

# High levels of chemicals found in indoor cats

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A study from Stockholm University has now established what was previously suspected, that the high levels of brominated flame retardants measured in cats are from the dust in our homes. Credit: Jana Weiss

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previously suspected, that the high levels of brominated flame retardants measured in cats are from the dust in our homes. The study has been published in the journal *Environmental Science & Technology*.

The study shows that cats are exposed to chemicals found in electronics and furniture, chemicals that become dust and can adversely affect health. It is the first time that this connection has been verified. In a previous study, the researchers demonstrated that brominated [flame retardants](#) were found in higher concentrations in the blood of cats that had developed Feline hyperthyroidism (hyperthyroidism in cats) compared to healthy cats. Now, new measurements of healthy cats establish their dust exposure. Paired samples were taken from the same household, i.e. they took both dust samples and blood samples at the same time.

## **Exposure to chemicals**

"By taking paired samples, we have greater insight into the environment that the cats live in. Moreover the cats in the study spent the majority of their time indoors and therefore air and dust in the home is expected to contribute more than the outdoor environment", says Jana Weiss at the Department of Environmental Science and Analytical Chemistry, Stockholm University.

The results are very interesting because small children, notorious for putting everything in their mouths, have exposures to these chemicals similar to cats.

"The brominated flame retardants that have been measured in [cats](#) are known [endocrine disruptors](#). It's particularly serious when [small children](#) ingest these substances because exposure during the development can have consequences later in life, such as thyroid disease", says Jana Weiss.

## About brominated flame retardants

Brominated flame retardants are added to textiles, furniture and electronic equipment to prevent the material from igniting. Many of the brominated flame retardants have been found to be health hazards, and some are suspected endocrine disruptors. A number of them have been prohibited for these reasons in products like electronic goods. However, they are extremely persistent and can leach from the products for many years after they have been produced, ultimately becoming part of [dust](#).

Provided by Stockholm University

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