Scientists find microplastics in human blood

UNTV News • March 29, 2022

Scientists have found microplastics in human blood for the first time.

According to new research published in the journal Environment International, 77 percent of the people tested carried plastic particles in their blood.

“Our study is the first indication that we have polymer particles in our blood – it’s a breakthrough result,” Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam ecotoxicologist Professor Dick Vethaak said in an interview with the British newspaper, the Guardian.

Vethaak claimed that the findings are a reasonable cause for concern.

Whole blood samples were collected from 22 anonymized, healthy, and non-fasting adult volunteers.

Among the plastic types discovered, PET or polyethylene terephthalate was the most widely encountered.

Fifty (50) percent of the volunteer blood donors have PET in their bloodstream. This plastic type with a resin code 1, is used for packaging beverages, like soft drinks, juices, and water.

This was followed by PS or polystyrene which is found in 36 percent of the donors. PS with resin code 6, is styrofoam commonly used for food containers and disposable cups.

PE or polyethylene plastic-type is also found in 23 percent of the tested people. These plastics with resin codes 2 and 4 are used in producing grocery bags, frozen food bags, food containers, and container lids.

And five (5) percent of the donors have PMMA or methyl methacrylate in their bloodstream. This plastic type belongs to resin code 7. PMMA is a transparent thermoplastic, often used as a light or shatter-resistant alternative to glass.

Resin codes are used by manufacturers to easily identify plastics for recycling purposes.

The study discussed that it is scientifically probable that plastic particles may be transported to organs via the bloodstream.

According to researchers, the plastic particle concentrations reported in the study are the sum of all potential exposure to route sources in the living environment that enter the air, water, and food, and even personal care products that might be ingested, dental polymers, fragments of polymeric implants, polymeric drug, and tattoo ink residues. — Maribelle R. Boral-Cabling