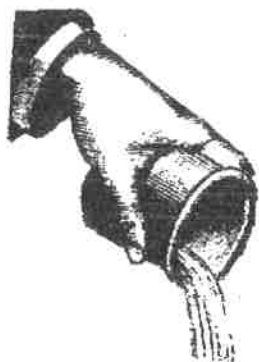


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Being Healthy™





## Don't empty your water glass yet

**T**he Big Drinking Water Scare: Milwaukee, April 1993. One person at the airport got sick drinking just enough tap water to swallow an aspirin. Before the city's water problem was solved, an estimated 370,000 residents became ill and some died.

Outbreaks like this one are rare and finding a solution is often complicated and costly.

One drinking water problem—*lead* in tap water—can be solved easily and at little or no cost. And in newer homes, it's seldom even a problem, because lead pipes were banned in 1986. If you suspect lead might be present in your tap water, take these 3 simple precautions in the morning before you reconstitute

your infant's formula or fix yourself a cup of coffee:

1. Start with cold—not hot—water.
2. Let the water run for 1½ to 2 minutes.
3. Boil the water for about 3 minutes (excessive boiling will concentrate the lead).

Are you curious to know how much lead is in your tap water? To find out, you can test your water with a mail-order kit available from labs such as these:

- Clean Water Fund, Asheville, NC, 704-251-0518
- Suburban Water Testing Lab, Reading, PA, 800-433-6595
- National Testing Labs, Cleveland, OH, 800-458-3330 (ext. 58)

The kits cost \$12 to \$58. They test "first-draw" water (water which has stood in pipes for several hours) and "purged-line" water (water from the tap after it has run 1-2 minutes). If the amount of lead in the first-draw sample exceeds 15 parts per billion or, in the purged-line sample, 5 parts per billion, you may want to buy a home water treatment device—a countertop filter, faucet filter, or undersink filter. These devices are *very* effective (they'll remove at least 80% of the lead).

For more information, call EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline: 800-426-4791.

### SIMPLY STATED . . . your dictionary of medical and legal terms

#### Proposed Standard Definitions for Bottled Water

The current terms for different types of bottled water vary from state to state. For example, in one state, "spring" water refers only to water collected from a natural orifice in the earth's surface; in another state, "spring" can be water from a natural orifice *or* from a bore hole which taps the spring and is located near the spot where the spring emerges. This lack of common terminology makes it difficult to identify components of diverse groups of bottled water products. So the Food and Drug Administration has proposed the following standard definitions:

- "Artesian" water—bottled water drawn from a well that taps a confined aquifer (a water-bearing rock, rock formation, or group of rocks) in which the water level stands above the natural water table.
- "Distilled" water—bottled water produced by a distillation process (vaporizing it, then condensing it in a way that leaves it free of dissolved materials).
- "Mineral" water—bottled water that comes from a source tapped from one or more bore holes or springs originating from a *geologically* and *physically* protected underground water source.
- "Purified" water—water produced by distillation, deionization (passing water through resins which remove most of the dissolved materials), reverse osmosis (the use of membrane filters to remove dissolved solids), or other processes. The new term would also match the U.S. Pharmacopeia's most recent definition of "purified" water (the water most often used for medical purposes).
- "Spring" water—bottled water obtained from an underground formation from which water flows naturally to the surface or *would* flow naturally to the surface if it were not collected underground through a bore hole near where a spring emerges.
- "Well" water—bottled water that comes from a hole bored, drilled or otherwise constructed in the ground to tap an aquifer.

The proposed new definitions would also cover the water ingredient in certain types of *flavored* bottled waters. Products labeled "carbonated," "seltzer," "soda," and "tonic" would be excluded in the new regulations because they're considered soft drinks.