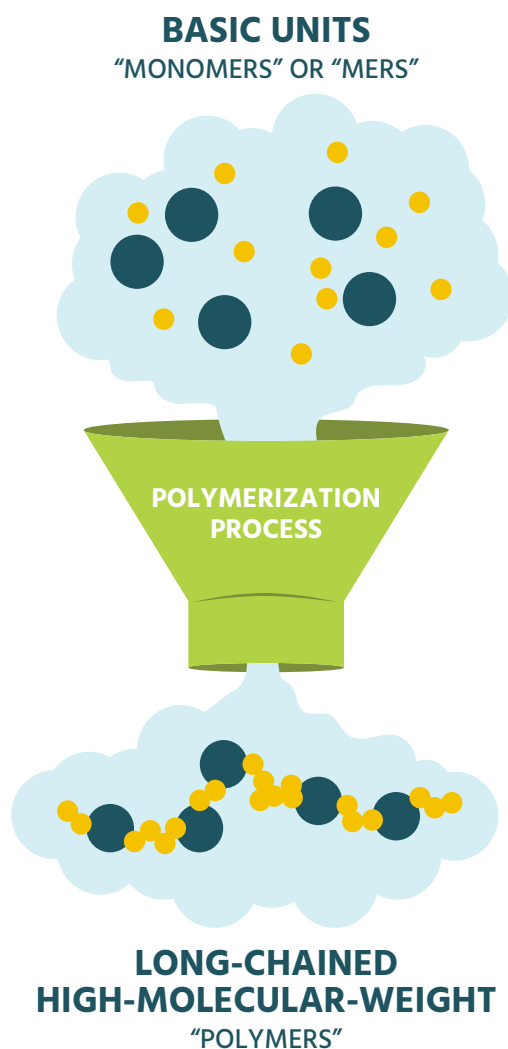


# WHAT ARE PLASTICS?



The word “plastic” refers to a huge variety of synthetic chemical substances that can be moulded or shaped into useful forms. The manufacture of plastics starts with small molecules, called “monomers”, which are repeated thousands or millions of times and assembled into long strands, called “polymers”. Almost all plastics derive from fossil fuels, especially natural gas. A wide variety of monomers—including several with serious health consequences—are used to make common plastics.



Plastics are made of large numbers of “monomers”, which are assembled into long chains called “polymers”.

Other chemicals, called “additives”, are blended in to lend the final product specific desirable characteristics.

**VISIT HEAL’S REPORT ‘TURNING THE PLASTIC TIDE: THE CHEMICALS IN PLASTIC THAT PUT OUR HEALTH AT RISK’ FOR MORE INFORMATION**

