

# SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

FROM KING FEATURES WEEKLY SERVICE,  
300 W. 57th STREET, 15th FLOOR, NEW  
YORK, NY 10019

CUSTOMER SERVICE: (800) 708-7311 EXT.

257

SENIOR NEWS LINE

FOR RELEASE AUG. 3, 2026

By Matilda Charles

## The danger of old cookware

When I was expecting a large crowd I needed to pull out all of my old cookware and see if I had enough pieces.

Yes, I had enough pieces. No, I didn't just wash them up and start cooking. Some of the pots and pans were so old I was concerned about PFAS, PFOA and PTFE and whether my cookware was manufactured when use of those chemicals was common.

I went online, and boy, did I learn some things.

The label on my supposedly "free of PFOA" pans doesn't necessarily mean they're safe, because other chemicals could be present. It's the same with "free of PTFE," the nonstick compound used in pots and pans.

The reason: PFOA and PTFE are only two of 9,000 different PFAS chemicals.

To explain: PFAS is called a "forever chemical" because it takes nearly forever to break down in the environment and in our bodies. Long-term use can lead to serious health complications.

PFOA is where the age of some of my cookware became a problem. PFOA is now illegal to use in the manufacture of cookware and has been since 2015. A pan will be especially problematic if it has scratches or is used on high heat.

PTFE, on the other hand, is still used. It's the compound that makes our pans nonstick — and it's unregulated. And, when you heat PTFE, you get PFAS and toxic fumes.

So what do we do (other than panic) when we clearly need to replace our kitchen cookware with something that's safe to use?

If we want to change our cookware, we need to be certain we purchase pieces that really are PTFE-free and PFAS-free. Best bets are stainless steel, titanium (no coating) and ceramic-coated pieces. Be sure to research each one you consider.

To get up to speed on these chemicals before you shop, see LeafScore.com, DefendOurHealth.org, MayoClinic.org or Cancer.org.

© 2026 King Features Synd., Inc.