



# Using NHANES to Estimate Chemical Exposures and Inform High-Throughput Exposure Predictions

**Zachary Stanfield**, R. Woodrow Setzer, Victoria Hull, Risa R. Sayre,  
Kristin K. Isaacs, John F. Wambaugh

*SOT RASS-ESS-ISES Combined Webinar*

February 14, 2024

# Conflict of Interest Statement and Disclaimer

- The authors have no conflict of interest to disclose
- The views expressed in this presentation are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. EPA



# Overview

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  1. Problem Description
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4. Exposure Trends
5. Summary

Journal of Exposure Science & Environmental Epidemiology www.nature.com/jes

**ARTICLE**

## Bayesian inference of chemical exposures from NHANES urine biomonitoring data

Zachary Stanfield <sup>1</sup>, R. Woodrow Setzer<sup>1</sup>, Victoria Hull<sup>1,2</sup>, Risa R. Sayre<sup>1</sup>, Kristin K. Isaacs<sup>1</sup> and John F. Wambaugh<sup>1</sup> 

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**BACKGROUND:** Knowing which environmental chemicals contribute to metabolites observed in humans is necessary for meaningful estimates of exposure and risk from biomonitoring data.  
**OBJECTIVE:** Employ a modeling approach that combines biomonitoring data with chemical metabolism information to produce chemical exposure intake rate estimates with well-quantified uncertainty.  
**METHODS:** Bayesian methodology was used to infer ranges of exposure for parent chemicals of biomarkers measured in urine samples from the U.S population by the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES). Metabolites were probabilistically linked to parent chemicals using the NHANES reports and text mining of PubMed abstracts.  
**RESULTS:** Chemical exposures were estimated for various population groups and translated to risk-based prioritization using toxicokinetic (TK) modeling and experimental data. Exposure estimates were investigated more closely for children aged 3 to 5 years, a population group that debuted with the 2015–2016 NHANES cohort.  
**SIGNIFICANCE:** The methods described here have been compiled into an R package, bayesmarker, and made publicly available on GitHub. These inferred exposures, when coupled with predicted toxic doses via high throughput TK, can help aid in the identification of public health priority chemicals via risk-based bioactivity-to-exposure ratios.

**Keywords:** Biomonitoring, Child Exposure/Health, Exposure Modeling, New Approach Methodologies (NAMs)

*Journal of Exposure Science & Environmental Epidemiology*; <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41370-022-00459-0>

*Stanfield et al., 2022*

# EPA's Exposure Forecasting Project

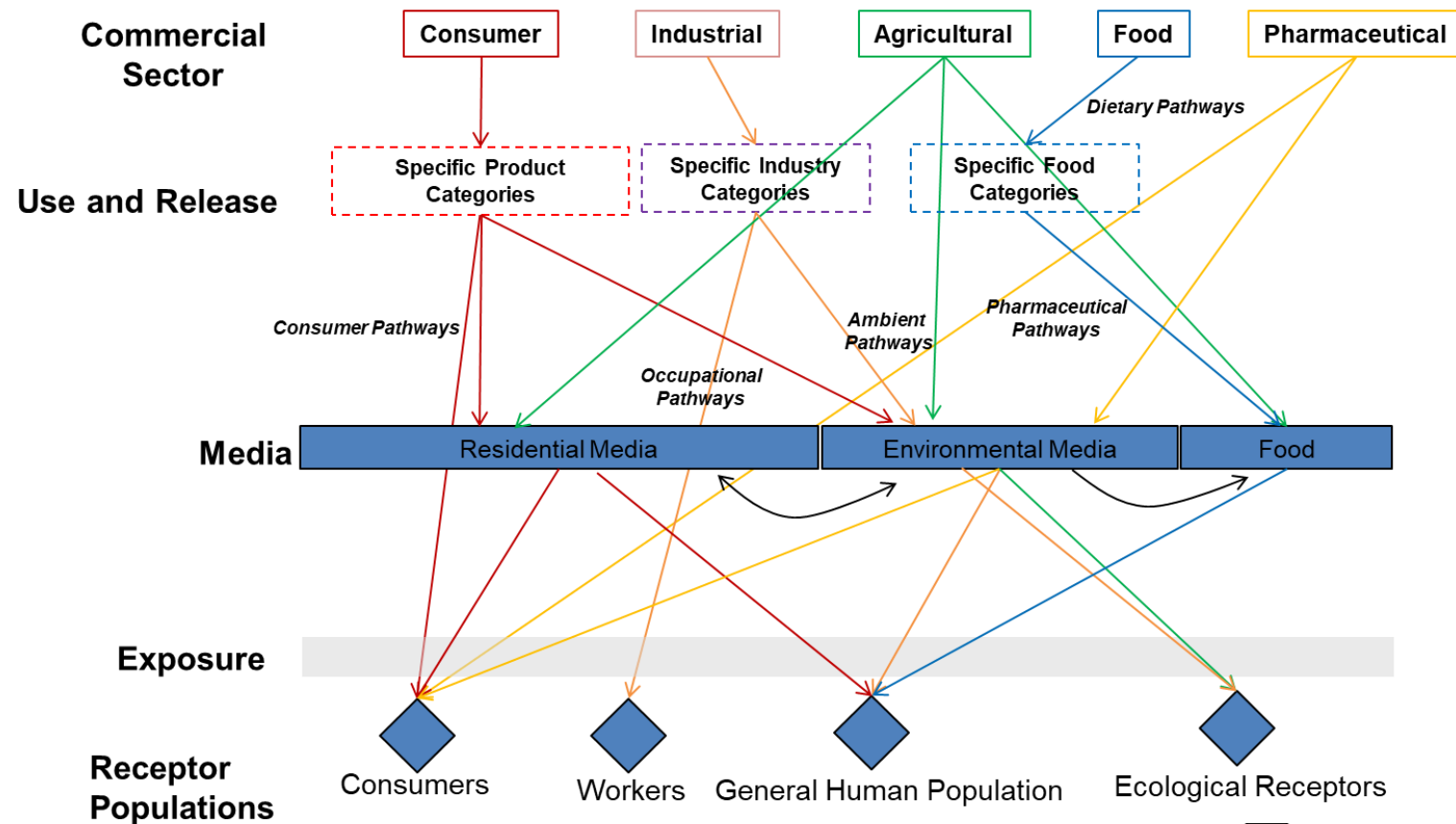
- EPA Office of Research and Development Exposure Forecasting (ExpoCast) project was established in 2009 as a partner project to EPA's Toxicity Forecasting (ToxCast) project
- ExpoCast seeks to develop the data, tools, and evaluation approaches required to generate rapid and scientifically-defensible exposure predictions for the full universe of existing and proposed commercial chemicals
- 380+ peer-reviewed publications since 2010
- ExpoCast scientists and trainees develop New Approach Methodologies (NAMs) for exposure



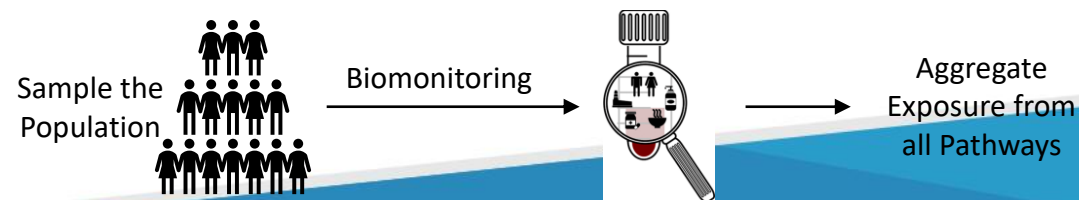
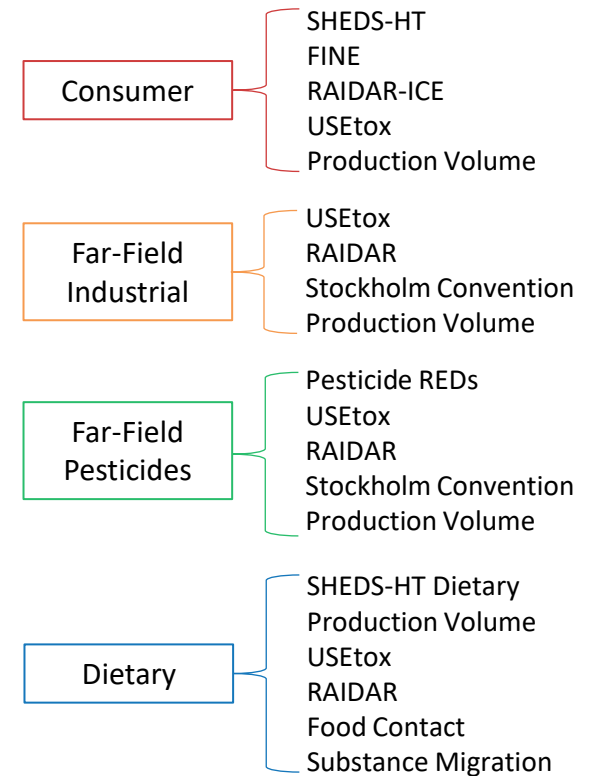
Credit: the Research Triangle Foundation

EPA Office of Research and  
Development Facility in  
Research Triangle Park, NC

# Pathways of Chemical Exposure

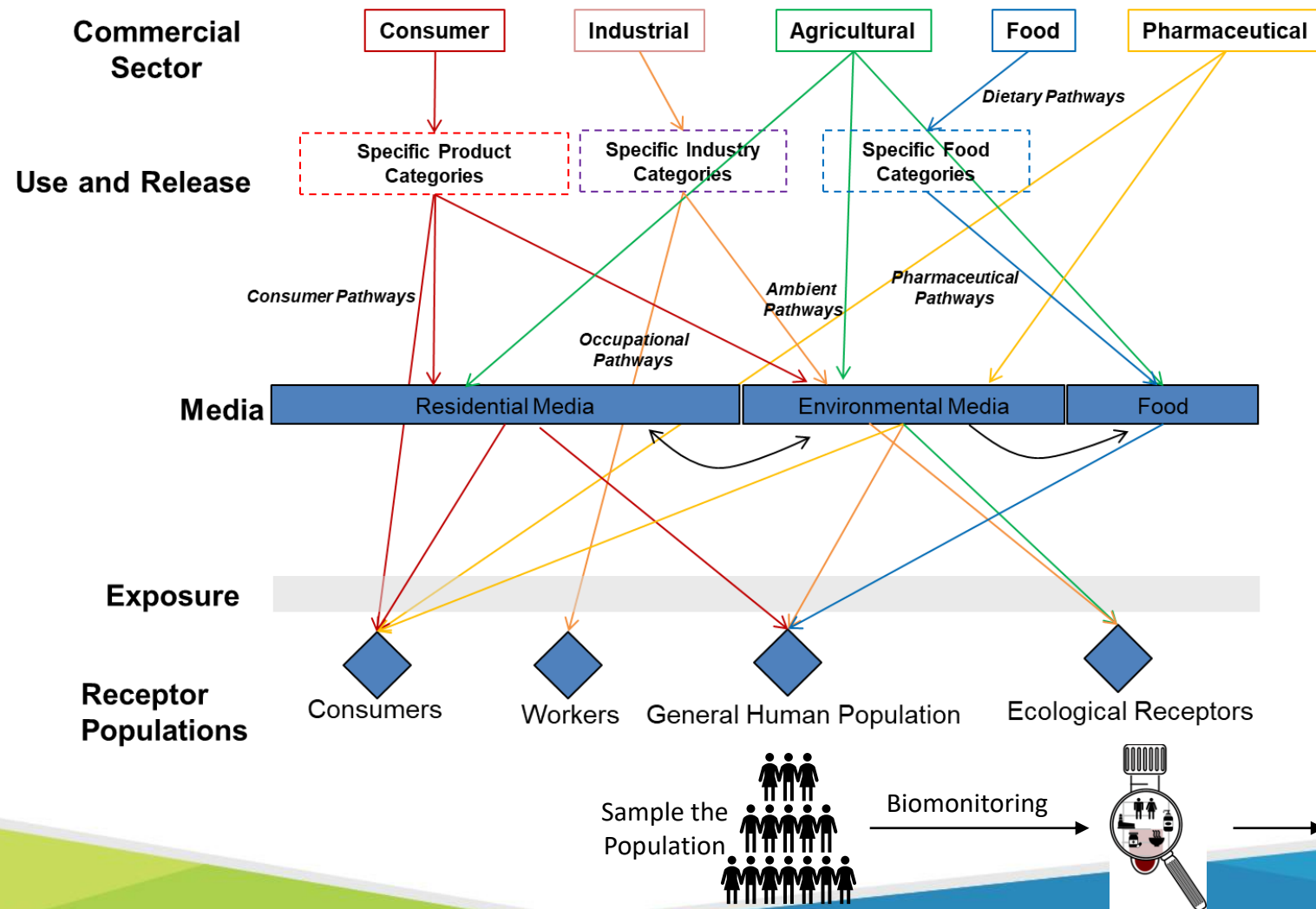


## Exposure Pathway Models

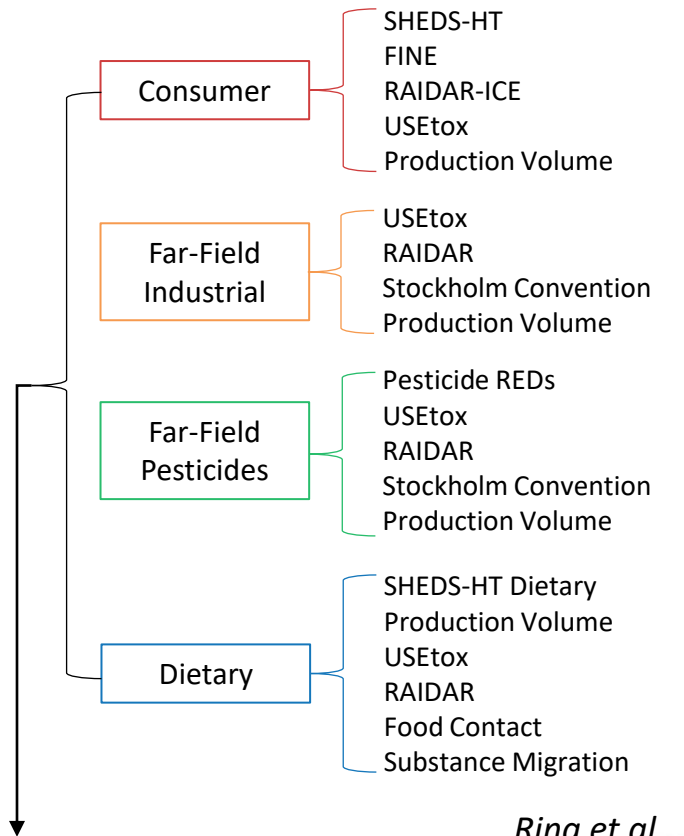


Ring et al., 2019

# Pathways of Chemical Exposure

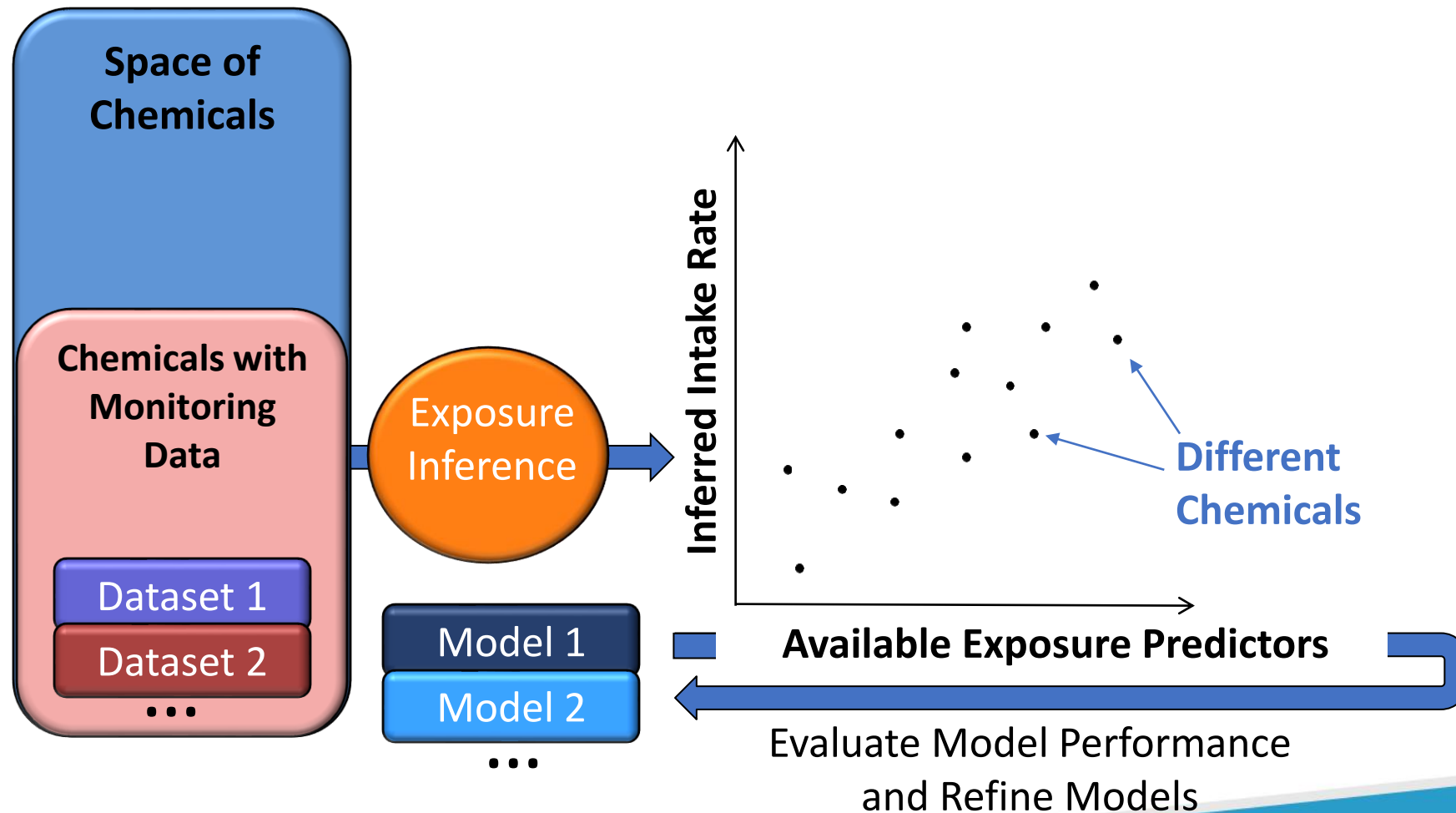


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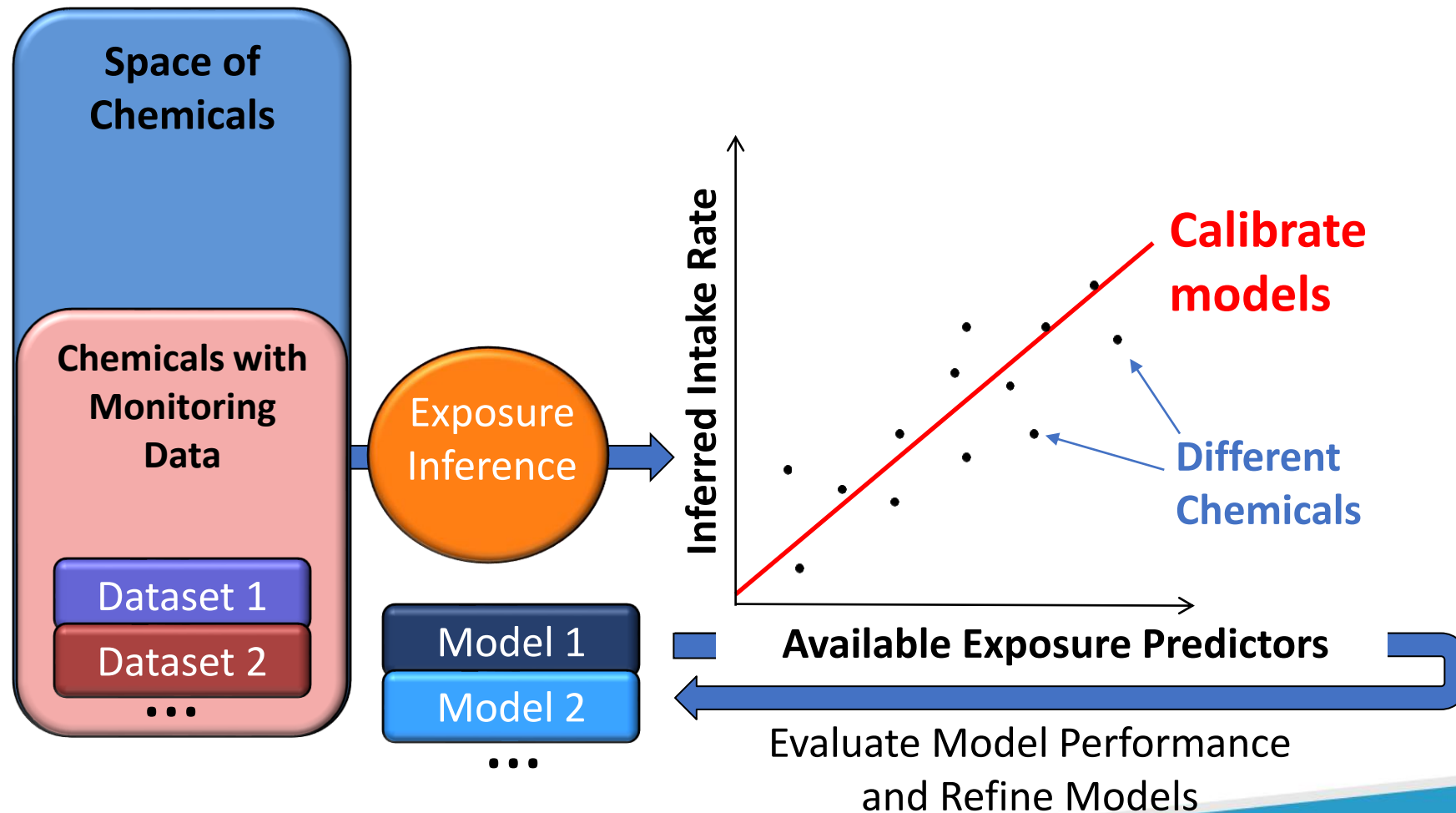


Ring et al., 2019

# Systematic Empirical Evaluation of Models (SEEM)

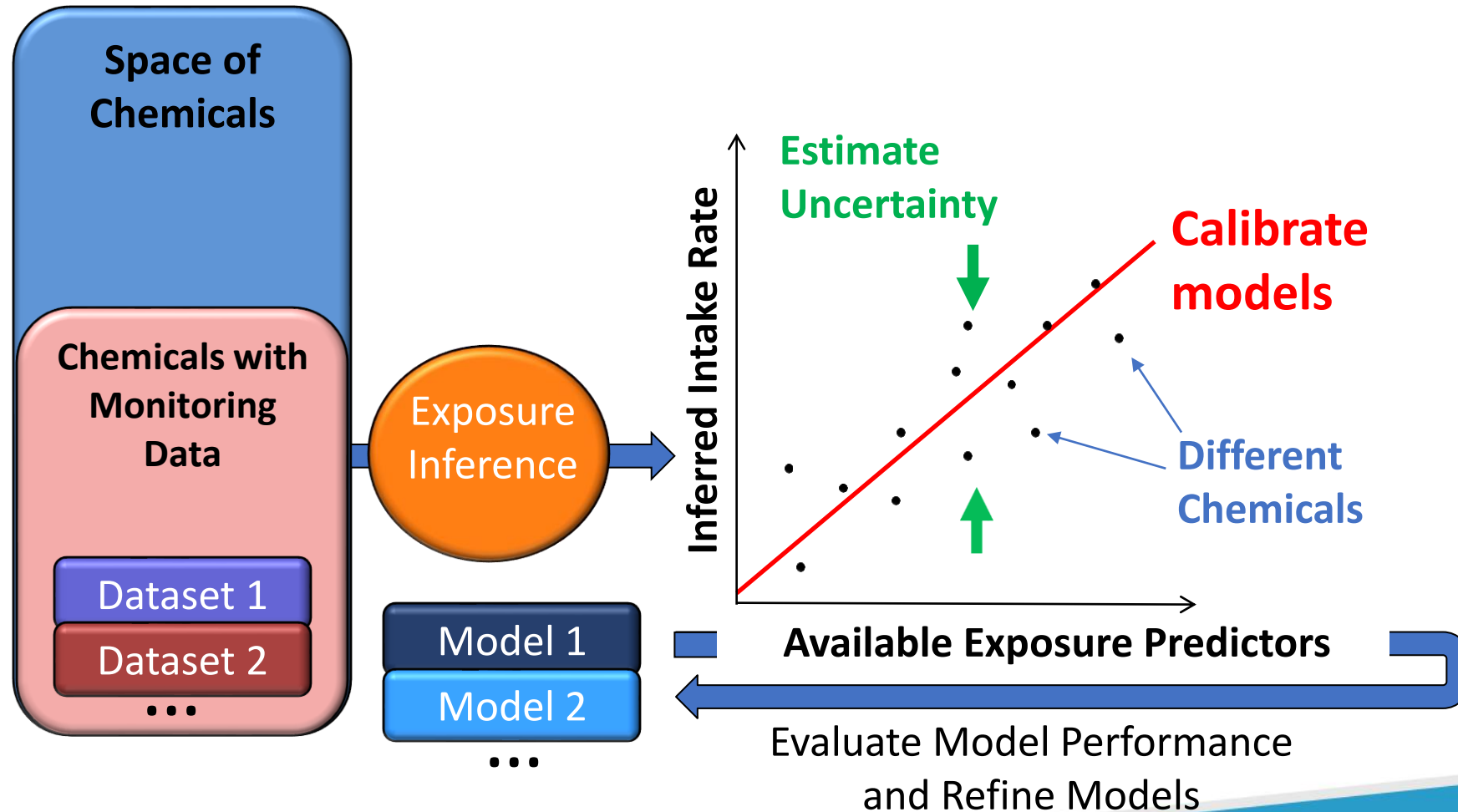


# Systematic Empirical Evaluation of Models (SEEM)

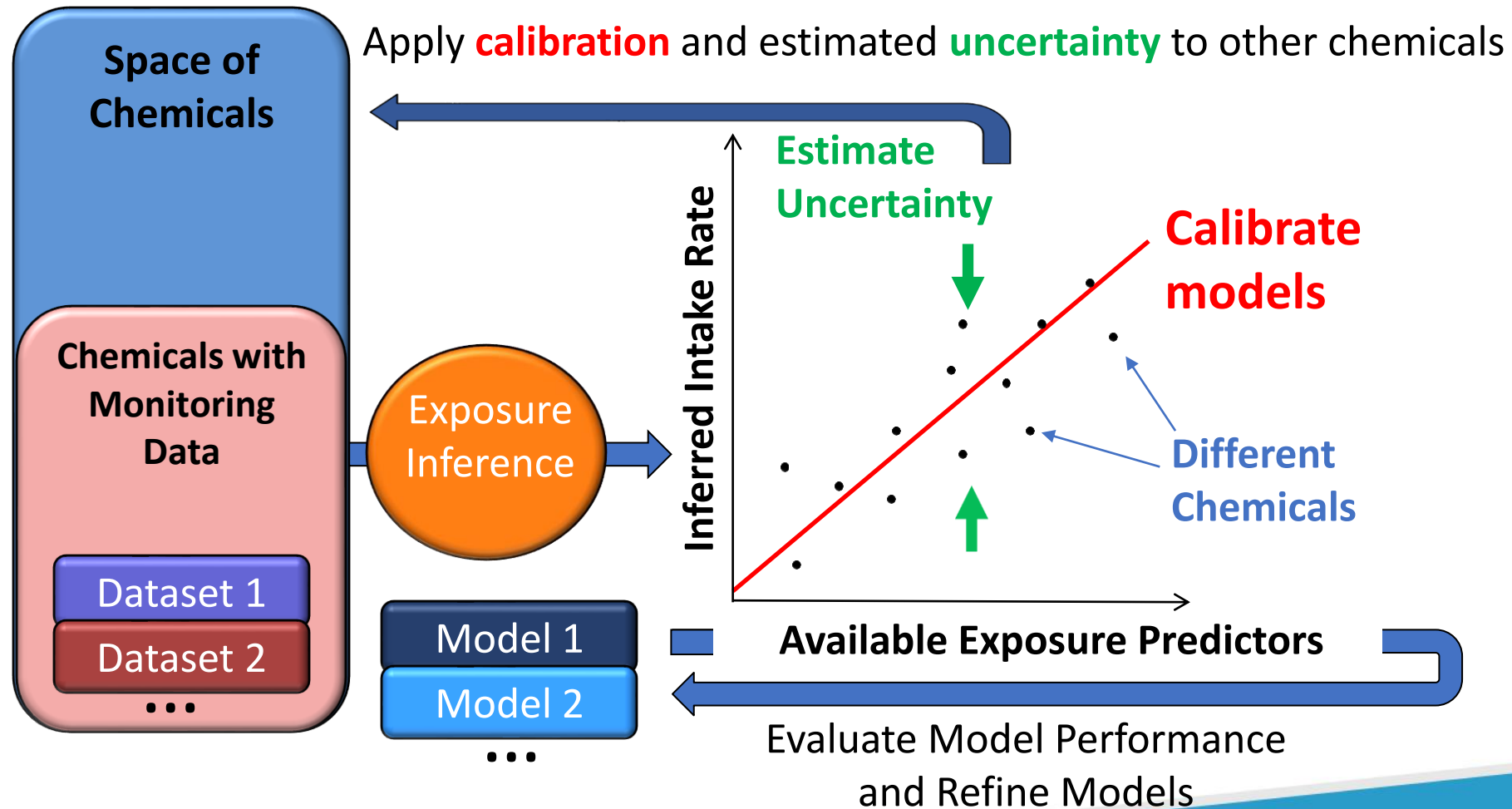




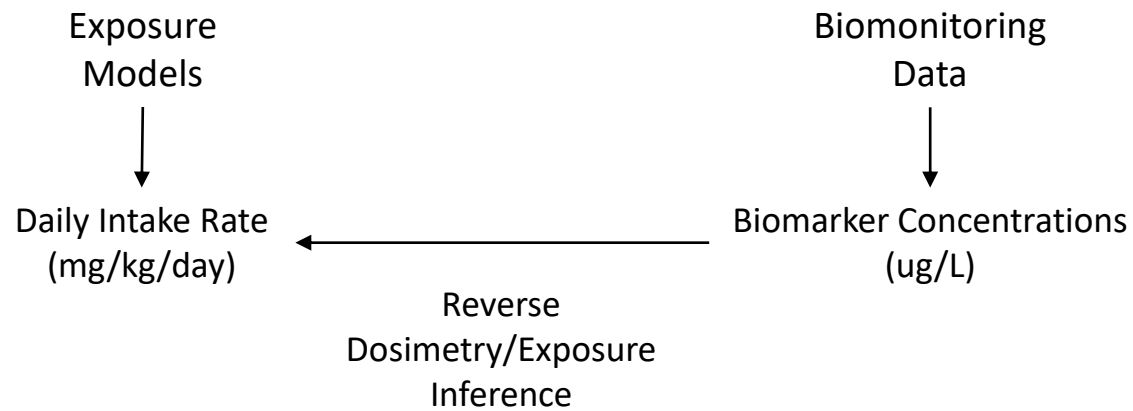
# Systematic Empirical Evaluation of Models (SEEM)



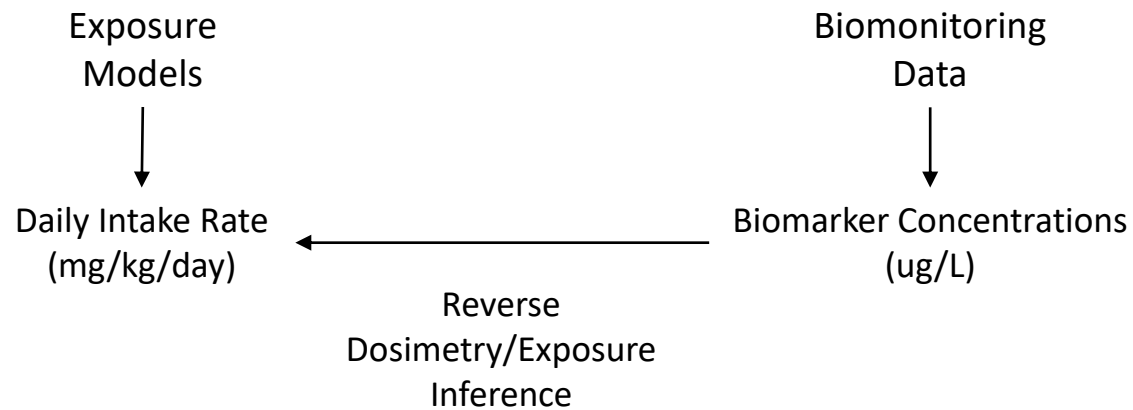
# Systematic Empirical Evaluation of Models (SEEM)



# How do we use biomonitoring data to evaluate high-throughput exposure models?



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## High-Throughput Models for Exposure-Based Chemical Prioritization in the ExpoCast Project

John F. Wambaugh,<sup>\*,†</sup> R. Woodrow Setzer,<sup>†</sup> David M. Reif,<sup>†</sup> Sumit Gangwal,<sup>†</sup> Jade Mitchell-Blackwood,<sup>‡</sup> Jon A. Arnot,<sup>§,||</sup> Olivier Joliet,<sup>⊥</sup> Alicia Frame,<sup>†,#</sup> James Rabinowitz,<sup>†</sup> Thomas B. Knudsen,<sup>†</sup> Richard S. Judson,<sup>†</sup> Peter Egeghy,<sup>‡</sup> Daniel Vallero,<sup>‡</sup> and Elaine A. Cohen Hubal<sup>†</sup>

<sup>†</sup>National Center for Computational Toxicology, and <sup>‡</sup>National Exposure Research Laboratory, Office of Research and Development, United States Environmental Protection Agency, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina 27711, United States

<sup>§</sup>Arnot Research and Consulting (ARC), 36 Sproat Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M4M 1W4, Canada

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<sup>⊥</sup>Environmental Health Sciences, School of Public Health, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109, United States

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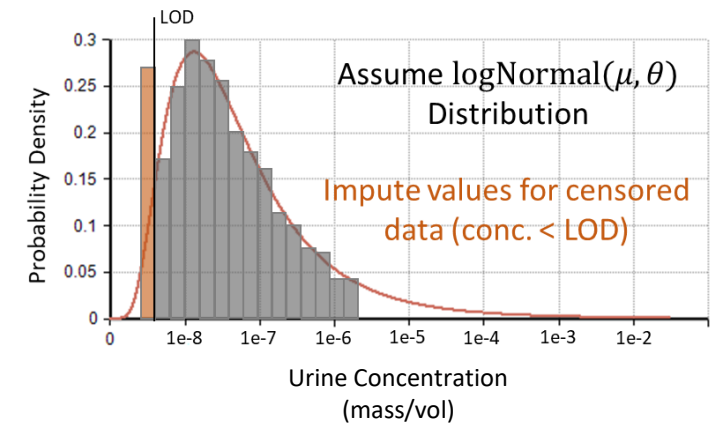
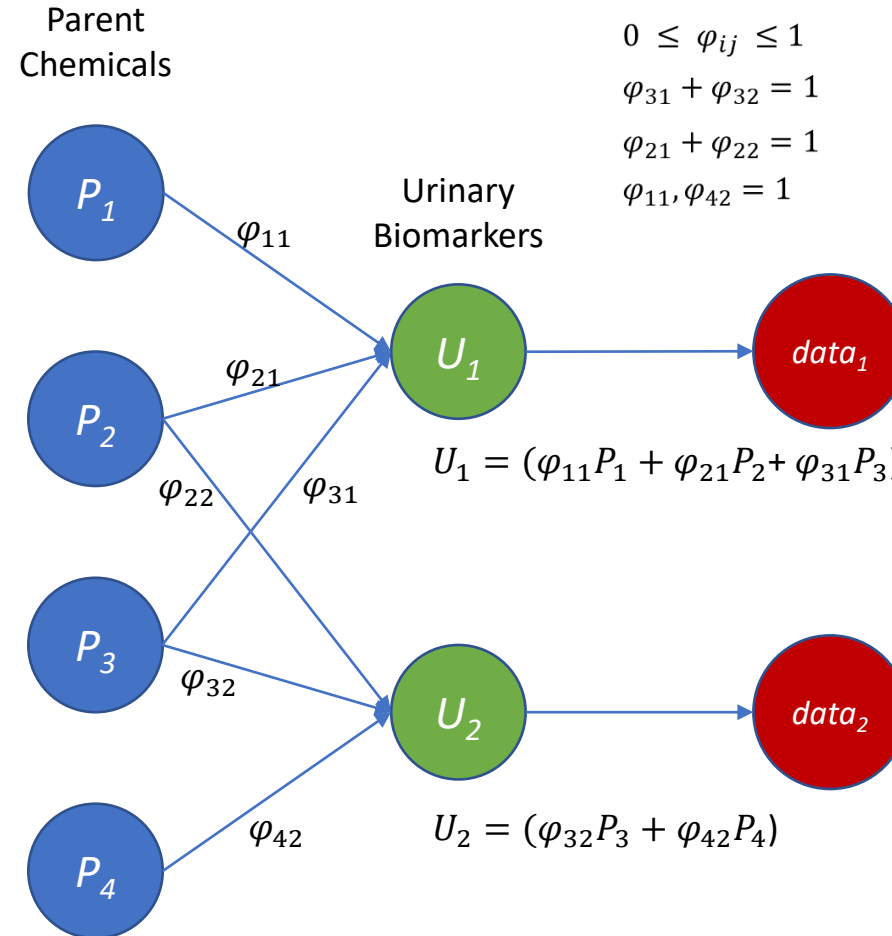
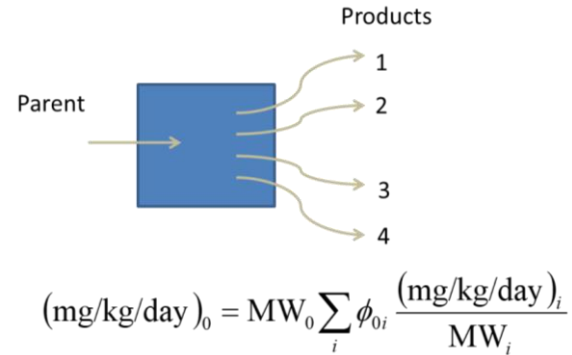
### Supporting Information

**ABSTRACT:** The United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) must characterize potential risks to human health and the environment associated with manufacture and use of thousands of chemicals. High-throughput screening (HTS) for biological activity allows the ToxCast research program to prioritize chemical inventories for potential hazard. Similar capabilities for estimating exposure potential would support



Wambaugh et al., 2013

# Problem Description



# Problem Description

## Reverse toxicokinetics (tk) approach

- Assume individuals are at steady-state equilibrium due to a constant rate of exposure to one or more parent compounds (*Lakind & Naiman, 2008; Mage et al., 2004; Tan et al., 2007*)
- Estimate the rate at which chemicals are filtered into urine by the kidneys
  - Chemicals are assumed to be (mainly) cleared by the kidneys via glomerular filtration, which can be estimated by creatinine excretion rates (CER)
  - Creatinine correction
$$(\text{mg/kg/day})_i = \frac{1}{\text{BW kg}} \frac{\text{mg}_i}{\text{g}_{\text{creatinine}}} * \frac{\text{g}_{\text{creatinine}}}{\text{day}}$$
  - When available, use urine flow data
    - CER ( $\text{g}_{\text{creatinine}}/\text{day}$ ) = creatinine conc. (g/mL) \* urine flow rate (mL/min) \* 24\*60 (min/day)
  - When not available, model daily excretion
    - Is a function of muscle mass, which is influenced by sex, race, age, and bodyweight

# How do we model this problem?

## Model Needs

- Handle censored data
- Determine optimal parent-metabolite fractions ( $\varphi$ 's)
- Incorporate distribution information for urine concentrations
- Include confidence assessment
  - How certain are we of our results?

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## Bayesian Inference

- Allows easy incorporation of censored data
- Can integrate prior information about the system
  - Considers what we already know and extrapolates the rest from the accompanying data
- Returns a distribution of parameter values that aids in downstream statistical analyses



# Bayesian Inference

- A method of statistical inference using Bayes' theorem

$$P(H | E) = \frac{P(E | H) \cdot P(H)}{P(E)}$$

*H = hypothesis, P(H) = prior probability, E = evidence, P(H|E) = posterior probability, P(E|H) = likelihood, P(E) = model evidence*

- Uses prior knowledge (prior distribution) in order to estimate posterior probabilities
- Models describe the problem as a directed graph where nodes are parameters and data, and edges denote dependencies between parameters and data
- Employs Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC)
  - A method for integrating over probability space to perform a Bayesian analysis (Gelman et al., 2013)
  - Converges on the “posterior” space where all iterations are equally likely and Markov chain iterations represent samples from the posterior distribution
- Can be implemented in R using JAGS (<http://mcmc-jags.sourceforge.net/>) and Stan (<https://mc-stan.org/>) programming via the packages rjags and rstan

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```
model{
  ## Model the parent exposures
  for (i in 1:N) {
    IP[i] ~ dnorm(IPmu, tau.V)
    P[i] <- exp(IP[i])
  }
  IPmu ~ dnorm(0, 0.001)

  ## code so that prior for sd(log(P[i])) is half-Cauchy(25)
  sd.dum ~ dt(0,1/625,1)
  sd.V <- abs(sd.dum)
  tau.V <- 1/pow(sd.V,2)

  ## Link the unobserved parent exposure to the observed (but censored) metabolites.
  IU <- log(t(Phi) %*% P)
  ## tau.se <- 1/(se * se)
  for (j in 1:Mn) {
    ly[j] ~ dnorm(IU[j],tau.se[j])
  }
  for (j in (Mn+1):M) {
    Pralod[j - Mn] <- 1 - pnorm(lod[j - Mn], IU[j], tau[j - Mn])
    ly[j] ~ dbin(Pralod[j - Mn], SS[j - Mn])
  }
  ## Estimate mixmu, mixtau, mixpi externally, and input as data.
  for (j in 1:(M - Mn)) {
    lsd[j] ~ dnormmix(mixmu, mixtau, mixpi)
    tau[j] <- exp(-2*lsd[j])
  }

  for (i in 1:NBranches)
  {
    phi[Bstart[i]:Bstop[i]] ~ ddirch(Alpha[Bstart[i]:Bstop[i]])
  }

  for (i in 1:Ndelta) {
    Phi[indx[i,1],indx[i,2]] <- phi[i]
  }
}
```

# Inferring Exposure from NHANES Data

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Wambaugh et al., 2013

Journal of Exposure Science & Environmental Epidemiology

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ARTICLE

Check for updates

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**BACKGROUND:** Knowing which environmental chemicals contribute to metabolites observed in humans is necessary for meaningful estimates of exposure and risk from biomonitoring data.

**OBJECTIVE:** Employ a modeling approach that combines biomonitoring data with chemical metabolism information to produce chemical exposure intake rate estimates with well-quantified uncertainty.

**METHODS:** Bayesian methodology was used to infer ranges of exposure for parent chemicals of biomarkers measured in urine samples from the U.S. population by the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES). Metabolites were probabilistically linked to parent chemicals using the NHANES reports and text mining of PubMed abstracts.

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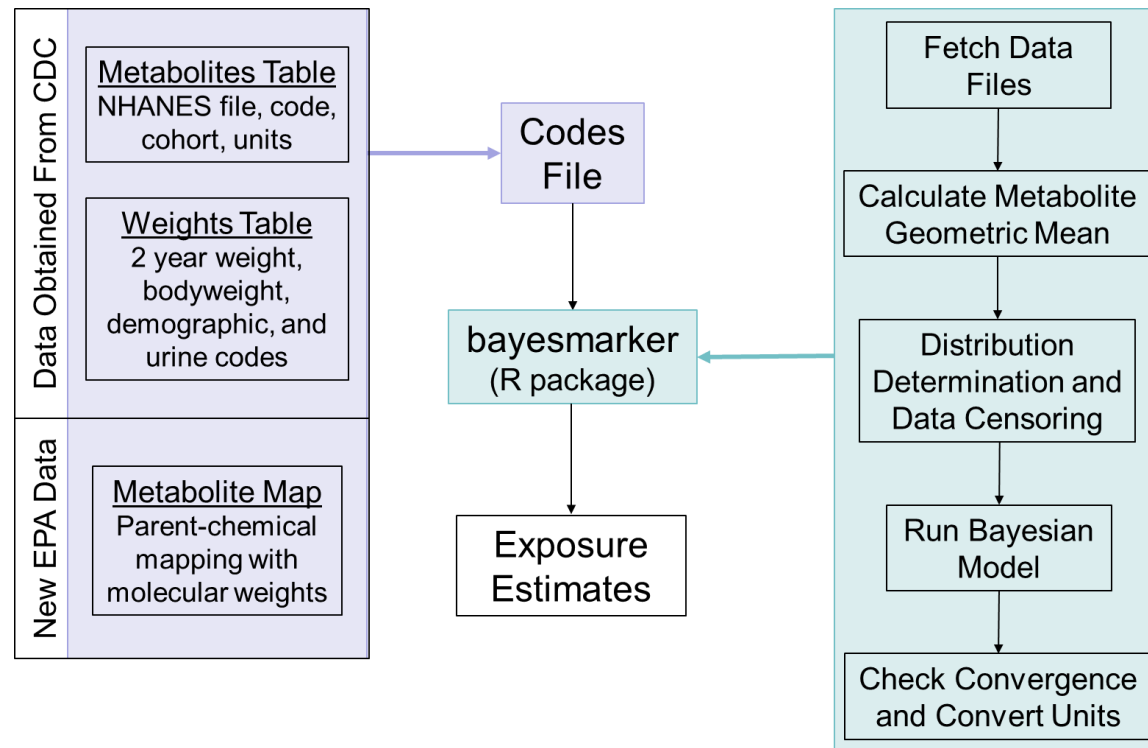
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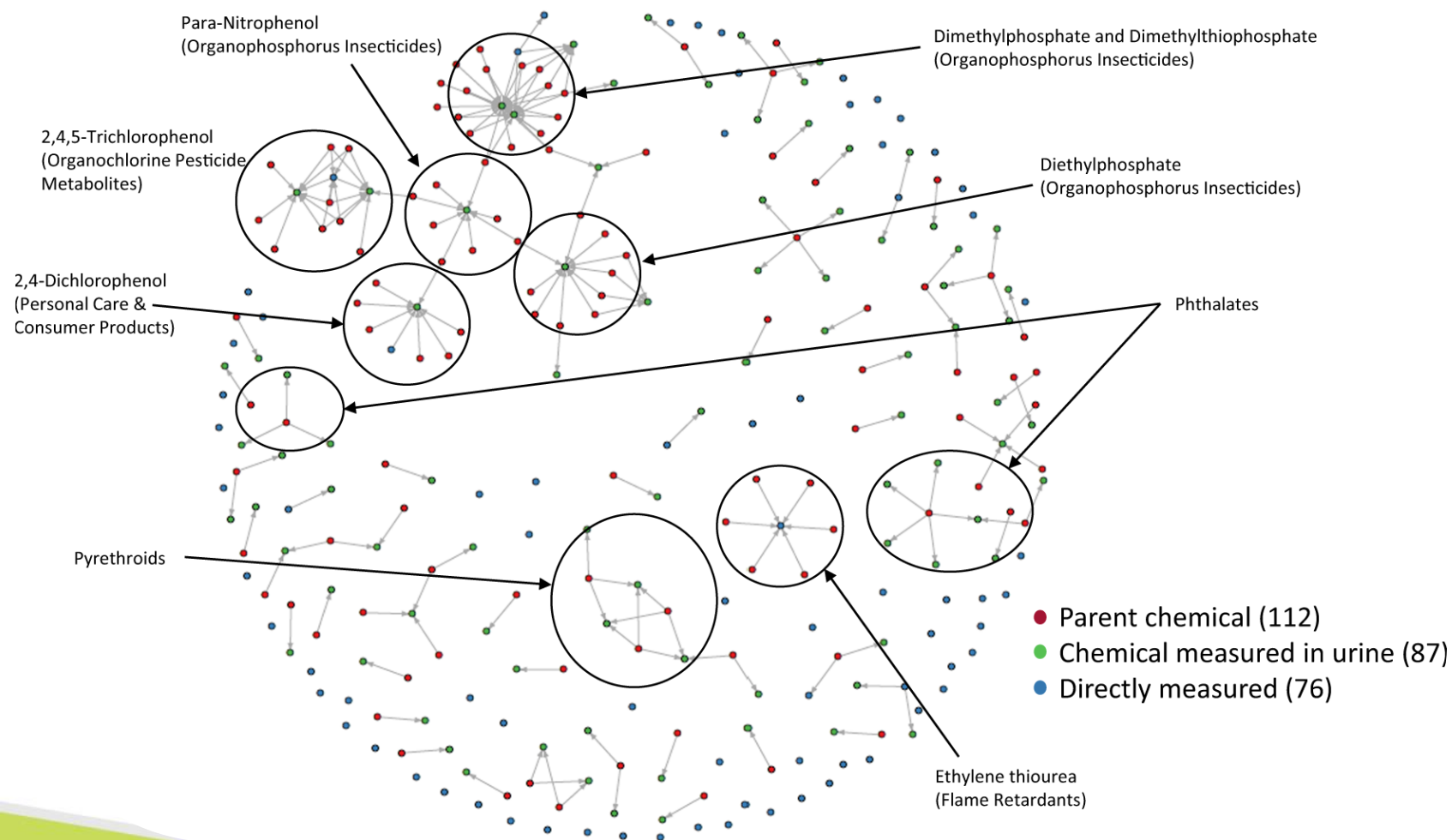
Stanfield et al., 2022

# The bayesmarker R Package



<https://github.com/USEPA/CompTox-HumanExposure-bayesmarker>

# Parent-Metabolite Network



- Wambaugh et al., 2013
  - 68 metabolites linked to 109 parent chemicals
- Stanfield et al., 2022
  - 151 metabolites linked to 179 parent chemicals (270 edges)
    - New metabolites curated by Victoria Hull
  - Evidence added from:
    - NHANES reports
    - Text mining of PubMed abstracts using chemical synonyms and metabolism keywords (Risa Sayre)

# NHANES Overview

National Center for Health Statistics


CDC > NCHS

[National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey](#)

[Print](#)


- About NHANES +
- What's New +
- Webinar
- Questionnaires, Datasets, and Related Documentation +
- Survey Participants +
- Biospecimen Program +
- New Content and Proposal Guidelines
- Publications and Products +

**Survey Participants**




If you were selected, learn more about participating

**Survey Data and Documentation**




Access data, documentation & response rates

**Publications and Products**



**Data Analysis Tutorials**



<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhanes/index.htm>

# NHANES Overview

The screenshot displays the NHANES website interface. On the left is a navigation sidebar with the following items: National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, About NHANES, What's New, Webinar, Questionnaires, Datasets, and Related Documentation (highlighted with a red box), Survey Participants, Biospecimen Program, New Content and Proposal Guidelines, and Publications and Products. The main content area features a 'Print' link, a 'Survey Methods' section with a document icon and text: 'Plan & Operations, Sample Design, Estimation & Weighting Procedures, Analytic Guidelines, etc.', and a 'Search Variables' section with a magnifying glass icon and text: 'Simple keyword search for Continuous NHANES (1999 and on) variables'. Below these is a 'Continuous NHANES' section containing a grid of survey period buttons: NHANES 08/2021-08/2023, NHANES 2017-March 2020 Pre-Pandemic Data, NHANES 2019-2020, NHANES 2017-2018, NHANES 2015-2016, NHANES 2013-2014, NHANES 2011-2012, NHANES 2009-2010, NHANES 2007-2008, NHANES 2005-2006, NHANES 2003-2004, NHANES 2001-2002, and NHANES 1999-2000. A secondary menu on the left lists: Questionnaires, Datasets, and Related Documentation; Survey Methods and Analytic Guidelines; Data User Agreement; Search Variables; Frequently Asked Questions; All Continuous NHANES; NHANES 08/2021-08/2023; NHANES 2017-March 2020; NHANES 2019-2020; NHANES 2017-2018; NHANES 2015-2016; and NHANES 2013-2014.

<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhanes/index.htm>



# NHANES Overview

The screenshot displays the NHANES website interface. On the left, a navigation menu for the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) is shown, with the 'Questionnaires, Datasets, and Related Documentation' link highlighted in a red box. The main content area features a header for the 'National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey' and a title for 'NHANES 2015-2016'. Below the title, there are several sections: 'Data, Documentation, Codebooks' with links to Demographics, Dietary, Examination, Laboratory, and Questionnaire Data, as well as Limited Access Data; 'Contents in Detail' with links to Questionnaire Instruments, Laboratory Methods, and Procedure Manuals; 'Using the Data' with links to Overview, Release Notes, Laboratory Data Overview, Questionnaire Data Overview, Examination Data Overview, Survey Methods and Analytic Guidelines, Response Rates and Population Totals, and NHANES Web Tutorial; and 'Contents at a Glance' with a link to What's New. A secondary navigation menu on the left side of the main content area also has 'Questionnaires, Datasets, and Related Documentation' highlighted in a red box, and 'NHANES 2015-2016' is highlighted in a red box within a list of survey periods.

<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhanes/index.htm>

# NHANES Overview

## National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey

### 2015-2016 Data Documentation, Codebook, and Frequencies

#### Demographic Variables and Sample Weights (DEMO\_I)

Data File: DEMO\_I.xpt

First Published: September 2017

Last Revised: NA

#### Component Description

The demographics file provides individual, family, and household-level information on the following topics:

- Survey participant's household interview and examination status;
- Interview and examination sample weights;
- Masked variance units;
- Language of questionnaires used for the interviews conducted in the household and in the mobile examination center;
- Use of proxy or interpreter during the interviews;
- The six-month time period when the examination was performed;
- Pregnancy status;
- Household and family income;
- Household and family sizes;
- Household composition: the number of children (aged 5 years or younger and 6-17 years old), and adults aged 60 years or older, in the household;
- Demographic information about the household reference person; and
- Other selected demographic information, such as gender, age, race/Hispanic origin, education, marital status, military service status, country of birth, citizenship, and years of U.S. residence.

The format and coding for all the variables included in the 2015-2016 NHANES demographics file are identical to those released for the 2013-2014 survey cycle.

Similar to the 2011-2014 cycle, the sample design for NHANES 2015-2016 also includes an

#### TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Component Description
- Eligible Sample
- Interview Setting and Mode of Administration
- Quality Assurance & Quality Control
- Data Processing and Editing
- Analytic Notes
- References
- Codebook
  - SEQN - Respondent sequence number
  - SDDSRVYR - Data release cycle
  - RIDSTATR - Interview/Examination status
  - RIAGENDR - Gender
  - RIDAGEYR - Age in years at screening
  - RIDAGEMN - Age in months at screening - 0 to 24 mos
  - RIDRETH1 - Race/Hispanic origin
  - RIDRETH3 - Race/Hispanic origin w/ NH Asian
  - RIDEXMON - Six month time period
  - RIDEXAGM - Age in months at exam - 0 to 19 years
  - DMQMILIZ - Served active duty in US Armed Forces
  - DMQADFC - Served in a foreign country
  - DMDBORN4 - Country of birth
  - DMDCITZN - Citizenship status
  - DMDYRSUS - Length of time in US
  - DMDEDUC3 - Education level - Children/Youth 6-19
  - DMDEDUC2 - Education level - Adults 20+

Demographic  
Data

# NHANES Overview

**National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey**  
2015-2016 Data Documentation, Codebook, and Frequencies  
Body Measures (BMX\_I)

**Data File:** BMX\_I.xpt  
**First Published:** September 2017  
**Last Revised:** NA

---

### Component Description

NHANES body measures data are used to monitor trends in infant and child growth, to estimate the prevalence of overweight and obesity in U.S. children, adolescents, and adults, and to examine the associations between body weight and the health and nutritional status of the U.S. population. The new collected Sagittal Abdominal Diameter (SAD) data will be used to establish population-based reference ranges, and to improve the health risk assessments associated with body weight and obesity.

The measurements and target age groups for the NHANES 2015–2016 body measures component are as follows:

- Weight: All ages
- Head circumference: birth through 6 months of age
- Recumbent length: birth through 47 months of age
- Standing height: 2 years and older
- Upper leg length: 8 years and older
- Upper arm length: 2 months of age and older
- Mid-upper arm circumference: 2 months of age and older
- Waist circumference: 2 years of age and older
- Sagittal abdominal diameter: 8 years of age and older

### Eligible Sample

All survey participants were eligible for the body measures component. Pregnant women and

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- Protocol and Procedure
- Quality Assurance & Quality Control
- Data Processing and Editing
- Analytic Notes
- References
- Codebook
  - SEQN - Respondent sequence number
  - BMDSTATS - Body Measures Component Status Code
  - BMXWT - Weight (kg)
  - BMIWT - Weight Comment
  - BMXRECUM - Recumbent Length (cm)
  - BMIRECUM - Recumbent Length Comment
  - BMXHEAD - Head Circumference (cm)
  - BMIHEAD - Head Circumference Comment
  - BMXHT - Standing Height (cm)
  - BMIHT - Standing Height Comment
  - BMXBMI - Body Mass Index (kg/m\*\*2)
  - BMDBMIC - BMI Category - Children/Youth
  - BMXLEG - Upper Leg Length (cm)
  - BMILEG - Upper Leg Length Comment
  - BMXARML - Upper Arm Length (cm)
  - BMIARML - Upper Arm Length Comment
  - BMXARMC - Arm Circumference (cm)
  - BMIARMC - Arm Circumference Comment
  - BMXWAIST - Waist Circumference (cm)
  - BMIWAIST - Waist Circumference Comment

Examination  
Data

# NHANES Overview

## National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey

### 2015-2016 Data Documentation, Codebook, and Frequencies

Personal Care and Consumer Product Chemicals and Metabolites (EPHPP\_I)

Data File: EPHPP\_I.xpt

First Published: January 2019

Last Revised: NA

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### Component Description

Biomonitoring of environmental phenols, parabens, and triclocarban is used to assess prevalence and relevance of exposure in public health. The routes of human exposure to these compounds include industrial pollution, pesticide use, food consumption, and use of personal care products.

Bisphenol A (BPA) is used in the manufacture of polycarbonate plastics and epoxy resins, which can be used in protective coatings on food containers and as composites and sealants in dentistry. Concerns over potential health risks of BPA have led to restrictions on the use of BPA in certain baby and children products (U.S. Food and Drug Administration 2014). BPA alternatives, such as bisphenol S (BPS, 4,4'-sulfonyldiphenol) and bisphenol F (BPF, 4,4'-dihydroxydiphenylmethane), have been introduced in the market to replace BPA (Liao et al. 2012). Some phenols are used as sunscreen agents for skin protection, and as UV filters in cosmetic products and plastics to improve stability (e.g., benzophenone-3). Phenols are also used as bactericides (e.g., triclosan) in soap and are found in other personal care products. Other chlorophenols have been used in the wood preservation industry as intermediates in the production of pesticides, and as disinfectants or fungicides for industrial and indoor home use. The manufacture of certain chlorinated aromatic compounds can also produce chlorophenols as byproducts.

Parabens, a group of alkyl (e.g., methyl, ethyl, propyl, butyl) esters of p-hydroxybenzoic acid, are widely used as antimicrobial preservatives in personal care products, and can also

## National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey

### 2015-2016 Data Documentation, Codebook, and Frequencies

Body Measures (BMX\_I)

Data File: BMX\_I.xpt

First Published: September 2011

Last Revised: NA

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### Component Description

NHANES body measures estimate the prevalence and to examine the association with the U.S. population. The measurements and component are as follows:

- Weight: All ages
- Head circumference:
- Recumbent length: bi
- Standing height: 2 ye
- Upper leg length: 8 y
- Upper arm length: 2 t
- Mid-upper arm circum
- Waist circumference:
- Sagittal abdominal dia

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Component Description
- Eligible Sample
- Description of Laboratory Methodology
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- Laboratory Quality Assurance and Monitoring
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- Analytic Notes
- References
- Codebook
  - SEQN - Respondent sequence number
  - WTSB2YR - Subsample B weights
  - URXBP3 - Urinary Benzophenone-3 (ng/mL)
  - URDBP3LC - Urinary Benzophenone-3 Comment Code
  - URXBPH - Urinary Bisphenol A (ng/mL)
  - URDBPHLC - Urinary Bisphenol A Comment Code
  - URXBPF - Urinary Bisphenol F (ng/mL)
  - URDBPFLC - Urinary Bisphenol F Comment Code
  - URXBPS - Urinary Bisphenol S (ng/mL)
  - URDBPSLC - Urinary Bisphenol S Comment Code
  - URXTLC - Urinary Triclocarban (ng/mL)
  - URDTLCLC - Urinary Triclocarban Comment Code
  - URXTRS - Urinary Triclosan (ng/mL)
  - URDRTRSLC - Urinary Triclosan Comment Code
  - URXBUP - Butyl paraben (ng/mL)

All survey participants were eligible for the body measures component. Pregnant women and

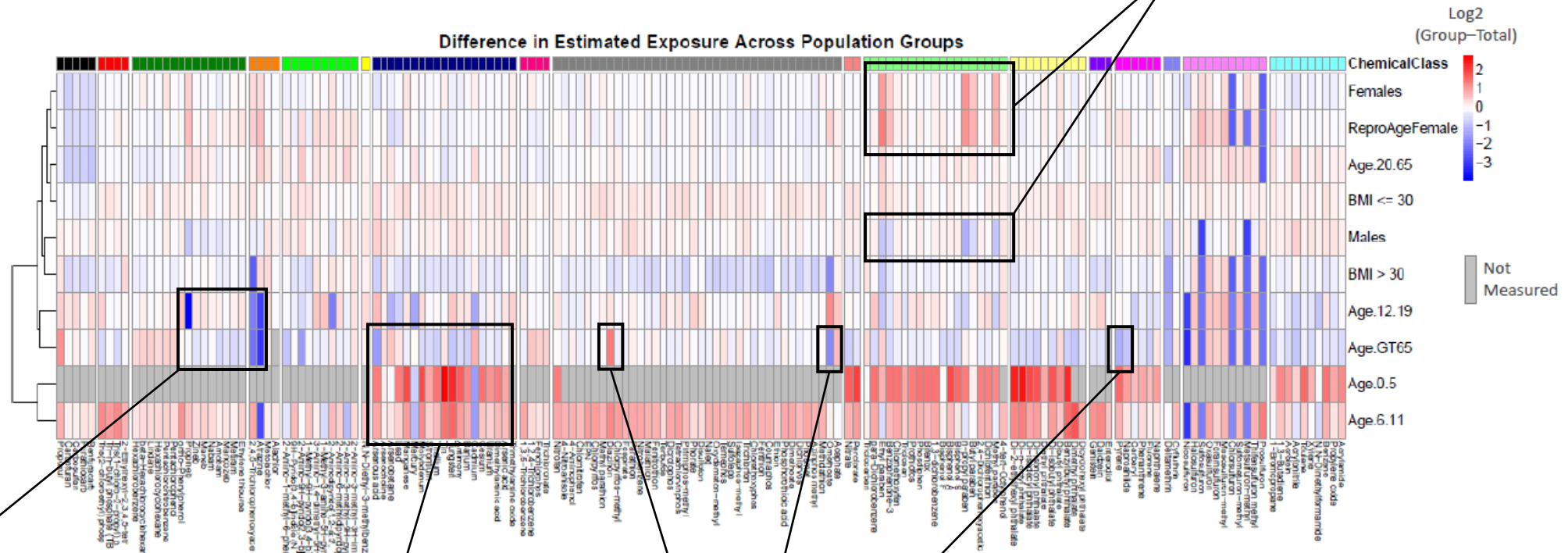
Similar to the 2011-2014 cycle, the sample design for NHANES 2015-2016 also includes an

Laboratory  
Data

# Results

# Demographic-specific Exposures

Higher exposure to parabens for women, lower for men



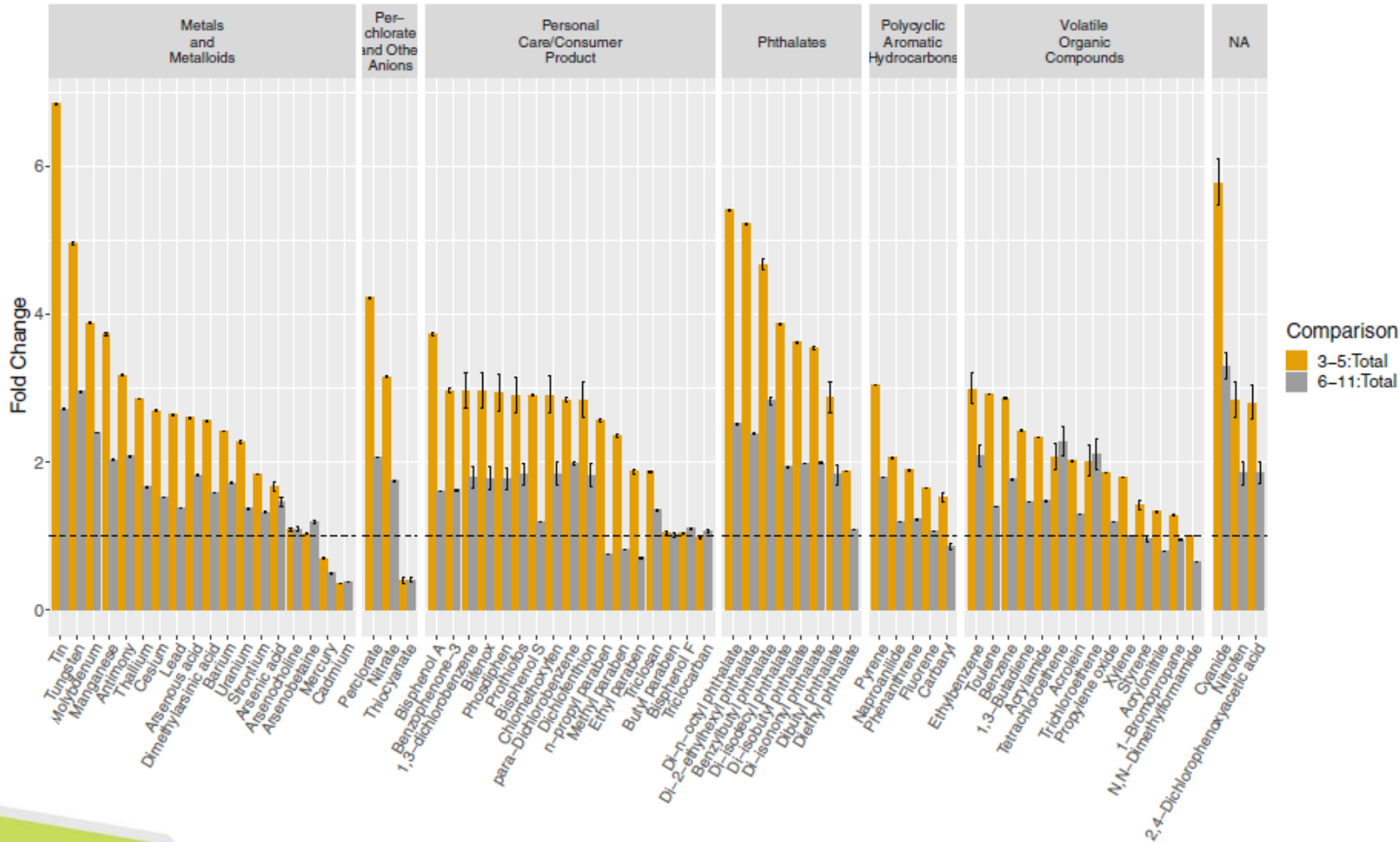
Lower exposure for teens and seniors for certain fungicides and herbicides

Opposite exposure of most metals for children and seniors

Higher exposure to diazinon, lower exposure to omethoate and pyrene

# Examining Childhood Exposures (2015-2016)

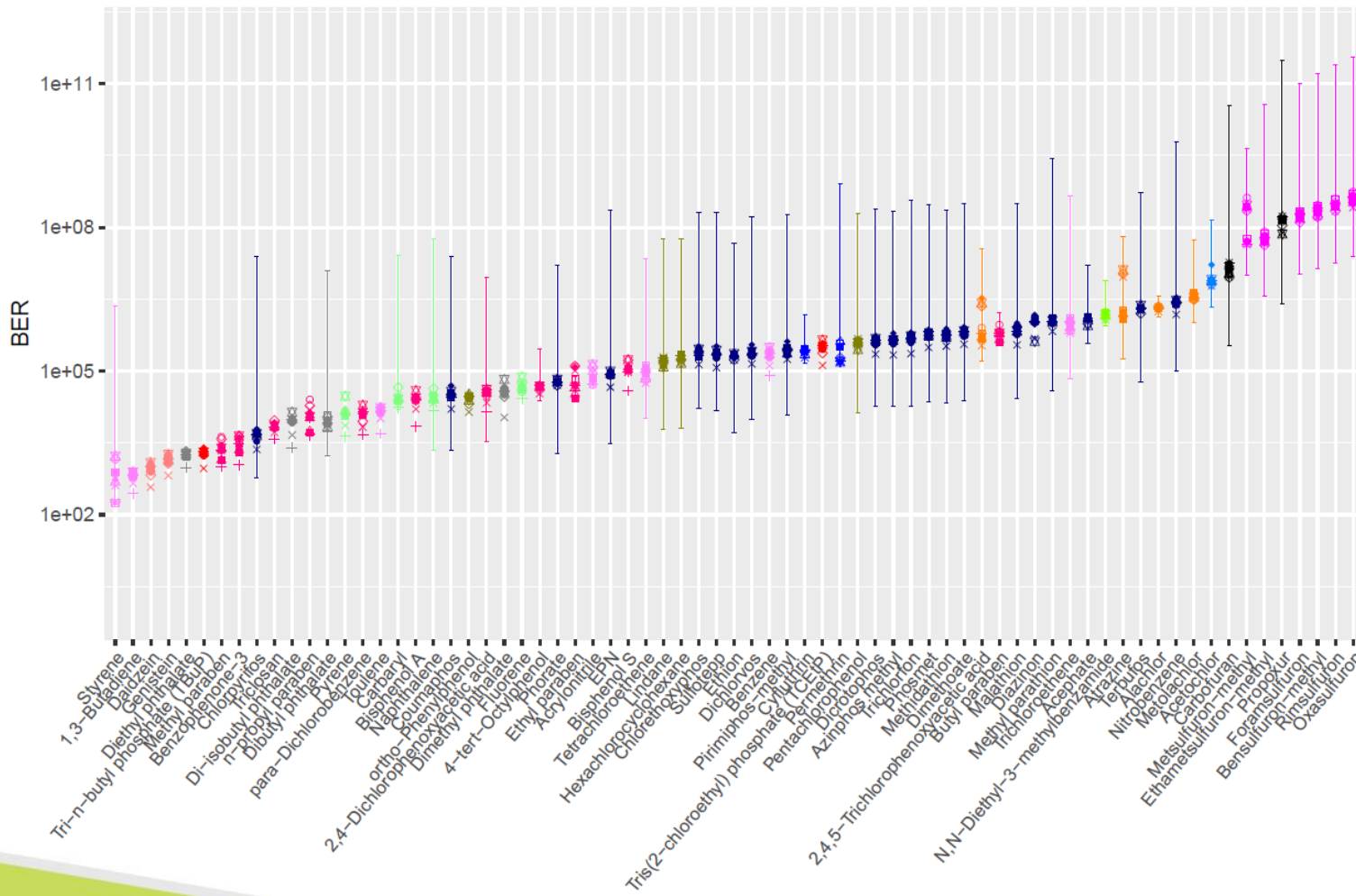
Exposure Fold Change Comparison Between the Total Population and Children aged 3–5 and 6–11



- NHANES started monitoring urine metabolites in 3–5-year-olds in the 2015-2016 cohort
- Consistently higher exposure children aged 3-5, particularly for some metals and phthalates
- Noticeable difference for some personal care product chemicals between the two child populations compared to all individuals

# Translating Exposure to Risk

Bioactivity:Exposure Ratio (BER) for Parent Chemicals of NHANES Metabolites



ChemicalClass

- Carbamate Pesticides
- Flame Retardant
- Fungicides
- Herbicides
- Insect Repellent
- Organophosphorus Insecticides
- Personal Care/Consumer Product
- Phthalates
- Phytoestrogens
- Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons
- Pyrethroids
- Sulfonyl Urea Herbicides
- Unknown
- Volatile Organic Compounds

Group

- Total
- Males
- △ Females
- + Age.3.5
- × Age.6.11
- ◇ Age.12.19
- \* Age.20.65
- ⊠ Age.>65
- ReproAgeFemale
- BMI <= 30
- BMI > 30

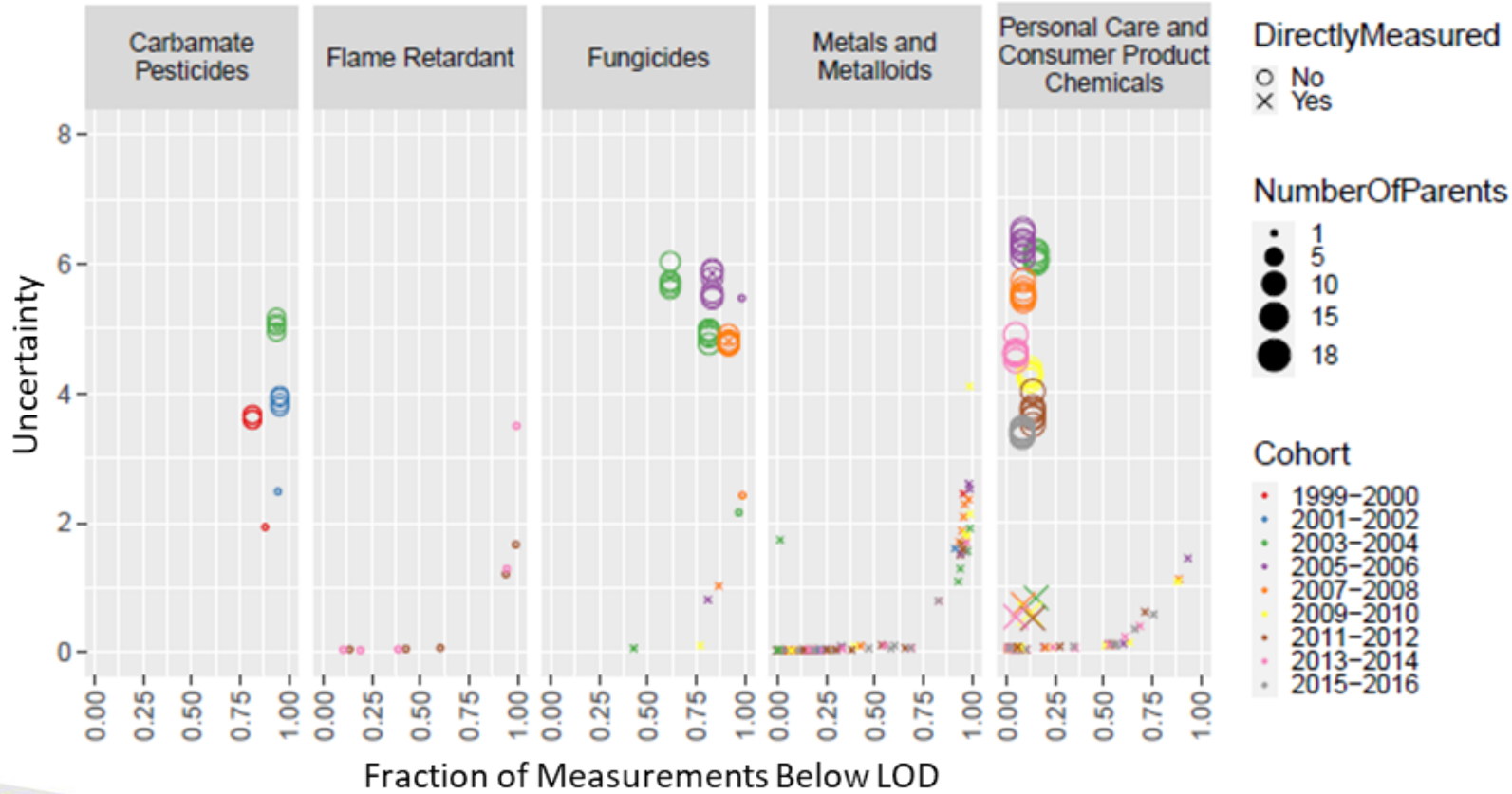
$$\frac{\text{Bioactivity}}{\text{Exposure}} = \frac{\text{HED}}{\text{Plasma Conc.}}$$

$$\frac{\text{calc\_tkstats}(\text{oral rat LD50} * \text{AF})}{\text{calc\_mc\_css}(\text{inferred exposure})}$$

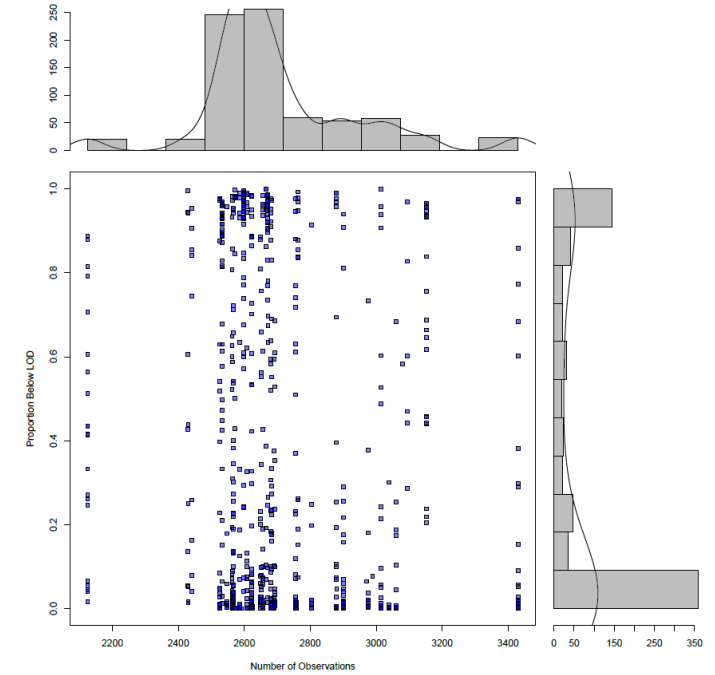
Mansouri et al., 2021  
 Venman and Flaga, 1985  
 Pearce et al., 2017



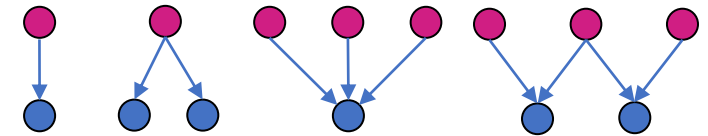
# Contributors of Uncertainty



Censored Data



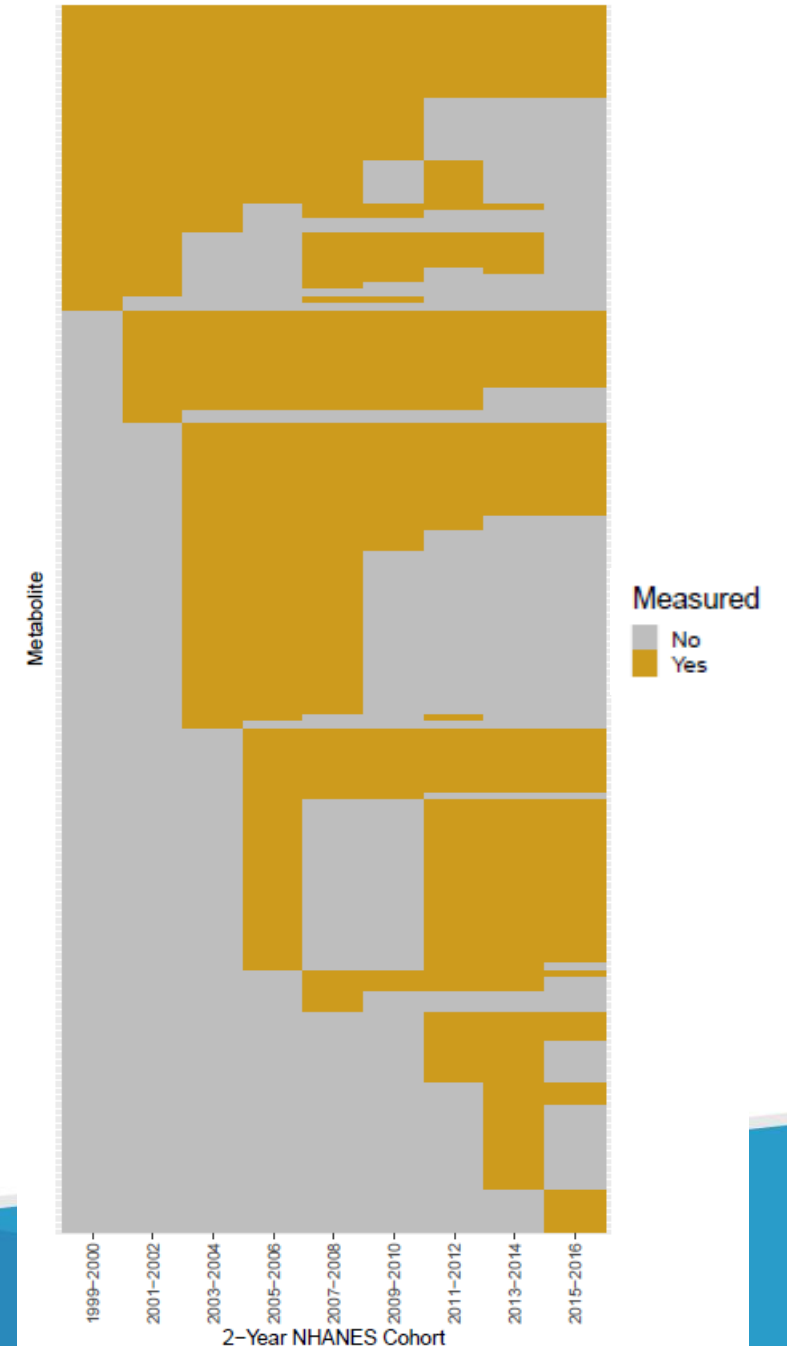
Metabolism



# Making the Most of the NHAENES Data

- The NHANES continuous survey cohorts can be compared or combined
- We can generate exposure estimates for each cohort individually
- We can compare changes in exposure for biomarkers measured in multiple cohorts

Metabolite Data Availability Across NHANES Cohorts



## Characterizing Chemical Exposure Trends from NHANES Urinary Biomonitoring Data

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<sup>1</sup>Center for Computational Toxicology and Exposure, Office of Research and Development, US Environmental Protection Agency, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, USA

<sup>2</sup>Oak Ridge Associated Universities, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, USA

**BACKGROUND:** Xenobiotic metabolites are widely present in human urine and can indicate recent exposure to environmental chemicals. Proper inference of which chemicals contribute to these metabolites can inform human exposure and risk. Furthermore, longitudinal biomonitoring studies provide insight into how chemical exposures change over time.

**OBJECTIVES:** We constructed an exposure landscape for as many human-exposure relevant chemicals over as large a time span as possible to characterize exposure trends across demographic groups and chemical types.

**METHODS:** We analyzed urine data of nine 2-y cohorts (1999–2016) from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES). Chemical daily intake rates (in milligrams per kilogram bodyweight per day) were inferred, using the R package bayesmarker, from metabolite concentrations in each cohort individually to identify exposure trends. Trends for metabolites and parents were clustered to find chemicals with similar exposure patterns. Exposure variation by age, gender, and body mass index were also assessed.

**RESULTS:** Intake rates for 179 parent chemicals were inferred from 151 metabolites (96 measured in five or more cohorts). Seventeen metabolites and 44 parent chemicals exhibited fold-changes  $\geq 10$  between any two cohorts (deltamethrin, di-*n*-octyl phthalate, and di-isononyl phthalate had the greatest exposure increases). Di-2-ethylhexyl phthalate intake began decreasing in 2007, whereas both di-isobutyl and di-isononyl phthalate began increasing shortly before. Intake for four parabens was markedly higher in females, especially reproductive-age females, compared with males and children. Cadmium and arsenobetaine exhibited higher exposure for individuals  $>65$  years of age and lower for individuals  $<20$  years of age.

**DISCUSSION:** With appropriate analysis, NHANES indicates trends in chemical exposures over the past two decades. Decreases in exposure are observable as the result of regulatory action, with some being accompanied by increases in replacement chemicals. Age- and gender-specific variations in exposure were observed for multiple chemicals. Continued estimation of demographic-specific exposures is needed to both monitor and identify potential vulnerable populations. <https://doi.org/10.1289/EHP12188>

Stanfield et al., 2024

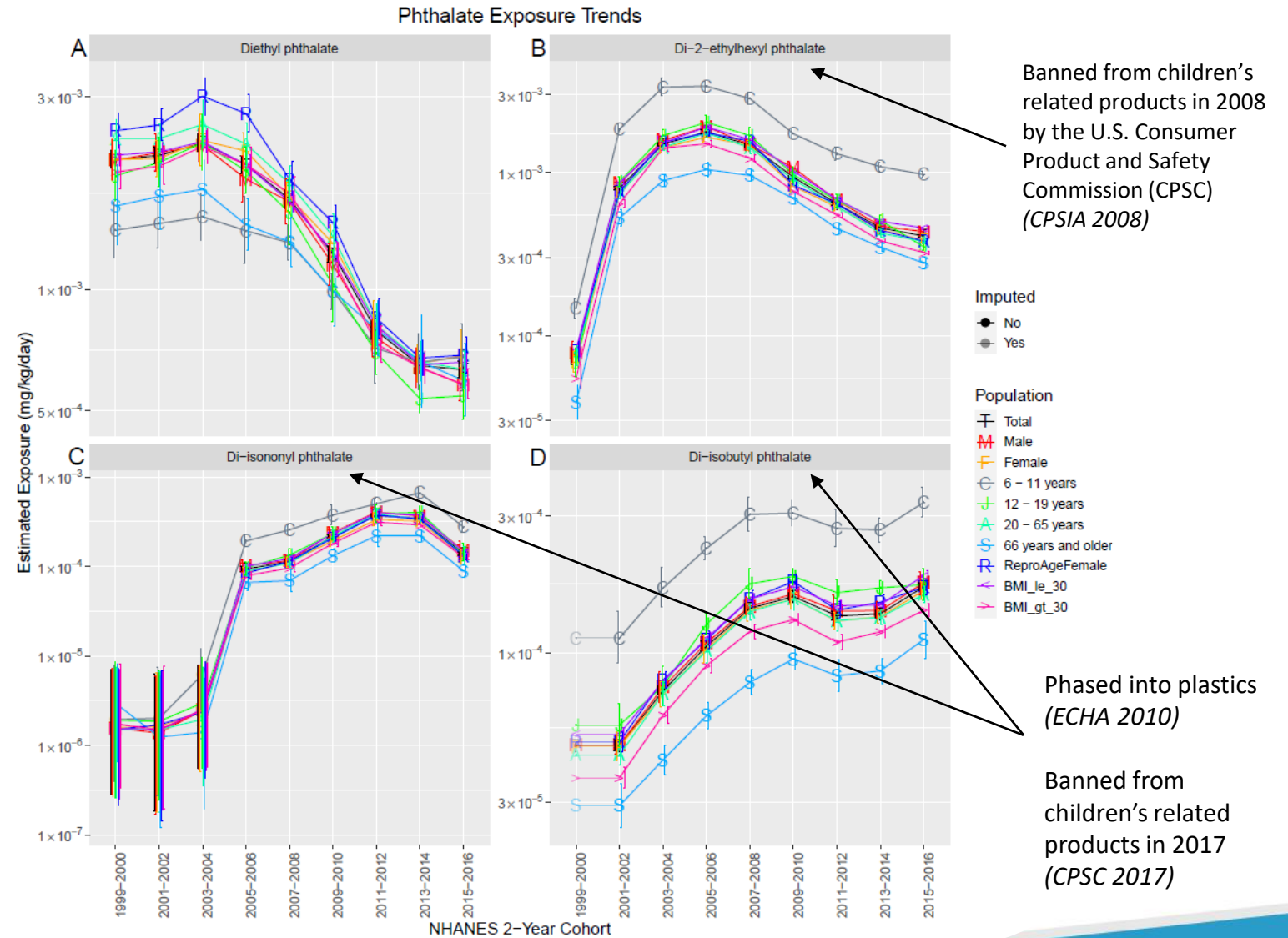
# Landscape of Chemical Exposure

- Exposure inference for 179 chemicals spanning 18 years
- Summary statistics
  - Median FC = 3.22
  - 44 with FC > 10
  - *Deltamethrin* had largest FC (increase; 369.91-fold or 2.57 orders of magnitude)



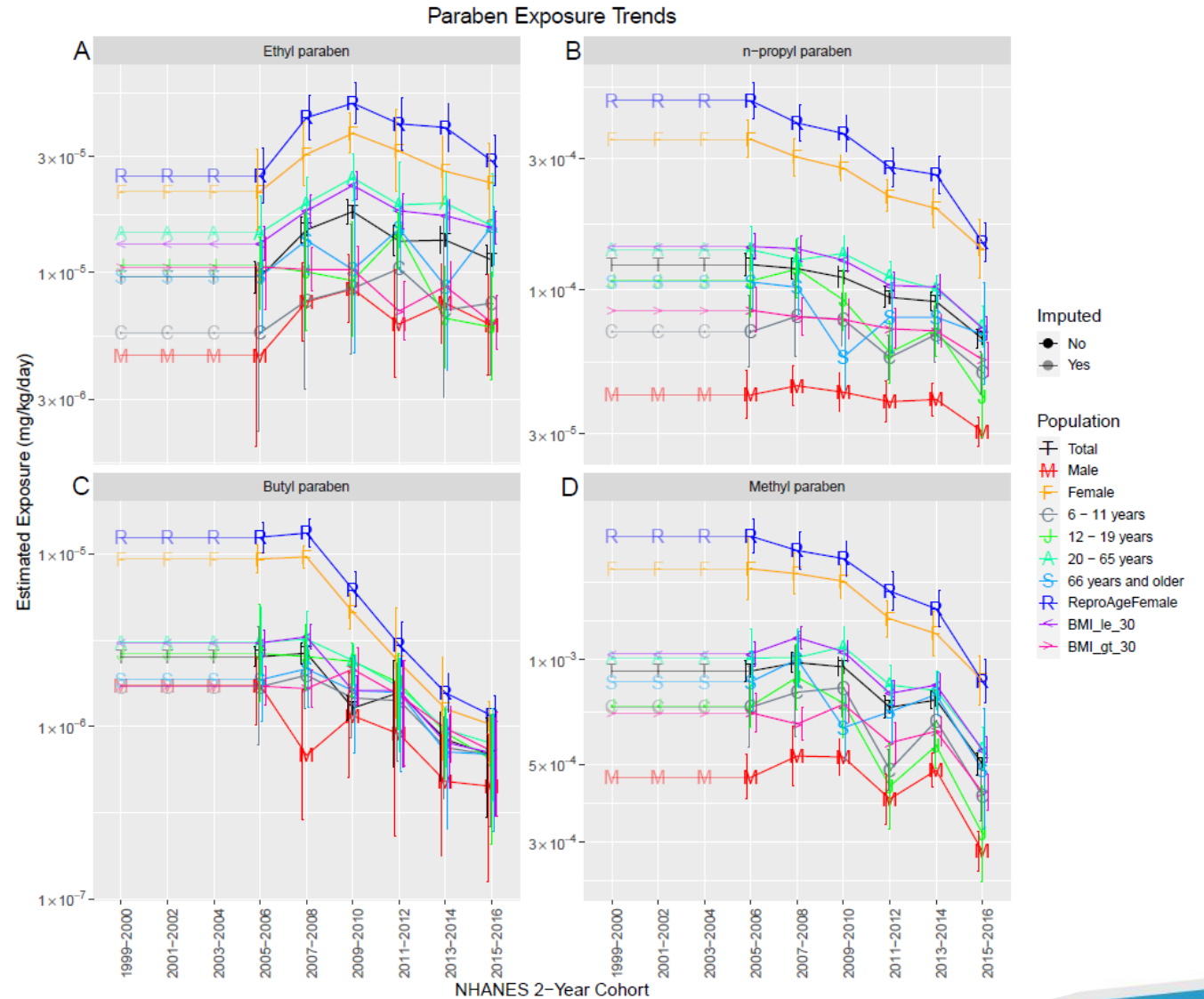
# Phthalates

- Phthalates are used as plasticizers in a wide range of consumer goods such as
  - Food packaging
  - Vinyl flooring
  - Personal care products (soaps, shampoos, hair sprays, cosmetics)



# Parabens

- Parabens are primarily used as preservatives and antibacterial agents in cosmetics and other personal care products (*Shen et al., 2007*)
- Similar results seen for pregnant women in Puerto Rico (*Ashrap et al., 2018*)



# Age-Specific Exposures

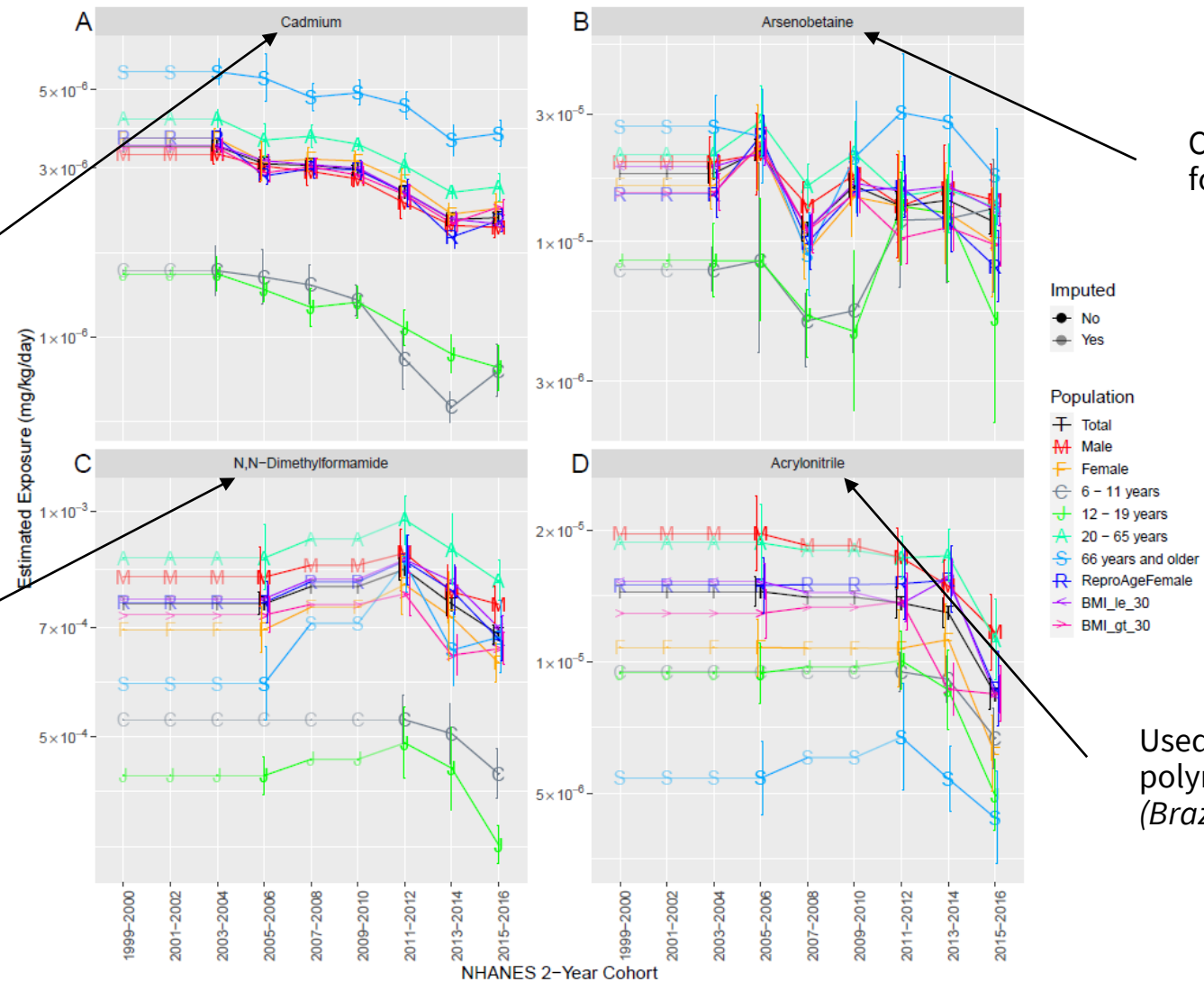
Previously used in plating and pigments in the 1990s

Then used in batteries

Recalls of children's jewelry in 2010 due to high levels of cadmium (CPSC 2010a; CPSC 2010b)

A solvent used in production processes for a wide variety of products and practices, including preparation of polyacrylonitrile (Bipp 2011)

Atypical Exposure Trends

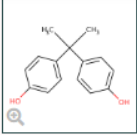


Commonly found in fish

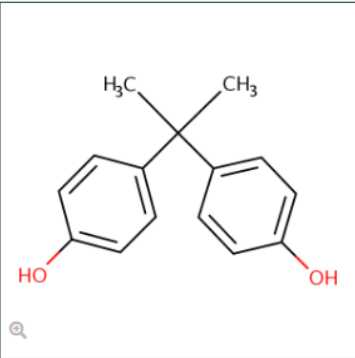
Used for chemical and polymer production (Brazdil 2012)

# Where to Find Exposure Inferences

CompTox Chemicals Dashboard v2.3.0 Home Search Lists About Tools Submit Comments Search all data

 **Bisphenol A**  
80-05-7 | DTXSID7020182  
Searched by Expert Validated Synonym.

**Chemical Details**



**Wikipedia**


**Bisphenol A (BPA)** is a chemical compound primarily used in the manufacturing of various plastics. It is a colourless solid which is soluble in most common organic solvents, but has very poor solubility in water. BPA is produced on an industrial scale by the condensation reaction of phenol and acetone. Global production in 2022 was estimated to be in the region of 10 million tonnes.


BPA's largest single application is as a co-monomer in the production of polycarbonates


[Read more](#)

**Quality Control Notes**

**Intrinsic Properties**

 **Molecular Formula:** C<sub>15</sub>H<sub>16</sub>O<sub>2</sub> [MOL FILE](#) [FIND ALL CHEMICALS](#)

 **Average Mass:** 228.291 g/mol [ISOTOPE MASS DISTRIBUTION](#)

 **Monoisotopic Mass:** 228.11503 g/mol

**Structural Identifiers**

**Chemical Details** (dropdown menu):  
Executive Summary  
Physchem Prop.  
Env. Fate/Transport  
Hazard Data  
Safety > GHS Data  
ADME > IVIVE  
Exposure  
Product & Use Categories  
Chemical Weight Fraction  
Chemical Functional Use  
Toxics Release Inventory  
Biomonitoring Data  
Exposure Predictions  
Production Volume

<https://comptox.epa.gov/dashboard/>



# Where to Find Exposure Inferences

The screenshot displays the CompTox Chemicals Dashboard for Bisphenol A. The main header includes navigation links (Home, Search, Lists, About, Tools) and a search bar. The chemical name 'Bisphenol A' is prominently displayed with its chemical structure and DTXSID (80-05-7 | DTXSID7020182). Below this, a section titled 'National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) Inferences (mg/kg-bw/day)' is shown. A search bar for monitoring data is present, followed by a table of monitoring data. The table has columns for Demographic, Lower Bound (Median), Upper Bound (Median), and Median. The 'Biomonitoring Data' option in the left sidebar is highlighted with a red box.

**Bisphenol A**  
80-05-7 | DTXSID7020182  
Searched by Expert Validated Synonym.

**National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) Inferences (mg/kg-bw/day)**

Search Monitoring Data EXPORT

Demographic ↓↑	Lower Bound (Median) ↓↑	Upper Bound (Median) ↓↑	Median ↓↑
Age 6-11	3.80e-5	4.92e-5	4.33e-5
Age 12-19	2.55e-5	3.38e-5	2.93e-5
Age 20-65	2.79e-5	3.27e-5	3.02e-5
Age 65+	1.91e-5	2.31e-5	2.10e-5
BMI < 30	3.02e-5	3.30e-5	3.16e-5
BMI ≥ 30	2.38e-5	2.74e-5	2.55e-5
Females	2.58e-5	3.03e-5	2.80e-5
Males	2.94e-5	3.37e-5	3.15e-5
Repro. Age Females	2.83e-5	3.31e-5	3.06e-5
Total	2.86e-5	3.08e-5	2.97e-5

Structural Identifiers

<https://comptox.epa.gov/dashboard/>

# Where to Find Exposure Inferences

The screenshot shows the CompTox Chemicals Dashboard for Bisphenol A. The left sidebar contains a menu with 'Exposure Predictions' highlighted in red. The main content area displays 'Exposure - Exposure Predictions (mg/kg-bw/day)' and a table of 'Demographics Predictions Data'.

**Chemical Details**

- Chemical Details
- Executive Summary
- Physchem Prop.
- Env. Fate/Transport
- Hazard Data
- Safety > GHS Data
- ADME > IVIVE
- Exposure
- Product & Use Categories
- Chemical Weight Fraction
- Chemical Functional Use
- Toxics Release Inventory
- Biomonitoring Data
- Exposure Predictions
- Production Volume

**Chemical Details**

- Chemical Details
- Executive Summary
- Physchem Prop.
- Env. Fate/Transport
- Hazard Data
- Safety > GHS Data
- ADME > IVIVE
- Exposure
- Bioactivity
- GenRA
- ACToR
- Literature
- Links
- Comments

**Bisphenol A**  
80-05-7 | DTXSID7020182  
Searched by Expert Validated Synonym.

**Exposure - Exposure Predictions (mg/kg-bw/day)**

Search Demographics Predictions Data [EXPORT]

**Demographics Predictions Data**

Demographic	Predictor	Median	Upper 95%ile	Units
	(2) SEEM2 Heuristic, SEEM3 Consensus			
Age 6-11	SEEM2 Heuristic	6.30e-5	1.05e-2	mg/kg/day
Age 12-19	SEEM2 Heuristic	5.87e-5	1.72e-2	mg/kg/day
Age 20-65	SEEM2 Heuristic	5.68e-5	1.15e-2	mg/kg/day
Age 66+	SEEM2 Heuristic	6.61e-5	1.95e-2	mg/kg/day
BMI <= 30	SEEM2 Heuristic	6.25e-5	1.36e-2	mg/kg/day
BMI > 30	SEEM2 Heuristic	7.07e-5	1.86e-2	mg/kg/day
Females	SEEM2 Heuristic	1.24e-5	2.90e-3	mg/kg/day
Males	SEEM2 Heuristic	3.87e-5	6.31e-3	mg/kg/day

[EXPORT]

Structural Identifiers [General Predictions Data]

<https://comptox.epa.gov/dashboard/>

# Where to Find Exposure Inferences

The image shows two side-by-side screenshots. The left screenshot is the 'CompTox Chemicals Dashboard v2.3.0'. It features a navigation menu on the left with categories like 'Chemical Details', 'Executive Summary', 'Physchem Prop.', 'Env. Fate/Transport', 'Hazard Data', 'Safety > GHS Data', 'ADME > IVIVE', and 'Exposure'. The 'Exposure' category is expanded, showing sub-options: 'Product & Use Categories', 'Chemical Weight Fraction', 'Chemical Functional Use', 'Toxics Release Inventory', 'Biomonitoring Data', 'Exposure Predictions', and 'Production Volume'. The main content area displays a chemical structure and a table for 'Exposure - Exposure' with a search bar and a 'Demographic' dropdown menu. The right screenshot is a GitHub repository page for 'USEPA / CompTox-HumanExposure-bayesmarker'. It shows a commit history table for the 'Stanfield2022MarkovChains' directory. The commit message for all entries is 'Removed non-NTFS compatible symbols from filenames'.

Name	Last commit message	Last commit date
..		
01-02	Removed non-NTFS compatible symbols from filenames	last year
03-04	Removed non-NTFS compatible symbols from filenames	last year
05-06	Removed non-NTFS compatible symbols from filenames	last year
07-08	Removed non-NTFS compatible symbols from filenames	last year
09-10	Removed non-NTFS compatible symbols from filenames	last year
11-12	Removed non-NTFS compatible symbols from filenames	last year
13-14	Removed non-NTFS compatible symbols from filenames	last year
15-16	Removed non-NTFS compatible symbols from filenames	last year
99-00	Removed non-NTFS compatible symbols from filenames	last year
README.txt	Removed non-NTFS compatible symbols from filenames	last year

<https://comptox.epa.gov/dashboard/>

## Summary

- A Bayesian inference approach was developed to provide higher-throughput exposure estimates based on measured data (for calibration of exposure models)
- Extended the data (cohorts, chemicals, metabolism links)
- Streamlined the pipeline in the form of the bayesmarker R package
- Extended analysis to examine trends of exposure based on the NHANES metabolite panel

## Future Work

- Obtain exposure estimates using NHANES blood/serum concentrations (ongoing)
  - 76 chemicals (11 PFAS)
  - All cohorts (~5 per chemical on avg.) and same population groups
- Use new inferences in the development of SEEM4
  - Blood/serum and urine chemicals
  - Demographic-specific models

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# Thank You!

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