Why do we care?

Microplastics are in our water, air, and food, and can get into our bodies.

Some of them leave your body, but some don't.

There are many types, shapes, and sizes of microplastics that may cause different health effects.

Some chemicals used in the production of plastics have negative health effects.

Scientists are studying the effects of microplastics on humans and the environment.

What can you do?

Take steps to reduce your exposure to plastics.

- Recycle and dispose of trash properly and avoid littering.
- Use less plastic or choose non-plastic options for clothing, packaging, cooking, and eating.
- Choose tap water over bottled water or use a water filter.
- Wet dust, vacuum, or use an air filter.

Promote changes in plastic production, use, and disposal.

- Get involved in litter cleanups.
- Learn about policies related to plastics and microplastics.

Stay up to date on research from reliable sources.

Share what you learn with others!

Developed by the Lake Ontario MicroPlastics Center (LOMP) with support from the NIEHS (P01 ES035526) and the NSF (OCE-2418255).

LOMP.urmc.edu

Microplastics and Me!

LOMP

Lake Ontario MicroPlastics Center

RIT Rochester Institute of Technology

University of Rochester

LOMP is a hub for research and community engagement around microplastics in the Great Lakes.

Last Updated 04/26

What are microplastics?

Microplastics are pieces of plastic that are smaller than 5 mm; smaller than a pencil eraser!

How are they made?

Some microplastics come from the breakdown of larger plastics. Others are created, like plastic pellets (called nurdles) or glitter.

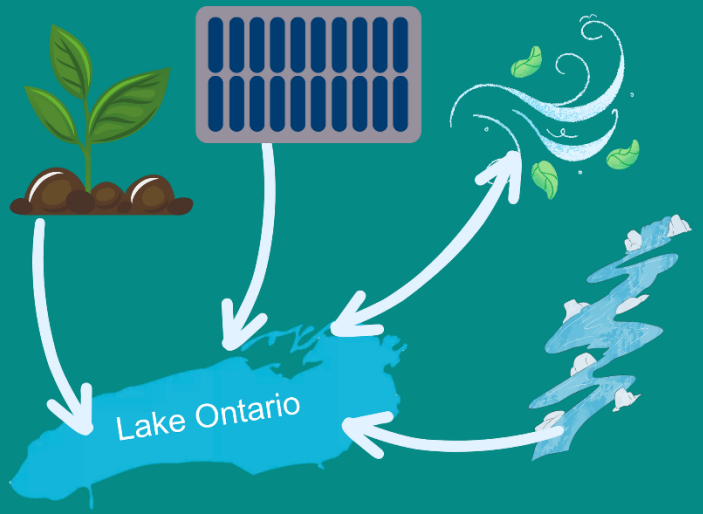
Any plastic item can break down into microplastics.

Where do they come from?

- Paint chips
- Building materials
- Fibers from clothing
- Cigarette butts
- Plastic packaging
- Tires
- Fishing gear
- Nurdles
- Plastic litter
- Hygiene products

...and more!

Where do microplastics go?



Microplastics can be carried over the landscape through the air or by water and can enter Lake Ontario.

They can end up in the air we breathe....

the food we eat....

and the water we drink.

We're trying to figure out what that means for human health and the environment.

What are our scientists learning?

Microplastics are very small and diverse. They are very hard to study, so there's a lot that scientists still don't know.

We're measuring microplastics in the environment. We're studying where microplastics come from, where they go, and how they affect our environment.

We're studying how exposure to microplastics in the air and water affects cells and organ systems. This will help us understand potential effects on human health.

We're developing methods to help scientists study microplastics. We're educating people to help them get involved.