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Karl Ehlert, Cor Beumer. Migration study of bisphenol A into water from polycarbonate baby bottles during microwave heating. Food Additives and Contaminants, 2008, 25 (07), pp.904-910. 10.1080/02652030701867867 . hal-00577375

HAL Id: hal-00577375 https://hal.science/hal-00577375

Submitted on 17 Mar 2011

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Food Additives and Contaminants



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Journal:	Food Additives and Contaminants
Manuscript ID:	TFAC-2007-361.R1
Manuscript Type:	Original Research Paper
Date Submitted by the Author:	09-Dec-2007
Complete List of Authors:	Ehlert, Karl; TNO quality of Life, Analytical Research Beumer, Cor; TNO Quality of Life, Analytical Research
Methods/Techniques:	Chromatography - GC/MS, Chromatography - HPLC
Additives/Contaminants:	Bis-phenol A
Food Types:	Baby food

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Migration of bisphenol A into water from polycarbonate baby bottles during microwave heating

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A study was performed to establish a comprehensive migration database for bisphenol A from polycarbonate baby bottles into water during exposure to microwave heating. Polycarbonate baby bottles from 18 different brands sold in Europe were collected. The initial residual content as well as the migration of bisphenol A after microwave heating were determined. The residual content of bisphenol A in the polycarbonate baby bottles ranged from 1.4 to 35.3 mg.kg⁻¹. Migration of bisphenol A into water was determined by placing a polycarbonate bottle filled with water in a microwave oven and heating to 100°C. After heating, the amount of bisphenol A in the water was analysed by GC-MS. The whole procedure of microwave heating and analysis was repeated twice for the same bottle. Thus, 3 migration extracts were prepared for each test specimen. Migration of bisphenol A into water ranged from levels of < 0.1 to 0.7 µg.l⁻¹. There was no correlation between the amount of the residual content of bisphenol A in the bottles and the migration of bisphenol A into water. Furthermore, there was also no correlation between the amount of bisphenol A in consecutive migration extracts. The data presented shows that during 3 microwave heating cycles of a baby bottle made from polycarbonate, no effects of microwave radiation on the migration of bisphenol A into water from polycarbonate can be observed. All levels found were well below the Specific Migration Limit of 0.6 mg.kg⁻¹ specified for bisphenol A in the Commission Directive 2004/19/EC.

Keywords: migration, residual content, bisphenol A (BPA), polycarbonate baby bottles, microwave

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Introduction

Migration of bisphenol A from polycarbonate materials under different testing conditions applying traditional heating is well described in literature. Brede *et. al.* (2003) and Boots (2004) examined the migration of bisphenol A from polycarbonate baby bottles after dishwashing, boiling and brushing, Tan *et al.* (2003) and Biles *et. al.* (1997) investigated the leaching of bisphenol A form old and new baby bottles. Yoshida *et. al.* (2003) and Maragou *et. al.* (2007) determined the migration of bisphenol A after repeated use.

Whereas the influence of time, pH, and temperature on the migration behaviour of bisphenol A from polycarbonate is well investigated, only a few studies have examined the effects of electromagnetic radiation in microwave heating. The results of these studies by Mountfort *et. al.* (1997) and Kawamura *et. al.* (1998) indicate that migration behaviour is not influenced by electromagnetic radiation on the plastic under chosen testing conditions. The recent opinion of the European Food Safety Authority on bisphenol A (EFSA, 2006) indicated that not much information is available on the migration behaviour of bisphenol A form polycarbonate during consecutive microwave heating.

The aim of this study was to establish more information regarding migration behaviour of bisphenol A into water during microwaving of polycarbonate baby bottles. More data in the public domain will be helpful to support the safety of polycarbonate plastic. Published migration studies using conventional heating were mostly performed with water as the food simulant. To allow comparison of data from microwave heating with data of conventional heating, water was used in this study. The selection of water is in accordance with Council Directive 85/572/EEC specifying water as the simulant to be used for milk, although the recent publication of Commission Directive 2007/19/EC, amending Commission Directive 2002/72/EC and Council Directive 85/572/EEC, introduced 50% ethanol as the preferred simulant for milk.

For the purpose of the study polycarbonate baby bottles from different brands sold in Europe were collected and the initial residual content as well as the migration of bisphenol A after repeated microwave heating were determined. The overall procedure was chosen to represent typical conditions for a microwave heating procedure as derived from recommendation from the baby bottles manufacturers.

Materials and Methods

Eighteen types of bottles from different brands sold in Europe were collected: ten major brands sold across Europe, 3 local brands from UK, 3 local brands from the Netherlands and 2 local brands from Germany. To warrant consistent quality all bottles of each brand were purchased from a single source.

Experimental

Sample characterisation

One bottle of each brand was examined by means of infrared analysis to confirm that the bottles are made of polycarbonate. A piece was cut and was examined on both sides using a Perkin Elmer Spectrum GX FT-IR System. Spectra were recorded in the ATR mode (Golden Gate) from 580 cm⁻¹ - 4000 cm⁻¹. Spectra were searched against commercial libraries to identify the polymer.

Residual content of bisphenol A

A sample of each brand was weighed and cut into pieces of about 2x2 cm. All pieces (the whole bottle was used) were placed in an Erlenmeyer flask. For each g of polycarbonate material 10 ml of dichloromethane was added. Bisphenol F (Aldrich) was added to the dichloromethane as internal standard at a concentration of 0.8 mg.l⁻¹. The solution was refluxed until the polycarbonate was completely dissolved. A volume of methanol (0.5 x volume of dichloromethane) was slowly added to precipitate the polymer fraction, while continuing refluxing for about 2 min. The solution was filtered, and the filtrate was stored in a refrigerator for at least 6 hours. An aliquot of the clear liquid containing the residual bisphenol A was transferred into a vial and analysed by HPLC. This whole procedure was performed in duplicate.

Instrumental conditions

HPLC analysis was performed using a Alliance 2695 HPLC (Waters) equipped with an automatic sampler/injector and a Fluorescence 474 detector (Waters) and a PDA 996 (UV) detector (Waters). The column was a Sunfire[™] C18 3.5 µm 3.0x150 mm column (Waters), kept at 35 °C. Elution was performed using a gradient as shown in table 1. Fluorescence detection was performed at an excitation wavelength set at 278 nm and emission wavelength set at 305 nm. UV spectra were recorded for identification purposes.

Table 1Eluent gradient

^{*}A=THF; B=water+0.1% TFA (trifluoroacetic acid); C=Acetonitril+0.1% TFA

Recovery

One sample was dissolved in dichloromethane as described above. The dichloromethane was divided in aliquots of 30 ml which were spiked at a level of 0.3 mg.l⁻¹. The recovery in a spiked sample extract was 103.3%. The working detection limit (WDL calculated from calibration curve according to DIN 32645) was 0.5 mg/kg.

Migration of bisphenol A

Sterilisation conditions

Sterilisation conditions were derived from recommendation from the baby bottles manufacturers. For each brand 6 specimens were immersed in boiling water (water purified using a Milli-Q gradient A10 System) for 5 min. After this, the bottles were placed on a grid and left to dry for at least 3 hours.

Heating and cooling conditions

The microwave oven (Whirlpool Jet Stream JT357) was operated at maximum power (jetmode, nominal power 1000 W). The power output of the microwave oven was determined as described in EN 14255:2002. This was carried out once before the migration studies, once in the middle of the series and once after finishing the migration tests. The average power output of the microwave oven was 728 W (RSD 3%). For one sample a temperature profile was recorded during microwave heating using a calibrated fibre-optic thermometer (950 Multichannel Fluoroptic Thermometer (Luxtron)). One probe was placed in the centre of the bottle and one probe was placed at the inside wall of the bottle. The bottle was filled with 100 ml of water and heated in the microwave oven without subsequent cooling down in the water bath. The microwaving was started after 5 sec, boiling was achieved after 1 min and 54 sec and maintained one minute till 2 min and 54 sec, after which the microwave door was opened. Figure 1 shows the temperature profiles. The temperature profiles indicate no difference between the temperature at the centre of the bottle and the temperature at the wall.

Figure 1. Temperature profile

To determine the loss of water during microwaving, the weight of a bottle filled with 103 g of water was determined before and after microwave heating. The difference in weight was 9.5 g, which means that 9 % of water was evaporated during microwave treatment. To analyse how long it takes that the microwave heated bottle content cools down to a temperature of 37° C in a water bath at 20 °C, a bottle of was filled with 100 ml of water and a conventional

thermometer was inserted at the centre of the bottle. After heating to $100 \,^{\circ}$ C, a temperature of 37 $^{\circ}$ C in a water bath at 20 $^{\circ}$ C was reached after 7 min and 44 sec.

Sample processing

After sterilisation, the dry bottles were filled with 100 ml of water (Sigma Aldrich, HPLCgrade) at room temperature, and placed in the centre of the microwave oven. Bottles with a volume greater than 200 ml were filled with 200 ml of water. The water in the bottle was heated until boiling, and boiling was maintained for 1 minute with unchanged power capacity. After this period the bottle was placed in a water bath at 20 °C until the water in middle of the bottle had reached a temperature of 37 °C. Then the content of the bottle was transferred into glassware to be analysed. The emptied bottle was rinsed 3 times by shaking with 50 ml water (purified using a Milli-Q gradient A10 System) at room temperature, for 15 seconds; the water was discarded after rinsing. The bottle was placed on a grid and left to dry for at least 3 hours. This rinsing and drying procedure was chosen to simulate normal use of the bottle. The procedure as described above was repeated another two times on the same bottle. Thus, 3 migration extracts were prepared for each test specimen.

Analytical method

Migration extracts were fortified with deuterated (d_{16} -) bisphenol A (Aldrich) as internal standard at a concentration of 40 ng per 100 ml extract. The samples were extracted and concentrated using SPE (Solid Phase Extraction) columns (ENV+, 100 mg). The SPE columns were placed on a SPE station, and solvated with 3 ml acetone, followed by 3 ml methanol, and conditioned with 3 ml of water. The water extracts were transferred through the SPE columns by applying a vacuum. Before elution, the SPE packing was dried by applying a vacuum for about 20 min. The SPE columns were eluted with 2 ml acetone. The acetone was evaporated and the residue was re-dissolved in 10 µl pyridine and 90 µl MSTFA (N-Methyl-N-(trimethylsilyl) trifluoroacetamide) in a GC-vial, and heated for 45 minutes at 40 °C.

Instrumental conditions

GC-MS analyses were achieved using an Agilent 6890N GC coupled to a Agilent 5973N mass spectrometer. Gas Chromatographic conditions: column HP-5MS, 0.25mm x 30m 0.25µm film thickness (Agilent); constant flow helium 1.5 ml.min⁻¹; Injection; 1 µl splitless injection; Injection temperature, 250 °C; oven initial temperature, 90 °C; oven initial time 4 min; oven rate, 10° C.min⁻¹; oven final temperature, 300° C; oven final time 10 min. Mass spectrometer conditions: ionization mode, El⁺; scan range, 50 – 600 *m/z*; scan time 0.33 s

Bisphenol A and the internal standard deuterated bisphenol A were quantified using extracted ion chromatograms at m/z 357 and m/z 368 respectively.

Calibration

Calibration solutions were prepared by spiking 100 ml water (Sigma Aldrich, HPLC-grade) samples with bisphenol A (Aldrich) at a level of 0.05, 0.1, 0.2, 0.5, 1, 2 and 5 μ g.l⁻¹. Quantification was performed using calculation from regression parameters according to DIN 32645. The working detection limit (WDL calculated from calibration curve according DIN 32645) was 0.1 μ g.l⁻¹.

Repeatability and recovery

The repeatability and recovery of the method was determined by spiking 5 aliquots of water (Sigma Aldrich, HPLC-grade) at a level of 1 μ g.l⁻¹. The mean recovery of 5 spiked samples was 95%. The standard deviation was 2 %.

Recovery in migration extracts

Twelve specimens of one sample were sterilised and migration extracts were obtained. The contents of the 12 specimens were combined and divided in aliquots of 90 ml. Three aliquots were spiked at a level of 0.1 μ g.l⁻¹ and 3 aliquots were spiked at a level of 0.2 μ g.l⁻¹. The recovery of spiked migration extracts was 113.7% for the extracts spiked at 0.1 μ g.l⁻¹ and 91.4% for the extracts spiked at 0.2 μ g.l⁻¹. The concentration of the non-spiked extracts was 0.11 μ g.l⁻¹.

Results and discussion

The FT-IR analysis confirmed that all 18 samples were made of polycarbonate. Figure 2 shows a typical FT-IR spectrum of a polycarbonate baby bottle. Characteristic wavelengths are 1768 cm⁻¹, 1503 cm⁻¹, 1244 cm⁻¹ and 3040 cm⁻¹

Figure 2. FT-IR spectrum of a polycarbonate baby bottle

Residual content of bisphenol A

Table 2 shows the results of the residual content of bisphenol A in the polycarbonate baby bottles. This shows that the residual content of bisphenol A in polycarbonate baby bottles is in range of 1.4 to 35.3 mg.kg⁻¹. Figure 3 and 4 present an HPLC chromatogram for the determination of the residual content of bisphenol A in the polycarbonate.

Table 2. Results of the residual content of bisphenol A in polycarbonate baby bottles.

Figure 3. HPLC chromatogram of a sample Rt_{bisphenol A} 15.2 min

Figure 4. HPLC chromatogram of a sample with an addition of 0.3 mg.l¹ of bisphenol A.

Migration of bisphenol A

Table 3 gives the average results of the migration of bisphenol A from the polycarbonate baby bottles into water after 3 microwave heating cycles, indicating that the migration of bisphenol A from the polycarbonate baby bottles into water ranged from < 0.1 to $0.7 \mu g l^{-1}$. Figure 5 - 7 present GC-MS chromatograms for the determination of migration of bisphenol A into water after microwave heating.

Table 3. Average results of the migration of bisphenol A into water after 3 microwave heating cycles.

Figure 5. GC-MS chromatogram of a standard bisphenol A at a level of 1 µg.l-1.

Figure 6. GC-MS chromatogram of a sample

Figure 7. GC-MS chromatogram of a sample with an addition of 0.1 μ g.¹ of bisphenol A.

Statistical analysis

To determine if there is a correlation between the amount of the residual content of bisphenol A in the bottles and the migration of bisphenol A, Spearman's correlation coefficients were calculated. This coefficient is a non-parametric version of Pearson's correlation coefficient, in which the actual data is converted to rankings before calculating the coefficient. The Spearman's correlation coefficients reveal that there is no correlation between the residual content and the migration of bisphenol A.

Spearman's correlations

(r; p-value is given between brackets) Residual content versus 1^{st} migration extract: r=0.005 (p=0.9833) Residual content versus 2^{nd} migration extract: r=0.055 (p=0.8271) Residual content versus 3^{rd} migration extract: r=-0.104 (p=0.6803) Furthermore it was tested whether the residual content of bisphenol A differs between migration extracts. This was done using the Kruskal-Wallis test, which is a one-way analysis of variance by ranks. The p-value for this test was 0.3690, so there was no difference in bisphenol A between migration extracts.

Conclusions

The residual content of bisphenol A in the polycarbonate baby bottles ranged from 1.4 to 35.3 mg.kg^{-1} . Migration of bisphenol A into water was found to be in the range of < 0.1 to $0.7 \mu \text{g.I}^{-1}$. The data presented shows that during 3 microwave heating cycles of a baby bottle made from polycarbonate, no effects of electromagnetic radiation on the migration of bisphenol A into water from polycarbonate was observed.Statistical analysis (Spearman correlations) showed there is no correlation between the amount of the residual content of bisphenol A in the bottles and the migration of bisphenol A. Furthermore, there was no statistical difference (Kruskal-Wallis correlation) in the amount of bisphenol A in the consecutive migration extracts. All levels found were well below the specific migration limit of 0.6 mg/kg specified for bisphenol A (Commission Directive 2004/19/EC)

Acknowledgement

The authors thank PlasticsEurope, the European Association of Plastics Manufacturers for their sponsorship, scientific and technical contribution. The authors would also like to thank S. Bijlsma and C.M. Rubingh (TNO) for the statistical contribution and E.K Zondervan-van den Beuken and W.D. van Dongen (TNO) who carefully reviewed the last version of the paper.

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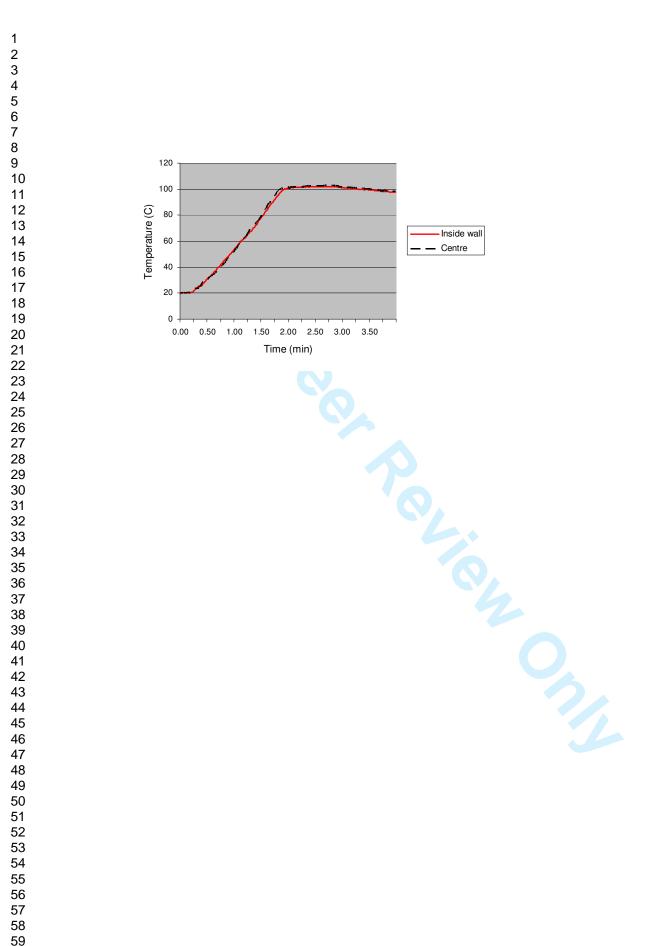
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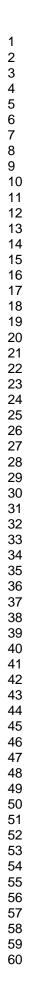
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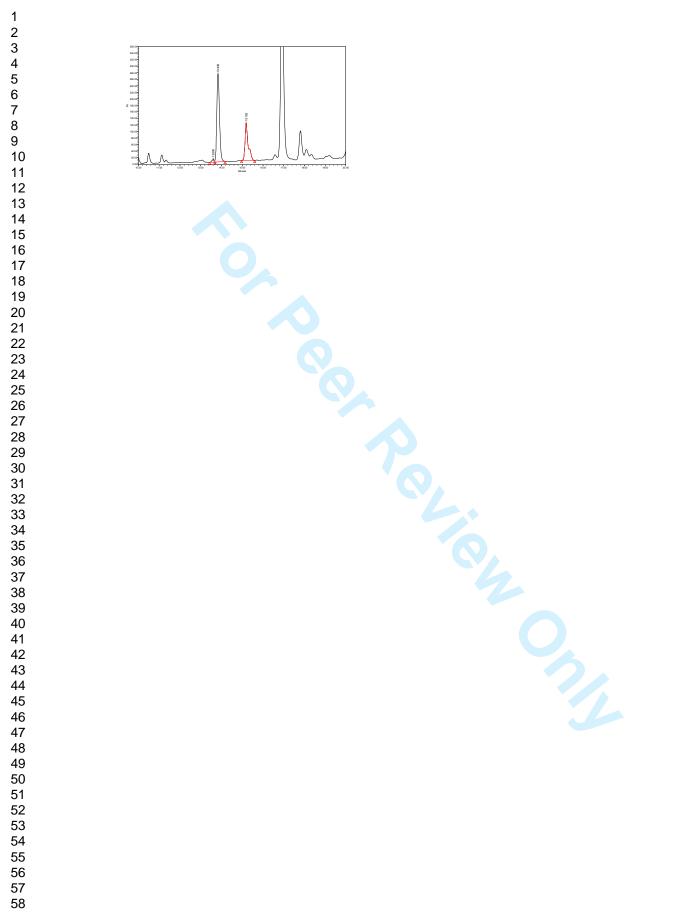
Sample	Residual content (mg.kg ⁻¹)		
Number	А	В	Average
1	2,6	1,1	1,9
2	1,8	2,8	2,3
2 3	2,9	3,2	3,1
4	3,5	4,5	4,0
5	2,4	2,5	2,5
6	27,2	30,0	28,6
7	4,6	6,7	5,7
8	7,2	4,0	5,6
9	23,4	26,5	25,0
10	4,1	5,9	5,0
11	4,7	3,8	4,3
12	33,8	36,7	35,3
13	14,4	14,3	14,4
14	3,4	4,2	3,8
15	1,4	1,4	1,4
16	2,5	2,7	2,6
17	2,5	3,1	2,8
18	25,6	16,9	21,3

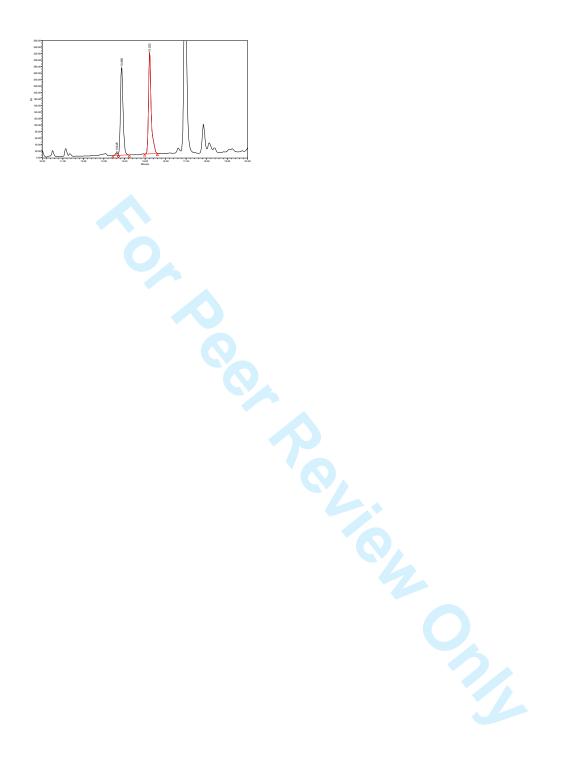
Sample	Migration (μ g.l ⁻¹)		
number	First cycle	Second cycle	Third cycle
1	0.10	<0.10	<0.10
2	0.12	0.11	0.14
3	0.22	0.16	0.30
4	0.26	0.17	0.13
5	0.13	0.11	0.18
6	<0.10	<0.10	<0.10
7	0.10	0.10	0.10
8	<0.10	0.11	<0.10
9	<0.10	<0.10	<0.10
10	0.19	0.12	0.11
11	0.13	<0.10	<0.10
12	0.49	0.73	0.28
13	0.13	<0.10	<0.10
14	0.17	<0.10	0.10
15	0.32	0.11	0.11
16	0.10	<0.10	<0.10
17	<0.10	0.12	<0.10
18	0.21	0.26	0.14



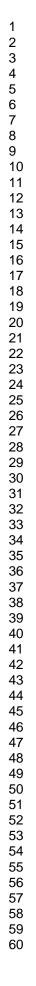


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