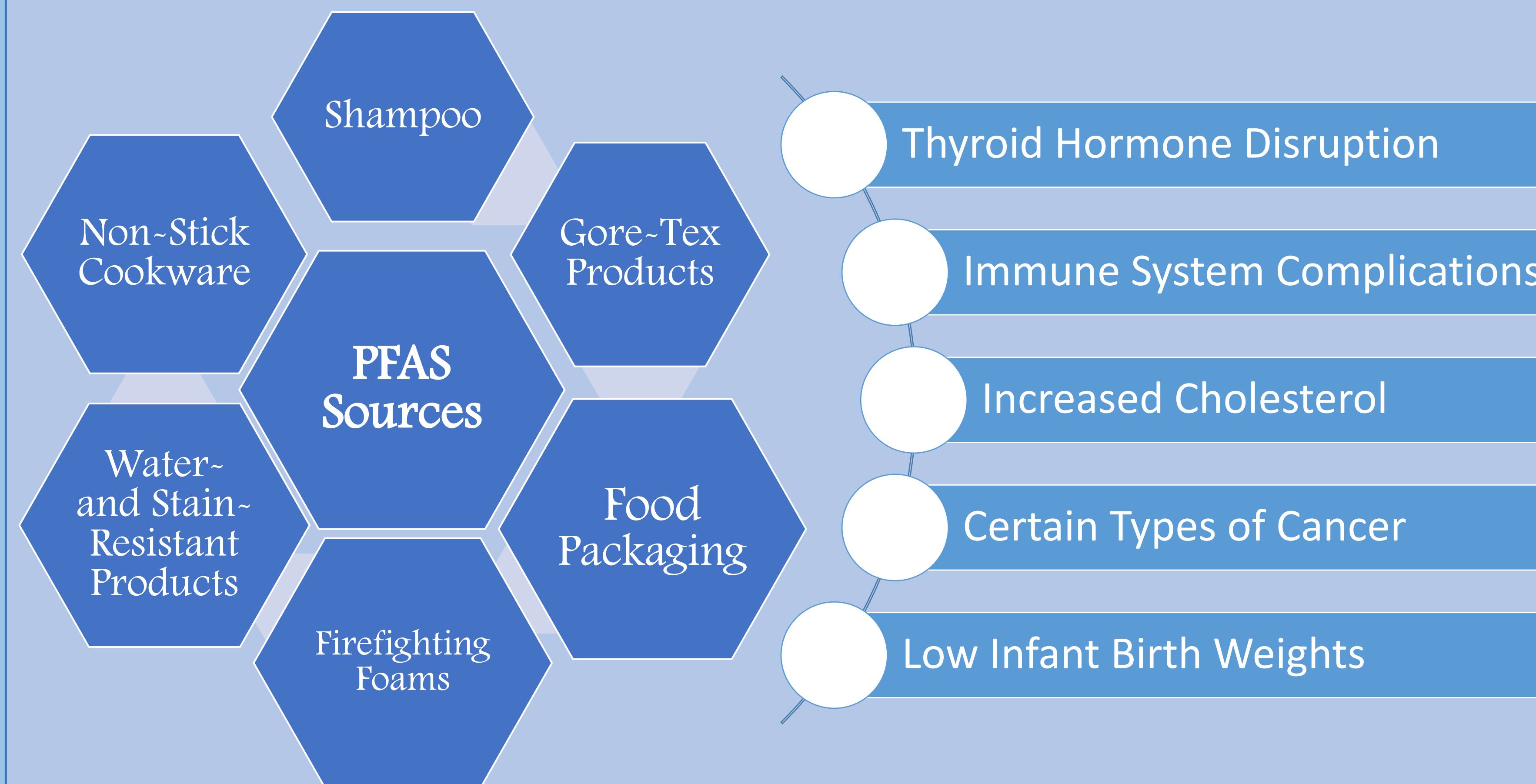
Hazards

- Toxic to both humans and the environment
- Ability to persist (not break down) and accumulate as individuals continue to be exposed (bioaccumulation)



Example of a long-chain PFAS compound. Both short- and long-chain compounds are difficult to remove as they can split during filtration and rebuild in the environment. Short-chain PFAS are more problematic as they require miniscule filtration for removal.

EXPOSURE AND HEALTH HAZARDS



POLICY ISSUES IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

January 2019:

- New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) proposed new PFAS Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCL) for the state of New Hampshire: reduction from 70ppt to 23-85ppt.

July 2019:

- New, even lower PFAS MCLs of 11-18ppt were to be effective October 1st, 2019

Fall 2019:

- 3M, Plymouth Water & Sewer District, farmer Charles Hanson, and Resource Management Inc. filed a lawsuit against NHDES for failing to provide adequate public commenting period on new, lower MCLs as well as a cost-benefit analysis



Map of known sites with PFAS contamination in New Hampshire

EPA ON THE WAY

PFOA Stewardship Program, 2006

- Called on 8 leading PFOA (PFAS family) companies to phase out emissions of PFOA and precursors (chemicals that can transform into PFOA). Stopped use and production of PFOA in U.S.

Significant New Use Rule, 2015

- Manufacturers (including importers) and processors of PFAS must notify EPA at least 90 days before starting or resuming new uses of PFAS in any products

EPA PFAS Action Plan, 2019

- Short and long-term strategies to address hazards associated with PFAS through multi-media, multi-program, national research, and risk communication

CITIZEN ACTION

Become an Informed Consumer!

- Limit your exposure by researching and avoiding products containing PFAS
- Request for your drinking water to be tested by your state department of environmental services
- Join and promote public engagement efforts involving states, tribes, local communities, utilities, and industries
- Inform yourself with “The Devil We Know” film from 2018
- Join Mindi Messmer’s NH Safe Water Alliance

[SEE REFERENCES ON HANDOUT](#)