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A diet containing residues of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB's) at levels one-half those considered safe by the FDA interferes with fertility in female monkeys, two researchers from the University of Wisconsin's Department of Pathology report. PCB's are chemicals that have been used by industry for well over 40 years and, although now being produced in limited amounts, are considered a major environmental contaminant, Deborah Barsotti, a graduate student working with Dr. James Allen, told PREVENTION.

The pair fed a group of eight female monkeys a diet containing PCB's at levels of 2.5 parts per million for six months. After that, only three of eight monkeys became pregnant following repeated matings. Only one monkey became pregnant in a second group fed PCB's at a rate of five ppm for six months. Nine of 10 female monkeys in the control group were impregnated.

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