

Aspartame: One of America's Biggest Killers

HELP YOURSELF TO DEATH: EQUAL, NUTRASWEET, EQUAL MEASURE, SPOONFUL, CANDERAL

If you want a sweet way to die, here it is.

HISTORY

For over eight years, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) refused to approve aspartame. **Evidence was abundant that it caused seizures, brain tumors, and sudden heart attacks in laboratory animals.**

In 1981, when Reagan (a friend of the head of G.D. Searle, Inc.) took office, he fired the FDA Commissioner, who steadfastly refused to approve aspartame, and appointed Dr. Arthur H. Hayes. But there was so much opposition to its approval that a board of inquiry was set up, which demanded that aspartame not be approved either for humans or animals. Hayes overruled his own board and approved it. Shortly afterward, he resigned and accepted a position with Searle's.

A 1998 survey conducted by the Calorie Control Council reported that **144 million American adults routinely eat and drink low-calorie, sugar-free products** such as desserts and artificially sweetened sodas.

PRESCRIPTION FOR DISASTER

Fully 10% of aspartame consists of methanol. Methanol is a deadly poison. It is found in wood alcohol. Methanol is gradually released in the small intestine when the methyl group of aspartame encounters the enzyme chymotrypsin (Stegink 1984, p. 143).

But methanol is more readily absorbed by the body (thus becoming even more dangerous) **when it is heated above 86° F. (30° C.) before being ingested.** This occurs when soft drinks are left out in the sun or foods containing aspartame (such as Jello) are heated. A temperature of 86° F. is hardly warm!

Methanol breaks down into formaldehyde and formic acid in the body. Formaldehyde is a deadly neurotoxin. According to an EPA assessment, methanol "is considered a cumulative poison, due to the low rate of excretion, once it is absorbed. In the body, it is oxidized to formaldehyde and formic acid; both of which are toxic."

Full-strength **formaldehyde is embalming fluid**, because nothing can live in its presence. In the body, part of the formaldehyde is broken down into **formic acid, which is an activator to strip epoxy and urethane coatings.** Imagine what it does to your tissues! **Formic acid has been shown to slowly accumulate** in various parts of the body. **It inhibits oxygen metabolism.** Both the brain and heart muscle need lots of oxygen.

Toxic buildup in the body greatly increases when more than 7.8 mg / day of methanol is ingested. One liter (about 1 quart of aspartame-sweetened beverage)

contains about 56 mg of methanol. Heavy users consume as much as 250 mg of methanol per day, or 32 times the EPA limit.

Formaldehyde is a known carcinogen; and it causes retinal damage of the eye. It interferes with DNA replication and causes birth defects. Because we lack a couple of key enzymes, humans are many times more sensitive to the toxic effects of methanol than animals. Formaldehyde is toxic to humans in even small doses.

Although very small amounts of methanol occur in fruit juices, it is never alone in natural food products. Ethanol, which is an antidote to methanol toxicity in humans, is always present in fruit juices.

Phenylalanine and aspartic acid constitute 90% of aspartame. When taken into the body, without other foods, they are neurotoxic. "Diet drinks" are loaded with aspartame and no food. The empty stomach increases the damage. Components of aspartame go straight to the brain, causing headaches, mental confusion, faulty balance, and seizures. Lab animals die from brain tumors.

THE 1990s

Desert Storm troops were given large quantities of aspartame-sweetened beverages which had been heated to high temperatures in the Saudi sun. Many of them returned home with a variety of mysterious disorders, similar to what occurs in persons chemically poisoned by formaldehyde. Other breakdown products of aspartame, such as DKP, may also have been a factor. (The troops were also ordered to swallow insecticides and take anti-poison gas pills.)

In a 1993 decision, the FDA approved aspartame as an ingredient in numerous food items which require heating. On June 27, 1996, without giving public notice, the FDA removed all restrictions from aspartame and allowed it to be used in every possible type of food, including all heated and baked goods.

Be careful what you buy at the store! Do not purchase processed foods in any form.

The amount of methanol people are putting into their bodies (by ingesting aspartame) is unprecedented in human history. Persons who eat or drink aspartame-containing products are often dieting and more likely to have nutritional deficiencies. This intensifies the harmful results. More on this later.

Because these poisons gradually accumulate in the system, the full effects, in the form of chronic diseases, may not be seen until years later.

CDC PRESS RELEASE: FEBRUARY 15, 2002

On this date, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

in Atlanta released a startling report on the astounding fact that **more than 60% of heart disease deaths in 1999 were sudden and nearly half occurred outside of hospitals!**

This CDC report stated that **Sudden Cardiac Death (SCD) is now the nation's Number 1 killer**; it prematurely ended the lives of 460,000 Americans in 1999. **When the heart stops abruptly without warning, the diagnosis is SCD.** It kills its victims within minutes. It is estimated that 95% of victims die before reaching the hospital. SCD often happens to outwardly healthy people, such as high school, college and professional athletes, plus thousands of children—all usually with no known heart problems. Here is the official CDC press release, dated February 15, 2002. (Because it is a press release, the CDC is spoken of in the third person.)

“Despite advances in the prevention and treatment of heart attacks and improvements in emergency transportation, **more than 60% of heart disease deaths in 1999—more than 460,000—were unexpected or ‘sudden,’ and nearly half of all heart deaths (46.9%) occurred outside of the hospital,** according to an analysis of state data by the centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

“Of the 728,743 heart disease deaths in 1999, 462,340 (63.4%) were defined as sudden cardiac deaths (SCD). Of those, 46.9% occurred outside of the hospital, and 16.5% occurred in the emergency room or were pronounced dead upon arrival at the hospital, **according to the latest death certificate data from the National Center for Health Statistics.** Women were more likely than men to die before reaching the hospital (51.9% compared to 41.7%) . . . [A list of states with the highest and lowest percentages is given; but all were high, varying between 58.5% and 72.9%.] . . .

“Possible reasons for the high percentages, according to the CDC researchers, are the unexpected nature of SCD and the failure to recognize early warning symptoms of heart disease, particularly heart attack. Early recognition of symptoms can lead to early treatment that results in less heart damage and fewer deaths.

“These high numbers of sudden deaths from heart disease, and the fact that they occur outside of the hospital, are alarming,” said CDC Director Jeffrey P. Koplan, MD, MPH. ‘CDC and its partners are working closely with states to educate Americans—and their health care providers—about the common and uncommon signs of heart attack and to encourage them to dial 9-1-1 immediately.’

“Uncommon **symptoms** of heart attack that the public and health care providers should watch for include **breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, and lightheadedness.** More common symptoms are **chest discomfort or pain; pain or discomfort in one or both arms or in the back, neck, jaw, or stomach; and shortness of breath.**

“Douglas Zipes, MD, president of the American College of Cardiology, concurred. ‘Because **almost one**

of every two Americans will die of cardiovascular disease, and because about half of those deaths will be sudden, we need to train people in **cardiopulmonary resuscitation** and in use of the **automated external defibrillator**, and make that equipment widely available,’ Zipes said . . . [Paragraph lauding CDC’s efforts to warn the public about health dangers.] . . .

“**Cardiovascular disease—principally heart attack, stroke, and high blood pressure—kill nearly a million Americans each year, making it the leading cause of death among men and women and all racial and ethnic groups.** About 62 million Americans live with cardiovascular disease, which in 2002 is expected to cost the nation an estimated \$329.2 billion in health care expenditures and lost productivity. This burden continues to grow as the population ages.

“Besides being aware of the warning signs of heart disease and responding immediately when they occur, **people can reduce their chances of disease through lifestyle changes: being physically active, eating a diet low in fat and high in fruits and vegetables, and stopping or never starting smoking.**”—*CDC Press Release, February 15, 2002; contact: Kathryn Harben, CDC.*

MORE FACTS ABOUT SUDDEN CARDIAC DEATH

The above press release assumed that the SCD deaths were the result of some kind of early, and previously unrecognized, heart disease. The true cause of many of those deaths is dramatically different.

Only in recent medical history is it mentioned that people have a habit of simply “dropping dead” from routine exertion.

Aspartame triggers an irregular heart rhythm and interacts with cardiac medication. It damages the cardiac conduction system and is a direct cause of sudden death.

Since the approval of the excitotoxin, aspartame, millions of American have fallen victim to numerous chronic and degenerative diseases—and death. The most shocking aspect is its relationship to incidents of sudden death among children and adults. **Nearly half a million Americans are simply “dropping dead” each year.**

Numerous medical journal reports and articles in magazines and newspapers have acknowledged this fatal problem; they generally do not explain its cause. The evidence points to aspartame. Just stop using all aspartame foods, and suddenly you will begin feeling better.

James Bowen, M.D., believes that the evidence is pointing to aspartame as the toxin responsible for sudden death in many of these instances. This is because the combination of aspartame consumption, along with the stresses of athletic competition, lead to activation of the shock mechanism, including arginine vaso-depression in the hypothalamus. This results in cerebral edema, cardiac congestion, and pulmonary edema.

In connection with this, there is severe potassium loss—which is a sure ticket to sudden death, especially because of the many other damages produced by aspartame.

Sudden death during seizures is almost always from cardiac standstill, due to arrhythmia (irregular heart beat). There are several ways that aspartame can cause this damage. **The methyl alcohol within it damages the myocardium (heart muscle) as well as the cardiac electrical system itself.** It also causes immense damage to the mitochondria. The result is that the myocardium and cardiac conduction system (which sends beats to the heart) never get to slow down and rest, but are constantly pumping blood.

The damaged mitochondria in the heart produce larger amounts of free radicals, resulting in increasingly irregular heartbeats (arrhythmia). This is not noticed until a bigger incidence occurs and the person drops over dead.

The problem is intensified by the fact that **many people, anxious to keep their weight down, fill up on "diet" foods and drinks while not obtaining enough vitamins, minerals, and co-enzyme factors.** This increases the likelihood of arrhythmia. Seizures put unusual demands on the cardiorespiratory system. **When anti-seizure medication is then taken, the toxicity of aspartame in the body is increased.**

Please understand that **Sudden Cardiac Death (SCD) is not only a "heart attack" or myocardial infarction caused by clogged arteries; it is an electrical problem in which the cardiac conduction system that generates the impulses regulating the heart suddenly puts out rapid or chaotic electrical impulses, or both.** The heart ceases its rhythmic contractions, the brain is starved of oxygen, and the victim loses consciousness in seconds. He is then reported to have had a sudden, mysterious heart attack, without apparent cause.

THE 1984 AND 1994 REPORTS

In November 1984, the CDC compiled a report, reviewing 213 of 592 cases of aspartame complaints. Some of these included **cardiac arrest, seizures, disorientation, hyperactivity, extreme numbness, excitability, memory loss, loss of depth perception, liver impairment, severe mood swings, and even death.** The executive summary, prepared by Frederick L. Trowbridge, concluded that all the complaints were "generally of a mild nature." He then retired.

Monsanto consistently claims that aspartame is "safe," with the exception of a few people who are "allergic" to it.

In February 1994, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) released a listing of adverse reactions reported to the FDA (DHHS 1994). Aspartame accounted for more than 75% of all adverse reactions reported to the FDA's Adverse Reaction Monitoring System (ARMS). The FDA has admitted that fewer than 1% of consumers ever report a prob-

lem they had with a food. Therefore the 10,000 registered complaints about aspartame actually represent a million. Many of those reactions were very serious, including seizures and sudden death. Here are some of these symptoms:

Abdominal pain, anxiety attacks, arthritis, asthma, asthmatic reactions, bloating, edema (fluid retention), blood sugar control problems (hypoglycemia or hyperglycemia), breathing difficulties, burning eyes or throat, burning urination, can't think straight, chest pains, chronic cough, chronic fatigue, confusion, death, depression, diarrhea, dizziness, excessive thirst or hunger, fatigue, feel unreal, flushing of face, hair loss or thinning of hair, dizziness, hearing loss, heart palpitations, hives, hypertension (high blood pressure), impotency and sexual problems, inability to concentrate, infection susceptibility, insomnia, irritability, itching, joint pains, laryngitis, marked personality changes, memory loss, menstrual problems or changes, migraines and severe headaches, muscle spasms, nausea or vomiting, numbness or tingling of extremities, panic attacks, phobias, poor memory, rapid heartbeat, rashes, seizures and convulsions, slurring of speech, swallowing pain, tachycardia, "thinking in a fog," tremors, tinnitus, vertigo, vision loss, weight gain.

According to the CDC, 100,000 young athletes die each year from all cardiovascular disorders, including cardiomyopathy, as a result of participation in sports. **This is twice as many as die in auto accidents.** Of the 100,000 who die annually, 45,000 of them play basketball, not boxing or football.

APRIL 20, 1995 DHHS REPORT

On April 20, 1995, the DHHS issued a report listing symptoms attributed to aspartame, in complaints received from the general public about that product in food and drink.

Of the more than 100 types of problems, **here are the 23 that were mentioned the most,** with the number of complaints for each:

Headache, 1,847 complaints / dizziness, poor equilibrium, 735 / change of mood, 656 / vomiting or nausea, 647 / abdominal pain and cramps, 483 / change in vision, 362 / diarrhea, 330 / seizures and convulsions, 290 / memory loss, 255 / fatigue, weakness 242 / other neurological, 230 / rash, 226 / sleep problems, 201 / hives, 191 / change in heart rate, 185 / itching, 175 / grand mal seizures, 174 / numbness, tingling, 172 / local swelling, 114 / change in activity level, 113 / difficulty in breathing, 112 / oral sensory changes, 106 / changes in menstrual pattern, 107.

It is obvious that aspartame does not spare any structural system in the body.

WHICH PRODUCTS ARE THE WORST

That same 1995 DHHS report also listed the distribution of reactions to aspartame by product name. This is an extremely helpful list, because it lists the worst of these "sugar-free" products and gives us a glimpse of the wide variety of aspartame products on the market.

Diet soft drinks, 3,021 complaints / table top sweetener, 1,716 / puddings, gelatins, 633 / lemonade, 410 / Kool Aid, 339 / iced tea, 319 / chewing gum, 319 / hot chocolate, 318 / frozen confections, 136 / cereal, 119 / sugar substitute tablets, 71 / breath mints, 62 / punch mix, 45 / fruit drinks, 24 / non-

dairy toppings, 8 / chewable multi-vitamins, 8 / dried fruit, 1 / other, 346.

FILLING THE LAND WITH DEFIBRILLATORS

When a person drops from SCD (if he is not given **a defibrillator shock to his heart** to get it started beating again) within five to ten minutes, he cannot be resuscitated.

A small model which can be operated by anyone is now selling like hot cakes: Push a button, and a voice instructs you to place one paddle over the heart and the other over the other side of the chest. Push another button; and the heartbeat is automatically checked and the voice announces whether or not he needs the shock (defibrillation). If so, the voice says not to touch the patient, but to push another button. An instant later, the voice says that the shock has been given; and then it tells whether the heart is working properly or another shock is needed.

These handy gadgets are being placed in malls, airports, office buildings, and on passenger airplanes all across America. Everywhere, people are suddenly dropping dead. New York State has mandated automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) be provided for all schools and athletic events, on and off campus. Illinois enacted a similar law. In California, they talk of making defibrillators as common as fire extinguishers.

The Philadelphia Trial Lawyers Association donated 73 AEDs to school gyms and playing fields in the area. The Philadelphia School District estimates that **7,000-10,000 children and youth in America die annually from SCD**. Victora Vetter, M.D., Chief of cardiology at Children's Hospital, said, "I diagnose, treat and follow hundreds of children from the Philadelphia region with cardiac issues."

The *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, for September 11, 2003, said, "**Sudden death in high school athletes is a topic that has received a lot of attention recently.**" It mentioned an article in *Science* magazine in 2002 which said that **450,000 people each year are victims of sudden death.**

A 2001 article in the *Journal of Athletic Training* reported, "**In the U.S. each year, sudden cardiac arrest kills 350,000, which is approximately 1,000 people per day . . . The exact incidence of Sudden Cardiac Arrest in athletes is unknown because no universal, standard surveillance method is used.**"

SOME SAMPLE CASES

American Airlines co-pilot Neill was drinking a diet drink, and suddenly fell over dead. The captain landed the plane, so the body could be removed and to get a new co-pilot.

Sonny Bono, the U.S. Congressman who (while skiing down a hill in Colorado) suddenly veered, hit a tree, and died. It was reported that Bono was not drinking alcohol, but only a "Diet Coke." His heart may sud-

denly have stopped beating.

President Bush had a fainting spell and claimed it was due to eating a pretzel. They contain aspartame. Blackouts are common in aspartame victims; and President Bush regularly drinks diet soft drinks.

Kathy Fulford was certain she was dying, because she was having blackouts. One day she almost hit a car head-on. Ten physicians were unable to diagnose the cause. Then a friend suggested she stop using aspartame products; and her health problems disappeared.

A friend of hers, a 46-year-old beautician, drank diet drinks to keep her weight down. She too had blackouts and was recently found dead on the floor—another SCD victim.

CARBONATED BEVERAGES AND HEART ACTION

A study of 500 high school athletes found that **drinking just one carbonated beverage a day increased the fracture rate of bones from 200% to 500%**, depending on the amount of carbonation in the bottle. Coke was said to be the worst offender. **Carbonation destroys the body's ability to absorb minerals. But carbonated beverages also cause problems for the heart.**

An Australian study revealed that **giving magnesium to heart attack victims immediately improved their condition 41% of the time.** Remember that; and keep some on hand. This is because magnesium is essential in the body's manufacture of enzymes that tell the heart to beat. There are 300 of these magnesium heart-related enzymes in the human heart.

The body needs both calcium and magnesium together. Calcium makes it possible for the heart to physically beat. Every muscle contraction requires calcium.

Drinking a carbonated beverage blocks the ability of the body to absorb both calcium and magnesium.

Two other important nutrients for healthy heart action are vitamin E and selenium, which are co-factors to one another. (The FDA commissioned a study of vitamin E without selenium and happily concluded that vitamin E was of little value.)

Copper is also important. A deficiency of this mineral can cause varicose veins, heart fibrillations, and brain aneurysms. **Copper works with zinc**; and both should be taken together.

For additional information, read H.J. Roberts, M.D., *Aspartame Disease: An Ignored Epidemic*. Dr. Roberts is a well-known board certified and recertified internist. The book is filled with highly technical facts.

Why is it that people are so determined to drink chemically colored and chemically sweetened water, when plain water is so much better?