

## Cobalt

*Cobalt (koh-balt)*

*Tested in: Urine and Water*

*Reported in: Water Only*

### Learn how you can protect yourself and your family.



#### Is there an unsafe level of cobalt in water?

Scientists have not determined if there are levels of cobalt that could be considered unsafe in water. If you are concerned about your test results, continue to the next section to learn how you might reduce cobalt in your water.



#### Is it possible to remove cobalt 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 cobalt harm my health?

Cobalt is a possible human carcinogen (may cause cancer in people).

Exposure to cobalt may also harm your

- cardiovascular system
- hematological system (blood forming)
- respiratory system
- development of organs



#### Are there other ways I could limit my exposure to cobalt?

- Follow all safety precautions if you work with cobalt.
- Follow your doctor's advice if you have artificial hip or knee joints.

#### What is cobalt?

Cobalt is an element found in rocks, soil, water, plants, and animals. Cobalt is part of vitamin B12, which is essential to our health. Cobalt other than vitamin B12 can be toxic. Cobalt is used to make alloys for aircraft engines, magnets, grinding and cutting tools, and artificial hip and knee joints. Cobalt compounds are also used in blue pigments to color glass, ceramics and paints, and porcelain enamel.

#### Where can I find more information?

- [https://www.cdc.gov/biomonitoring/Cobalt\\_BiomonitoringSummary.html](https://www.cdc.gov/biomonitoring/Cobalt_BiomonitoringSummary.html)
- <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/az/c.html>