

Dr. Joe Schwarcz wipes the floor with anti-aspartame zealots

By ACSH Staff — June 29, 2015



Dr. Joe Schwarcz, the director of McGill University's Office for

Science & Society, is well known for his able dissections of quackery of all types. In a recent [article](#) [1] in the *Montreal Gazette*, he takes on and (in our opinion) demolishes the attacks on aspartame. The basis of his take on the subject is chemistry something the anti-aspartame fringe element doesn't seem to understand at all.

For an example of his take on these often-ludicrous attacks, just consider the statement that aspartame is made from the feces of genetically modified *E. coli* bacteria. Brings to mind all sorts of images of foodborne illness, right? But Dr. Joe points out that, lacking a digestive system, bacteria don't produce what we would consider poop, and he adds that if you consider that accurate, you must consider wine as yeast poop. Not terribly appetizing, is it?

Yet another often-promoted slur is that aspartame contains methanol a known metabolic poison. But so do many other foods and beverages, Dr. Joe points out, and in greater quantities than does the sweetener.

The point is, to settle the supposed question about aspartame safety, one need only look at the results of the many high-quality studies, as have many agencies around the world. It's not useful to listen to the scientifically ill-equipped lone wolves braying about the evils of aspartame, says Dr. Joe. We couldn't agree more!

ACSH's Dr. Ruth Kava commented It is always refreshing to read an article by Dr. Schwarcz on any science-related topic. He has both the scientific background and the ability to communicate the important information to consumers. We say Way to go, Dr. Joe!

For more information on artificial sweeteners of all types, see the ACSH publication [Sugar Substitutes and Your Health](#). [2]

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Links

[1] <http://montrealgazette.com/technology/science/the-right-chemistry-some-of-the-attacks-against-artificial-sweeteners-are-ludicrous>

[2] <http://acsh.org/2006/04/sugar-substitutes-and-your-health/>