



## *Aspartame; a poisoned world.*

**By Jacqueline Fields, MD and founder of *Dr. Fields' Sacred Skin* | May 1, 2014**

I want all my patients to watch this movie. It is called ASPARTAME; A POISONED WORLD. The data on aspartame is critical for everyone to know. But mostly I want everyone to stop drinking all sodas and foods sweetened with aspartame. Also know it is very difficult to find gum without aspartame unless you buy it at a health food store or the Healing Gardens Medicinal Store.

Did you know that Aspartame has been proven to cause brain damage by leaving traces of Methanol in the blood? It makes you wonder why Aspartame has been approved as “safe” and is found in thousands of food products. Currently more than 90 countries have given the artificial sweetener the “OK” to be used in foods.

Given that Aspartame is 200 times sweeter than sugar, manufacturers are able to produce their sweet foods and market them as “low calorie” so they can market and appeal to millions of people on “diets.” There is no doubt that the less sugar you have in your diet, the better. But replacing sugar with aspartame is not the solution, and in fact is likely to be even *worse* for your health.

Aspartame can make people have headaches, feel light headed and nausea. But that isn't even the bad part when you look at what all of the research is suggesting. So I question, and everyone should be asking the same: With all of the research about Aspartame and its dangerous effects, even in small quantities, why is it still approved by the FDA and other health agencies as being safe for human consumption? There are better solutions available and with less danger and side effects.

### *What is this lovely substance (aspartame) made of?*

An Aspartame molecule is essentially made up of 3 different substances. 90% of it is made of two natural amino acids, 1 being aspartic acid and the other being phenylalanine. The other 10% of the molecule is made up of a methyl ester bond (includes Methanol). The methanol is released from the aspartame within hours of consumption and begins traveling through the body via the blood. Once the methyl ester bond is broken, it liberates methyl alcohol or methanol (wood alcohol).

The big problem with methanol is that it easily passes into your blood-brain barrier and once there, is converted into formaldehyde. Formaldehyde is what is causing the brain damage.

While animals are able to detoxify methanol in the body, humans do not have this capability. It doesn't really take a rocket scientist to realize that accumulating formaldehyde in the brain is not a good thing.

### *What's the deal with methanol?*

As mentioned above, Methanol is the key issue here as it is what converts into formaldehyde. While it is often believed that formic acid is the issue with Aspartame, it is actually formaldehyde. Formaldehyde is a serious neurotoxin and carcinogen. According to the EPA, Methanol is considered a cumulative poison which means it accumulates in the body and very little is excreted each time it is consumed.

Methanol is a toxin that destroys the myelin tissue in your body, which is the insulating material around your nerves that allows nerve signals to travel properly. Once injured, one can have what are called demyelinating symptoms that are commonly seen in diseases like MS and also migraines that can include bizarre and inconsistent visual field disruptions.

### *But it must be safe in small doses!*

While having NO methanol in the body makes most sense, the EPA has accepted that a limit of consumption of 7.8 mg/day is still OK. Why we accept even small amounts of toxic stuff in our body is beyond me, but some feel we can still consume this stuff in small doses. According to Woodrow Monte, Ph.D., R.D., director of the Food Science and Nutrition Laboratory at Arizona State University:

“When diet sodas and soft drinks, sweetened with aspartame, are used to replace fluid loss during exercise and physical exertion in hot climates, the intake of methanol can exceed 250 mg/day or 32 times the Environmental Protection Agency's recommended limit of consumption for this cumulative toxin.”

Further, he states that due to the lack of a couple of key enzymes, humans are many times more sensitive to the toxic effects of methanol than animals. Therefore, tests of aspartame or methanol on animals do not accurately reflect the danger for humans.

“There are no human or mammalian studies to evaluate the possible mutagenic, teratogenic, or carcinogenic effects of chronic administration of methyl alcohol,” he said.

How can you know you are getting too much Methanol? You may experience headaches, ear buzzing, dizziness, nausea, gastrointestinal disturbances, weakness, vertigo, chills, memory lapses, numbness and shooting pains in the extremities, behavioral disturbances, and neuritis. Another distinct sign of

methanol poisoning is vision problems.

Adding to the problem, one of the amino acids in aspartame, aspartic acid is capable of crossing your blood-brain barrier. There it attacks your brain cells, creating a form of cellular overstimulation called excitotoxicity, which can lead to cell death.

Your blood-brain barrier, which normally protects your brain from excess aspartate, as well as toxins, is not able to adequately protect you against the effects of aspartame consumption because it:

1. Is not fully developed during childhood
2. Does not fully protect all areas of the brain
3. Is damaged by numerous chronic and acute conditions
4. Allows seepage of excess aspartate into the brain even when intact

That excess aspartame slowly begins to destroy neurons, and the large majority (75 percent or more) of neural cells in a particular area of the brain are killed before any clinical symptoms of a chronic illness are noticed. Then, when they do occur, they may or may not be associated with aspartame consumption, even though examples of chronic illnesses that are made worse by long-term exposure to excitatory amino acid damage include: Multiple sclerosis (MS), ALS, hormonal problems, memory loss, epilepsy, hearing loss, Alzheimer's, dementia, brain lesions, and Neuroendocrine disorders.

It can be easy for us to make the argument that this stuff is OK in small doses, and it hasn't killed us yet so it can't be that bad. But if you pause and look at the data about our escalation of neurodegenerative diseases, It really does make you realize that chemicals like aspartame are all contributing to this escalation of these diseases. It's time to make new choices!! Let's commit to food and drinks that are healthier and more in line with our bodies. It is substances like Aspartame that are causing these issues and the difference it makes to avoid these substances is monumental for our quality of life and consciousness.

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