
# UK Aspartame Awareness Campaign

Remove Methanol from your Diet and improve your HEALTH

www.Aspartame-Awareness-Campaign.co.uk

James McDonald
bigmac2@freenetname.co.uk

Ms Anne Peat
Clerk
Public Petitions Committee
By e-mail Anne.Peat@scottish.parliament.uk

12th August 2011

Dear Ms Peat,

**Ref: PE1376 – methanol in our food** -

Below is our response to the FSA letter of 4th August Ref: FAS/0034.

First I would like to clarify exactly what Mr. Don was asking and why he was asking it - what he actually said was:-

"*The Food Standards Agency knows that I am a great fan of it, but it has not addressed the point that the petitioner has raised on the other chemical inhibitors that are present in natural foodstuffs. I would be grateful if it did so. I am not here to tell members where the right answer lies, but it would be extremely helpful if the Food Standards Agency could tell us."*

The reason Mr. Don asked the question was to clarify the presence of inhibitors which are present naturally in fruits and vegetables containing methanol; these inhibitors are bound to the methanol within the fruit or veg. and prevent its methanol from metabolising thus giving our bodies time to clear it safely and without harm. If this were not the case we would all be very sick with methanol poisoning through eating our 3 veg. and one apple a day also how would our vegetarians and vegans survive? Methanol in nature is never found alone – it is never FREE - it is safe.

The question of what these natural inhibitors are, have been more alluded to by scientists than individually identified since they are of positive benefit to us. However two chemicals, ethanol and pectin, are generally recognised as playing the critical role of protecting us from the metabolism of methanol in nature. Small bolus doses of ethanol are the prime treatment for someone suffering pure methanol poisoning.

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In his reply I am not sure why Professor Milne felt it was necessary to defend the FSA position on methanol, this is unnecessarily widening the question asked and a shameless attempt to blind us with science; we have debated these issues elsewhere in this petition and remain diametrically opposed to the FSA position which is:- *"that the body handles the methanol from aspartame in the same way as methanol in nature"* and that *"it is safe to consume the small amounts of methanol from aspartame daily without harm"*

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What we are discussing here is the ingestion of methanol from two completely different sources;-

Source 1 - Is the methanol found naturally as part of the fruits and vegetables we eat in our diet on a daily basis, where the methanol is bound to the inhibitors ethanol and Pectin. These protect us from harm by blocking the metabolism of the methanol thus protecting us from its highly toxic effects. This process is described above and we can all testify that we come to no harm whatsoever by the process.

Source 2 - Is the pure methanol freed from aspartame; Aspartame is a totally manufactured chemical product of three constituents – 50% Phenylalanine / 40% Aspartic acid / 10% methyl ester (methanol) at a temperature of 86 degrees f (eg. in the gut) the methyl ester converts back to its original state of pure methanol and separates away from the other two chemicals – it is now described as free methanol with no competition to prevent it entering the bloodstream and following its destructive metabolic pathway: Methanol > Formaldehyde > Formic Acid > Co2 > H2o .

This is exactly the same pathway followed by pure methanol deliberately or otherwise consumed by persons who became desperately ill or died from methanol poisoning – one tablespoonful (10ml) will make you blind, 3 tablespoonfuls (30ml) could be fatal - this process could take up to 30hrs.

When I first outlined this process to COT in 2009 they examined it and commented that *"it was too simple"* - It may seem very simple but they have so far not been able to refute it – what they meant was it did not fit the advice the FSA were giving out about aspartame.

COT, FSA, EFSA, FDA, the aspartame producer (Ajinomoto) and the food industry, all use the same analogy; "*Because we suffer no harmful effects from consuming natural methanol from our fruits and vegetables the body can handle the very small amount of methanol released by aspartame safely"* This is supposition and not based on any facts. When requested, FSA could not produce a shred of scientific evidence that substantiated this contention.

We can see above two independent and separate routes for methanol through the body one entirely safe and the other potentially very dangerous – how does the very small amounts of methanol from aspartame harm us?

Methanol is a slow stealthy killer of humans, operating at the molecular level this cumulative poison builds up in our bodies eventually causing neurological, organ and tissue damage over time (0-20 yrs) anecdotal evidence cases reported over the last 29 years supports this; without exception when sufferers cease their intake of aspartame their symptoms radically improve or disappear altogether.

The ADI (acceptable daily intake)of aspartame in the USA where most of the evidence comes from is 50mg/kg, - 25% higher than in the UK (40mg/kg)- because we are consuming less we have not yet seen here the level of harm reported in the US, but we are now seeing an increase in reported cases. People are coming forward for help who are addicted to carbonated diet drinks, sugar free chewing gum and tabletop sweeteners or have severe eyesight, neurological and memory problems. Sufferers come to us in desperation when their GP's have been unable to help them – The GP's are not aware that their patients are consuming methanol in their diet every day and have been for the best part of 29years - compliments of the FSA who consistently declare, in the face of mounting evidence to the contrary, that aspartame is safe, thus denying our GP's and primary care staff vital medical knowledge about their patients.

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Our research into the methanol in aspartame over the last two years has revealed a significant error by COT who first approved aspartame for use in our food in 1982 - they did not account for the severe metabolic toxicity of its 10% methanol – they regarded it *"not of concern"* (COT report 1992) subsequent research has shown this to be a monumental error.

The safety of a food product is assessed by establishing an NOAEL (no observable effect level) for the product using animal studies (supplied by the applicant) which one would expect would be based on the most toxic of its constituents. By relegating methanol to the "not of concern" rank the animal tests were carried out using the whole aspartame molecule with the assumption that any problems with methanol would show up – very clever or very naive by the applicant Searle. Once the NOAEL is established the value is divided x 100 for a margin of safety the result is the ADI as follows:-

NOAEL of aspartame in rats = 4000mg/kg divide x 100 = **40mg/kg – UK ADI of aspartame since 1982.** This is a very important comparative measure of aspartame "safety" and controls the amount of aspartame manufacturers are permitted to add to our food.

In 2009 we went back to basics; with generally accepted scientific facts and data from the MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet) for methanol; we calculated an ADI for methanol which was 35 times lower than the one for aspartame? We knew then something was very wrong. At a meeting in the FSA London offices in Oct 2009 we challenged FSA with our findings. They never directly discussed, refuted nor challenged them – they simply ignored them – their attitude was - We don't like what you say / we don't see it / It is not there

In March 2011 we revisited the approval process and discovered the most frightening aspect of this whole sordid process the, NOAEL of aspartame in rats contains enough methanol to kill a human! As follows:-

NOAEL of aspartame in rats = 4000mg/kg divide by 10 = **400mg/kg of methanol** - **The lethal acute dose of methanol in man is 343mg/kg.** (see paper attached Page 4)

What this means is, if a human consumed 4000mg/kg of aspartame like the rats which showed NOAEL; it would likely kill them. A NOAEL of aspartame in rats is NOT an NOAEL of methanol in humans On this basis aspartame should never have been approved in our food.

This information transcends all the previous discussions of how the body handles methanol, we should not be consuming it in the first place. We have advised FSA of our findings and again we are getting the - We don't like what you say / we don't see it / It is not there, attitude. I am happy for the FSA to prove me wrong but I want a dialogue about the information I have supplied them with. I hope with the help of the PPC I might get the chance.

Can we please ask the FSA to comment on the following questions:-

1) The UK Aspartame Awareness Campaign (UKAAC) is challenging aspartame safety on the basis that the NOAEL of aspartame in rats contains 400mg/kg of methanol. They claim this is above the acute lethal dose of methanol in humans and on that basis, aspartame is unfit for human consumption and should never have been approved in 1982.

2) For everyone's safety, what method does the FSA use to check the amount of aspartame manufacturers are adding to our food?

I trust this brings everyone up to date and hope you will consider keeping my petition open until we get methanol out of the Scottish diet.

Yours Sincerely

James McDonald

(UKAAC)

# UK Aspartame Awareness Campaign (UKAAC)

Author
Jim McDonald - 13th August 2009

## To determin the ADI of aspartame using methanol as the critical component:

| methanol factors | | source | ml | sg | grams | | mg | wt.in kg | Lethal Doses Rat mg/kg | Lethal Doses Adult mg/kg | Blinding Dose Adult mg/kg | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| REF: | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Lab. Rat - Lethal single dose - LD50 | MSDS | | | | | | | 5628 | | | Rats are 15 times more resistant to methanol than humans. |
| 2 | Specific Gravity of Pure Methanol | MSDS | | 0.8 | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | Adult human - single Lethal dose | MSDS | 30 | = | 24 | = | 24000 | 70 | | 343 | | |
| 4 | Adult single dose- causes blindness | MSDS | 10 | = | 8 | = | 8000 | 70 | | | 114 | |

**Method used to calculate the ADI for Pure Methanol**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Establish "NOAEL" | None | Use say 10% of blidness level | REF: 4 | 11.4 |
| Divide by 100 to provide a safety margin | FSA | ADI for Pure Methanol based on Blindness level | | 0.114 |

Using this "no effect level" is probably not safe, due to there being no back-up data available.

## To prove the ADI of aspartame at 40mg/kg is not safe:

Revised 12th March 2011

Using the above References and lethal dose data compared to the current ADI of aspartame. it can be seen that 40mg/kg is not a safe level for humans.

| REF: Lethal doses of methanol in:- | | source | mg/kg | | Methanol mg/kg | Methanol mg/kg | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | RATS - LD50 | MSDS | | | 5628 | | |
| 3 | HUMANS | MSDS | | | | 343 | Rats are 15 times more resistant to methanol than man! |
| | NOAEL for aspartame | COT/FSA | 4000 | **methanol = 10%** | | 400 | This cannot possibly be considered the NOEL for methanol - it exceeds the lethal dose! |
| | | COT/FSA | | **Diketopiperazine = 3-4%** | | 140 | At 18 times the TDI of >7.5 mg/kg - how can this be the NOAEL for DEP? |