IOWA

State Hygienic Laboratory
Iowa Biomonitoring Program

Beryllium

Beryllium *(beh-ril-ee-uhm)*
Tested in: *Urine and Water*
Reported in: *Water Only*

Learn how you can protect yourself and your family.

Is there an unsafe level of beryllium in water?

Yes, the EPA says that there is too much beryllium when levels are higher than 0.004 mg/L. Check your laboratory test report to see your personalized results.

Is it possible to remove beryllium from drinking water?

Yes, you may be able to reduce the amount of chemicals in your water. First, it is important to find out how chemicals may be getting into your water. We recommend that you contact your county's environmental health department or a well specialist. They may want to test your water for bacteria or nitrate or look at your well for any damage. Testing for bacteria or nitrate may be available for free through your county.

You may also be able to install an in-home treatment system to reduce chemicals in the water you drink. Not all treatment systems remove all chemicals. Talk to a water treatment specialist to determine the best options for the chemical(s) that may have been found in your water tests.

Will exposure to beryllium harm my health?

Beryllium is a human carcinogen (causing cancer in people).

Exposure to beryllium may also harm your

- gastrointestinal system
- immunological system
- respiratory system

Are there other ways I could limit my exposure to beryllium?

- Follow all safety precautions if you work with beryllium.
- Avoid touching soil near uncontrolled hazardous waste sites. It is especially important to keep children and pets away from the area.

What is beryllium?

Beryllium is a metal found in rocks, coal, and soil. Beryllium may get into water from rocks, soil, or industrial waste. Beryllium may be used by metal refineries and coal-burning factories. It is used to make many products, such as cars, nuclear reactors, aerospace parts, computers, sports equipment, and dental bridges. People working or living near industries that use beryllium are most likely to be exposed.

Where can I find more information?

- https://www.cdc.gov/biomonitoring/Beryllium_BiomonitoringSummary.html
- https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/az/b.html