Aspartame is safe Really!

By ACSH Staff — March 3, 2014

Along with BPA, DDT, and PCBs, Aspartame has been the focus of fear-mongers for decades. Anything that can go wrong with the human body from cancer to lupus to brain tumors and multiple sclerosis has been blamed on this innocuous artificial sweetener. And the internet, of course, has been the medium for many of these false claims. But now, the internet is also providing some redress in the form of a well-written essay [1] explaining what Aspartame is, its component parts, and why it is no danger to anyone except the few with a genetic disorder.

In brief, Aspartame is about 200 times sweeter than sugar, so much less of it need be used for a given sweetening effect. This alone should make us doubt that it could be harmful since so little is necessary.

The constituents of the sweetener are phenylalanine and aspartic acid, two amino acids found in many different proteins, and methanol, an alcohol found in many fruits and vegetables, as well as in wine, whiskey and beer. At the levels supplied by Aspartame, only the phenylalanine is potentially dangerous, and then only to the relatively small proportion of people who are born with a condition known as phenylketonuria an inability to metabolize this particular amino acid. In light of this, the FDA has mandated a label on Aspartame-containing products warning those people of its phenylalanine content.

Aspartame has been tested and re-tested again and again to see if it is really a threat to human health indeed it is probably the most widely tested food additive in the United States, if not the world. And the results of all this testing are that the product is safe at typically consumed levels up to 40 milligrams of Aspartame per kilogram of body weight.

Much more detailed information is presented in the essay, any anyone who is in the least concerned with Aspartame s safety should read it carefully.

ACSH s Dr. Ruth Kava stance is We have said repeatedly that Aspartame is one of the safest food
additives, and it is rewarding to see such a comprehensive review of the topic in this essay. It has never been clear why this sweetener has been the target of so much misinformation, but we hope that more essays such as this one will provide reassurance to those with any concerns.

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