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Aluminum water bottles — Safe for lemon water? ^[1]

Dear Alice,

Can I store my lemon water in aluminum bottles? If not, what should I store it in? It's for everyday drinking, so the storage duration will not be very long.

Answer

Dear Reader,

Reduce, reuse, recycle! Reusing water bottles is one of the best ways to reduce waste and help keep you hydrated, so great work in doing your part save the planet. However, not all reusable water bottles are created equal. Aluminum bottles, though quite durable, have been shown to leach higher than healthy amounts of the metal into their liquid contents, especially acidic liquids like your lemon water. Using aluminum bottles with synthetic linings may help reduce this, though linings that include the chemical Bisphenol A (BPA) have also been shown to leach the chemical into the bottle's contents. Never fear, though, there are other nature- and health-friendly options to store your water!

Just for background, in a series of animal tests, aluminum was shown to be a neurotoxin which is why many aluminum bottle manufacturers have switched to using synthetic epoxy resins to line the inside of their bottles. BPA is a common chemical found in these linings as well as in other polycarbonate plastic bottles and food containers. New research is now causing concern over BPA's effect on the neurological, behavioral, and reproductive health of fetuses, infants, and children. When used to line aluminum bottles, traces of BPA-containing chemicals inevitably remain in the bottle, which is why many manufacturers that use such coatings strongly recommend that customers thoroughly wash their bottles before using them. Also, if scratched or exposed to high heat, this coating may crack, exposing the liquid contents of the bottle to the aluminum. Research is still being done on the long-term health effects of aluminum and BPA on humans, but the jury is still out. Also since manufacturers often don't publicize information about the chemical contents of their liners, and since liners can sometimes retain flavors and smells, it can't hurt to check out alternatives.

Stainless steel is a great alternative that is commonly used in food preparation, wine making, and brewing industries. It is durable, won't leach chemicals into your beverages, and does not retain

flavors or smells. Additionally, it's perfectly safe for lemon water! Even acidic beverages are safe to use in stainless steel bottles (unless in very high heat and even then it's mostly a concern for people with nickel allergies). The one down side is that stainless steel is a bit heavier than aluminum, though weight seems like a fair trade-off to avoid unintentionally ingesting potentially harmful metals and chemicals. Since stainless steel does contain nickel, those with sensitivity to it may need to explore alternatives.

Overall, sticking to water bottles made from stainless steel or those with BPA-free linings is your best bet to play your part in reducing, reusing, and recycling containers for your lemon water.

Alice!

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