The Good, The Bad, & The Ugly: A Bittersweet Research About Artificial Sweeteners [1][2]

Gathered and Edited by Sr. Pastor A. A. Jackson

Do you use any of those seemingly neighborhood friendly little pink (Sweet & Low®), yellow (Splenda®), and blue (Equal®) packets of artificial sugar? Well, consider this professionally documented information…

A study revealed that eating artificially sweetened foods and drinking sweetened beverages might hinder your body's ability to estimate calorie intake, thus boosting your inclination to overindulge.

First Study on Artificial Sweeteners

- The first group of rats were given two liquids, both of which contained natural high-calorie sweeteners
- The second group of rats were given two liquids, one that was sweetened with saccharin
- Both groups were given a sweet, high-calorie chocolate-flavored snack after 10 days into the study

Findings From the Study

- Rats that were given the artificially flavored liquids had a more difficult time differentiating their calorie intake and displayed the tendency to overeat
- The rats given artificially sweetened drinks were found to consume three times more calories than rats that didn't receive any sweeteners in their drinks

Second Study on Artificial Sweeteners

- For the duration of 30 days, two groups of rats were fed their regular food along with a high-calorie supplement.
- One group was given a supplement similar the heavy consistency of chocolate pudding
- The other group was given a supplement that had the consistency of chocolate milk

Findings From the Study

- The rats that were given the chocolate milk-like supplement experienced a notable weight gain over the rats who received the pudding-like supplement
- Researchers concluded that the rats who were given the milk-like supplement had a harder time estimating calories than the rats that were given the pudding-like supplement

Researchers compared the results of this study to the Pavlovian theory where dogs were conditioned to associate the ringing of a bell to food. Researchers also stated that the rats in the study showed a similar relationship between the taste or texture of a food and the number of calories it contained.

Researchers came to the conclusion that an inability to distinguish calorie intake was brought on by artificial sweeteners. On the other hand, the sweetener industry viewed the results of the study as inconclusive because of the fact that it was tested solely on animals. They also stated that sweeteners played an active part in weight loss and were a valuable tool for weight control.

Another spokesperson for the sweetener industry added that it wasn't necessary to cut back on artificial sweeteners because the FDA previously approved them.

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[1] As retrieved 3/21/07 from http://www.mercola.com

[2] As retrieved 3/21/07 from http://www.perfectlyhealthy.net

Dr. Joseph Mercola's Comment:

The number of Americans consuming sugar-free products increased from less than 70 million in 1987 to more than 160 million in 2000. During the same period, the consumption of regular soft drinks increased by more than 15 gallons per capita annually. The average American now consumes over 600 cans of soda a year. Over the past 25 years, there has been a dramatic increase in the consumption of artificially sweetened foods and low viscosity or mostly liquid, high-calorie beverages. Obesity has also skyrocketed during this period. Soda is one of the main nutritional reasons why most people suffer from health problems. It parallels alcohol in one profound similarity. If one drinks all that sugar the appetite is relatively suppressed for nourishing foods like vegetables and that results in nutritional deficiencies. This is independent of all the damage that sugar can do. You might say, "But I drink diet soda!" Well as most of my regular readers know, that is likely far worse (Aspartame), and as the above study shows may ruin your body's ability to count calories. **The healthiest beverage you could drink is pure water.**

The Not So Good, The Bad, & The Ugly - PART ONE

Aspartame: The Sweet Killer – It Puts the *DIE* in *Die*t Soda and over 6,000 Other Products!

All things being *Equal*®, what's really in the Blue Packet?

Aspartame: How Sweet Is It? *By Leigh Erin Connealy, MD; Edited by Sr. Pastor A. A. Jackson*

Aspartame, more commonly known as AminoSweet, NutraSweet, or Equal, is one of the most toxic substances being consumed today. The artificial sweetener, currently used in over 4,000 products worldwide, entertains a sordid past and has been one of the most tested and debated food additives in the history of the FDA. While the manufacturer maintains that aspartame is not a danger to your health, the scientific studies don't necessarily agree. The FDA has approved the product for mass consumption, in spite of overwhelming evidence that aspartame can have neurotoxic, metabolic, allergenic, fetal and carcinogenic effects. When you question how such a substance has not been banned, one simply needs to look at the billions of dollars generated by the sale of aspartame each year. In light of the staggering number of dollar signs involved, it's easy to see that the artificial sweetener industry has reached Big Tobacco status. With so much money at stake, the truth suffers almost as much as the health of the consumers, while the shareholders wealth continues to grow exponentially.

The Deadly Ingredients of Aspartame

In 1965, James Schlatter, a chemist for G.D. Searle, was developing an anti-ulcer drug when he accidentally stumbled upon aspartame. Made up of aspartic acid (40%), phenylalanine (50%) and methanol (10%), aspartame is 200 times sweeter than natural sugar.

Aspartic Acid

Aspartate is a neurotransmitter in the brain, facilitating information from one neuron to another. Too much aspartate allows an influx of calcium into the brain cells, triggering an excessive amount of free radicals which kill the cells. Aspartate is referred to as an "excitotoxin" because of the nerve cell damage that it causes. Many chronic illnesses have been attributed to by long term excitotoxin

exposure, including multiple sclerosis, ALS, memory loss, hormonal problems, hearing loss, epilepsy, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, hypoglycemia, dementia, brain lesions and neuroendocrine disorders.

In 1971, Dr. John Olney, neuroscientist and one of the world's foremost experts on excitotoxins, informed G.D. Searle that his research had revealed that aspartic acid caused holes in the brains of mice. Searle did not inform the FDA of these findings until after aspartames approval in 1981. This would prove to be one event in a startling pattern of **lies and deception**.

Phenylalanine

Phenylalanine is an amino acid normally found in the brain. Human testing has shown phenylalanine levels in the blood are increased significantly in those who chronically use aspartame. Excessive levels of phenylalanine in the brain can cause the levels of serotonin to decrease, which can lead to depression, schizophrenia and make one more susceptible to seizures.

Studies conducted on rats by G.D. Searle found phenylalanine to be safe for humans. However, Louis J. Elsas, II, M.D., Director of Medical Genetics and Professor of Pediatrics at Emory University School of Medicine told the US Senate in 1987 that, "Normal humans do not metabolize phenylalanine as efficiently as do lower species such as rodents and thus most of the previous studies on aspartame effects on rodents are irrelevant." Unfortunately, this fell on deaf ears and failed to garner additional testing.

Methanol

By far, the most controversial ingredient in aspartame is methanol (aka wood alcohol). An EPA assessment of methanol states that it is "considered a cumulative poison due to the low rate of excretion once it is absorbed. In the body, methanol is oxidated to formaldehyde and formic acid; both of these metabolites are toxic." This oxidation occurs when methanol reaches 86°F (30°C). Formaldehyde, a product broken down from aspartate, is a known carcinogen and causes retinal damage, birth defects and interferes with DNA replications.

The EPA recommends a consumption limit of 7.8 mg/day. A 1L aspartame sweetened beverage contains about 56 mg of methanol, seven times the EPA limit. The most common maladies related to methanol poisoning are vision problems including misty vision, progressive contraction of visual fields, blurring of vision, obscuration of vision, retinal damage and blindness.

The History of Aspartame

In 1973, G.D. Searle submitted aspartame to the FDA for approval as a sweetening agent. Approval was granted in July of 1974 but pulled in December after objections to its safety were filed by neuroscience researcher, John Olney, and consumer attorney, James Turner. Questions regarding G.D. Searle's research practices were subsequently raised and an FDA investigation was launched.

It is important to note that of the 164 studies that were conducted, 74 of them had industry related sponsorship and 90 were funded without any industry money. Of the 90 non-industry sponsored studies, 83 (92%) identified one of more problems with aspartame.

In 1976, an FDA task force investigation revealed numerous faults in G.D. Seale's studies. FDA Toxicologist and Task Force member, Dr. Adrian Gross stated, "They [G.D. Searle] lied and they didn't submit the real nature of their observations because, had they done that, it is more likely that a great

number of these studies would have been rejected for adequacy. What Searle did, they took great pains to camouflage these shortcomings of the study… For instance, animals would develop tumors while they were under study. Well, they would remove these tumors from the animals." In July 1976 the FDA created another task force, headed by Jerome Bressler, to investigate the discrepancies in three studies in particular.

In 1977, a Grand Jury investigation into Searle's violation of the law was launched, headed by US Attorney William Conlon. Conlon failed to follow through and the statute of limitations ran out. 15 months later, Conlon accepted a job with the law firm representing G.D. Searle in the investigation.

In August of 1977, the Bressler Report was released, citing a myriad of lies and inconsistencies with Searle's studies. Senior Scientist on the FDA's task force, Jacqueline Verrett, testified in front of the US Senate, "It would appear that the safety of aspartame and its breakdown products has still not been satisfactorily determines, since the flaws cited in these three studies were also present in all of the other studies submitted by Searle." Due to these findings, a Public Board of Inquiry (PBOI) was launched.

In 1980, the PBOI voted unanimously to reject the use of aspartame until additional studies on its potential to cause brain tumors could be done. In January of 1981, G.D. Searle reapplied for approval, submitting new studies with its application. In March, a 5 member FDA panel of scientists reviewed the PBOI's findings. The panel referred to the brain tumor data as "worrisome" and could not recommend approval. In July of 1981, FDA Commissioner Arthur Hull Hayes, Jr. overruled the PBOI and approved aspartame for dry foods use, ignoring the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 348) which states that a food additive should not be approved if tests are inconclusive.

In October 1982, Searle petitioned the FDA for approval to use aspartame in soft drinks and children's vitamins. The FDA approved the use in soft drinks in 1983. Shortly after approval, Commissioner Hayes left the FDA under charges of improprieties and was hired as a consultant for G.D. Searle's PR Firm, Burson Marstellar.

In July of 1983, both Woodrow Monte, Director of the Science and Nutrition Laboratory at Arizona State University and James Turner, Esq. filed petitions objecting to the approval of aspartame based on possible serious adverse side effects from chronic intake of aspartame. In November, the FDA denied the petitions "because public interest did not require it."

In 1984, 6,900,000 lbs of aspartame were consumed in the US. In 1985, G.D. Searle was bought out by Monsanto, creating the NutraSweet Company as a separate subsidiary from G.D. Searle. 14,400,000 lbs. of aspartame were consumed in the US that same year. 15,700,000 lbs of aspartame were consumed in the US in 1986. 17,100,000 lbs were consumed in 1987. NutraSweet stopped providing consumption data to the USDA after 1987. In 1996, the FDA removed all restrictions on aspartame and authorized its use in all products, including heated and baked goods. This was done in spite of the fact that aspartame breaks down into formaldehyde above 86°F.

Today, aspartame accounts for over 75% of the adverse reactions to food additives reported to the FDA. HOW SWEET IS IT? A few of the 90 different documented symptoms include: headaches/ migraines, dizziness, seizures, nausea, numbness, muscle spasms, weight gain, rashes, depression, fatigue, irritability, tachycardia, insomnia, vision problems, hearing loss, heart palpitations, breathing difficulties, anxiety attacks, slurred speech, loss of taste, tinnitus, vertigo, memory loss and joint pain.

Which one are you ready for? ☠