

No Glyphosate in Human Milk — So What?



By Ruth Kava — May 11, 2016



Although glyphosate, the active ingredient in the herbicide

Roundup®, is now [recognized](#) [1] by all but a handful of anti-chemical activists to be a non-starter in the cancer-causation races, there is still concern by some that somehow, somewhere, someone will be harmed by it.

Since the activists typically target parents of babies and young children, obviously the most easily concerned group, it should be a relief to that group to see the results of a recent [study](#) [2] (entitled Glyphosate and aminomethylphosphonic acid are not detectable in human milk) in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*.

Dr. Michelle K. McGuire from Washington State University in collaboration with colleagues from several institutions collected milk and urine samples from about 40 lactating women from Washington State and Idaho. They then analyzed these samples for the presence of glyphosate and aminomethylphosphonic acid (AMPA), which is a metabolite or breakdown product of glyphosate. They detected neither glyphosate nor AMPA in any of the milk samples — none. And they said their analysis technique was sensitive down to the level of 1 microgram per liter (which is the same as one part per billion).

The results of the urine analysis were very low — 0.28 and 0.30 parts per billion for glyphosate and AMPA respectively. And it didn't make a bit of difference if the ladies were choosing organic or conventional foods and beverages — so one more myth exploded.

Now, the fact that they couldn't detect any glyphosate or AMPA in human milk doesn't mean they weren't there — but the concentrations would have to be less than one part per billion — so the amount reaching a nursing infant (if any did) would be truly infinitesimal. The moral of the story is that, first of all glyphosate and AMPA are highly unlikely to reach a baby through its mother's milk, and second of all, it probably makes no difference whatsoever, because these compounds are not harmful to humans. The area in which these women lived are highly productive agricultural areas where Roundup® is routinely used, thus if it were typically passed from mother to baby it is likely that it would be detected in these women and their offspring.

In the final analysis, however, it really makes no difference, since glyphosate isn't a threat to

humans — just to weeds.

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[1] <http://acsh.org/?s=glyphosate&cat=0&x=0&y=0>

[2] <http://ajcn.nutrition.org/content/103/5/1285.abstract>