

Group Dismisses Dioxin Cancer Links

By ACSH Staff — August 25, 2005

An August 25, 2005 [article by Ryan LaFontaine in the Sun Herald](#) ^[1] describes ACSH's position on dioxin scares and EPA carcinogen designations, quoting ACSH Medical and Executive Director Dr. Gilbert Ross:

The American Council on Science and Health petitioned the Environmental Protection Agency to eliminate "junk science" when determining what chemicals cause human cancer.

The ACSH claims that by classifying certain substances as carcinogenic the EPA is creating health panics and misleading the public about the risks posed by some chemicals, including dioxins.

In a recent report on human exposure to chemicals, the Centers for Disease Control cautioned that because people have a chemical in their system does not mean the chemical will cause disease.

Citing the CDC's report, some health advocacy groups, including the nonprofit ACSH, say there's no cause for alarm. A DuPont spokesman said the company has contributed study funds to ACSH.

Dr. Gilbert Ross, medical director of ACSH, told the Sun Herald dioxins are among many substances labeled, by some environmental health activists, as being carcinogenic.

"We are asking the EPA to assess the use of high-dose rat tests to designate human carcinogens," he said, in a phone interview from his New York office. "In the rat tests they've found that dioxins can cause cancer, but not in humans."

Some agencies, such as the International Agency for Cancer Research, have listed TCDD -- one of more than 200 forms of dioxin -- as the only one known to cause cancer.

High-dose tests in laboratories showed TCDD can cause cancer in rats, but Ross asserted there's no medical data showing any dioxins are associated with cancer in humans at any dose.

Glen Strong, a Bay St. Louis oyster fisherman, is suing DuPont DeLisle because he claims dioxins released from the plant caused his multiple myeloma.

DuPont attorneys have pointed to Strong's cigarette smoking, for more than thirty years, as a more likely cause.

Ross agrees with Strong's expert witnesses, who have testified that smoking doesn't cause multiple myeloma, but he said there's no scientific evidence that points to dioxins as a likely source.

"There is little evidence that smoking causes multiple myeloma," he said. "I would say that Mr. Strong's multiple myeloma has nothing to do with his lifestyle and certainly not dioxins."

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