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## Can Your Mattress Kill You?

*The memory foam can kill even your pets!*

We used to sleep on bed mattresses made of more or less natural untreated stuff. But now, they tell you that you ain't cool, man, if you do not have a visco-elastic polyurethane foam (also called memory foam) mattress. They say this is the technological revolution in your bed, the Star Trek dream in your bedroom and the idea of the rigid mattresses is just a prejudice. It is being strongly advertised that the memory foam will remove your back, neck and articulation pains. Millions of people have got a better sleep and life quality, according to the sites selling these products, and, in their published surveys, about 90 % of the clients vote for these mattresses. More than in the elections held in a Communist country. But the sites do not mention that the foam is made from petroleum-based chemicals, starting from the proper foam to flame retardants and viscosity inducing agents. First: what does polyurethane mean? The term refers to any polymer made of organic units joined by urethane connections. By organic units you should understand hydrocarbons from the petroleum or derived chemicals. Theoretically, a fully reacted polyurethane polymer should be chemically inert. But any chemist will tell you that even fully reacted polyurethane can produce dust inducing mechanical irritation to the eyes and lungs. And, as there are no industrial processes 100 % complete, you should expect the polyurethane to expel its chemical load. Only the resin blends can expel isocyanates, which were proven to be skin and respiratory sensitizers, causing asthma. This is just a short list of toxins found in an analyzed type of memory foam: TDI (Toluene Di-Isocyanate), Polyol (Poly Ether Gycol), Silicone Surfactant, Tertiary Amine, Stannous Octoate, Flame Retardant, Pigments/Dyes. TDI is an aromatic hydrocarbon (it is really smelly) causing asthma. Tertiary amines have strong odors and are allergenic. No need to comment on the dyes... You can read [here](#) how the "technology chemicals" can impact your health. OK, I understand that the material can be used in various technologies, but how the heck you can make mattresses out of it? People spend around one third of their life sleeping. This way, you expose people repeatedly and continuously, for long periods, to low levels of chemicals. Sleeping on such a mattress or pillow exposes the person to tight contact to the chemical source, fact that increases several times the contamination degree. It is clear that the hydrocarbons evaporate and load the sleeping room. Most of the hydrocarbons are powerful carcinogenic chemicals and attack, with severe damages, the immune and nervous systems. Most autoimmune disorders (like arthritis, lupus, allergies asthma, and others) have been connected with or thought to be boosted by increased exposure to petroleum. Interestingly, in the US there are no exposure limits for carcinogenicity in the case of the polyurethans. Some researches detected very high levels of toxins, like arsenic and phosphor compounds, in the memory foams. Such actions forced producing companies to remove most toxic chemicals from the mattresses and pillows in many western countries, but the remaining stock can be sent to new virgin markets, unaware of the issue. **Memory foam was originally developed by NASA, but the agency found it too expensive. There are [voices](#) saying that NASA abandoned the material because of chemical volatility issues. Now imagine people spending \$ 1,000-6,000 with the hope of a better health, and instead ruining it. I wonder where do those 90 % are, when hundreds of posts on the Internet talks on a very different note.** We have received at Softpedia.com a mail from someone who clearly belongs to that 10 %: "I bought the mattress at the beginning of December 2007. In 2-3 weeks after sleeping on those mattresses and pillows, me and my wife started having severe nausea, dizziness and a sensation like being irradiated or having a powerful allergy. The room was loaded by a sweetish-bitter scent (many aromatic

hydrocarbons have this smell, like benzene, but also some aldehydes, both categories being powerful carcinogenic and known to attack neurons and provoke severe allergies). Routine analyses looked normal, and the medics were not able to find the cause. I clearly remained with the sensation that the mattress expelled gases. One month later I threw away the mattress. Those at the store that had sold me the mattress told me it was because of the plastic wrapping. You can imagine how "happy" my holidays were. That's the trick: At the beginning, I really enjoyed the mattress, then the problems started. By the New Year I was praying for living. After getting rid of the mattress, we were better in two weeks."

[img=2]We watched on what people say on Internet. Indeed: Great for a while! Then...We extracted some opinions from [here](#). The symptoms vary from rashes to sinus problems, or swollen, inflamed red and itchy eyes and skin, difficult breathing, enlarged lymph nodes (sign of inflammation), irregular heartbeat, vomiting, fever, asthma symptoms, sore throat, nose bleed, diarrhea. People reported the same symptoms even in pets (like cats). Some even reported lymphoma (blood cancer) in dogs exposed to these mattresses. The issue of the scent is omnipresent. "Just being in the sleeping room made many feel very sick, and after months it was equally persistent." "Now three months after removing the bed from our room we are still unable to even use our room (I have to hold my breath if I have to go into our room to get something). We have tried everything to get the odor out of the room. We have left the windows open with 3 fans running day and night (rain got in and ruined our hardwood floors), we have used an ozone machine to try to neutralize the odor, we have removed everything from the closet and washed it. We have scrubbed down everything in the room 5 times, including walls using water and baking soda. All of this still has not removed the odor." "I have a firm mattress and have tried 2 brands of memory foam toppers. One brand was very expensive and the second was a cheaper one. Both had very bad smells and the directions said to air them out for a few days and I did. The smells never went away and I tried sleeping on them after a week. The more expensive brand had a worse smell and made me sick with headaches from the first night. A few months later I tried with the cheaper one and after airing it out it was still smelly. Now after a month I have been getting bad headaches and bad dreams. This morning I am removing it and never going to try memory foam again despite it being very comfortable." "Bought (...) mattress and first night I slept on it, it had a strong odor which I had never smelled from any mattress I had owned before. I thought it must be because it was just out of the plastic and they were using a different cover material. The next morning I woke up with a migraine headache (which I don't get), my body ached, my hips bones felt as though I had fell to the floor and landed on them, my knees hurt, my back ached." "My (...) still stinks after 2 years; I wake up groggy after sleeping on it, seem to need 9 hours of sleep and still don't feel rested, and have developed an auto immune disorder--Hashimoto's disease-- since purchasing." Paradoxically, the mattresses that aimed to relief back and neck pain worsen it! This happens due to allergies (autoimmunity conditions), when the white cells can attack your own tissues, including muscles. This translates into back and neck pain. "After two and a half years of owning this bed my husband and I both started having back, neck and shoulder pains. Some mornings I would feel like my arms and shoulders were beaten up. It took hours for the pains to subside. It was a major undertaking just to turn over in the bed because each position I was in started to hurt. I felt like I was tossing and turning all night and waking up exhausted. I would say the last six months have taken its toll on both of us. We were out of town at a relative's house sleeping in their bed and awoke to no pains - that's when I started to realize it was our bed causing the pains." "These are allergy symptoms." "It started with minor problems and got worse - Hives, kidneys hurting, swollen lips, flu feelings, morning cough, sore joints, etc. We had two memory foam pillows and a memory foam mattress pad on our bed. Took them off and within two days all problems were gone. Two months later all is well and no more memory foam." "Here come the effects on the nervous system. Nightmare, migraines, insomnia (!), panic attack, anxiety, lethargy, irritability, memory loss and depression do not miss!" "I recently purchased a visco-elastic

memory foam mattress topper pad. Since using this pad, my wife and I have both experienced dizziness, headache, nausea, etc." "The first night of sleeping on our new high end latex foam layered mattress, I awoke with a headache and nausea and noticed a horrible sickly sweet smell that permeated the mattress, the room and even penetrated the other rooms in the house. After calling the salesman(who said mine was the first complaint of mattress odor) he recommended that we air it for a few days." "Outgassing from our new adjustable air mattress gave me false symptoms of a heart attack. The night before my "attack," I had brightly colored strange dreams. I was depressed for the next couple days (unusual for me), and the depression lifted within twenty-four hours of moving the mattress outside." "I purchased a memory foam topper for my bed. I am at home sick today after trying to sleep on it for the last week. At first I thought I really liked it and the smell would soon go away but now my husband and I both have noticed that we feel tired and completely drained of energy. I never get headaches or a sore throat, but now we both keep on having them." "This seems to be the best solution:" "3 months ago I bought an Isotonic memory foam topper and pillows from Bed Bath and Beyond. It was the best night sleep I got in a long time, although for the last 3 months I have been severely ill and never associated it with the bed. I went to the emergency room about 2 weeks after purchasing the topper. I was extremely dizzy, could not keep my balance, could not breathe through my nose, shortness of breath, sore throat, my ears felt infected and it was hard even to eat a slim slice of bread. I bought a HEPA air filter hoping that would help and after giving that a couple of weeks I was still very ill. So after being bedridden for 3 months I racked my brain for what had changed since I got sick. It came to me, the mattress topper. I immediately got on the internet and found this site and was shocked to find what I thought was causing my sickness. I got rid of the mattress and pillows 3 days ago and progressively felt better every day. Today was the first time I have been able to live life in a long time. If I can be of help to anyone please feel free to contact me." "We would like you to share your opinion with us. If all this sounds familiar to you, please send us a message.