



# Bitter sweet

» Breast cancer | By Dr Woodrow Monte

In the final in our three-part series on the potential effects of aspartame, Dr Woodrow Monte presents a case to suggest that eliminating aspartame from our food supply may go some way towards reducing the proliferation of breast cancer

If you have read my previous features in *Fitness Life*, you will understand why I believe that aspartame is one cause of breast cancer. I have written this piece to be easily read, so please share it with your children.

The methanol produced when aspartame is consumed will always first convert directly into formaldehyde. There is no intermediate compound or alternate path. Formaldehyde is one of the most powerful cancer-causing agents (carcinogens) known to science. It is classed as a Group I carcinogen by the IARC – the International Agency for Research on Cancer, in Lyon, France.

The breast is an organ that has no way to protect itself from formaldehyde and no means to render it harmless. Formaldehyde is normally blocked from reaching the internal organs, and in fact it can only reach the breast in methanol form or by a direct hypodermic injection of formaldehyde solution.

The conversion of methanol to formaldehyde requires alcohol dehydrogenase or ADH. This is not a

common enzyme in the human body, and the breast cells that contain it are the mammary epithelial cells – those known to transform into adenocarcinoma (cancer cells). In fact, the human breast is one of the few organs in the body with a high concentration of ADH.

The most recent breast cancer scientific literature implicates ADH as perhaps having a pivotal role in the formation of breast cancer, indicating a greater incidence of the disease in those with higher levels of ADH activity in their breasts. One article even goes so far as to implicate acetaldehyde as a potential culprit. This is the molecule into which ethanol is metabolised by ADH, and is the first step in the manufacture of vinegar, but it's a beneficial molecule with no link whatsoever to carcinogenicity.

However, recent scientific literature is a desert when it comes to methanol. It is as if there was no such thing as methanol in the environment; as if all the laboratories doing work in methanol toxicity vanished from the face of the earth 40 years ago, and with them, the science of methanol poisoning.

The truth is that methanol acts as a golden bullet. It wastes none of its destructive power, but administers a carcinogen directly into those breast cells most vulnerable to cancer.

All of the hundreds of tests that were carried out to prove that aspartame was safe took place on animals that are insensitive to methanol poisoning. This was well known to the company that invented the chemical; why else would it have hired the world's methanol research laboratories to help it in its quest?

Such animals have a specialised catalase enzyme in their livers that humans do

not possess. Catalase keeps methanol out of their general circulation, and they are therefore immune to methanol as a poison. Many thousands of people lost their lives in the early 1900s, when methanol was allowed into foods and medications after it was falsely proven safe after testing on an identical array of animals.

Twenty-six years ago, I travelled from my laboratory at Arizona State University to Washington DC, to view testing results from the company that invented aspartame. It was seeking approval at the time for use of the chemical in carbonated beverages. I will never forget viewing the data from the only high-dosage human consumption study, which was carried out on diabetics. This study was never repeated. Before the test began, the subjects were screened for all manner of illnesses and were certified disease-free as a prerequisite to being accepted into the programme. After 11 weeks of high-dose aspartame consumption, two of the women developed epithelial cancer. One had a mastectomy and her subsequent pathology tested conclusively positive for adenocarcinoma.

To my most profound horror, the executive summary of that same study concluded that aspartame was safe! The rationale used to reach this outcome ignored the fact that none of the placebo group suffered, but fully 8% of the aspartame consumption subjects developed epithelial cancer. This result was written off because "no such cancers were seen in the numerous animal studies". They should have never been ignored.

I can't say that methanol is the only cause of breast cancer; there are so

## » Breast cancer

many other poisons in our modern environment. I will say that it is intuitively obvious that no good can come from producing one more cancer-causing agent inside a sensitive breast cell already exposed to other threats.

Breast cancer – along with MS – is

believe are linked to methanol poisoning derived primarily from food. With this observation, I hope to point the way to my colleagues as they continue to investigate these links.

Unfortunately, though, no major pharmacological laboratory anywhere

almost perfect workings, we must first consider the impact of our poisoned environment upon us. The wild natural world of our ancient forbearers seems, to me, a friendlier place to be than this one we have tamed with new processes and chemical tools whose power we do not fully understand.

Methanol is an unwanted residue of our quest for leisure and release from the burden of the constant search for sustenance. It has been around since man first tasted meat cooked on an open fire or was forced by hunger to eat fruit long past its prime. It has been to our great disadvantage that it has now been made to taste sweet.

**Ed's note: This feature assumes the reader has read the first two articles on aspartame by Dr Woodrow Monte (in Fitness Life issues 33 and 34). If you missed these issues, you can order back issues from subs@fitnesslife.co.nz.**

**We have chosen to review one side of this debate only, as pro-aspartame information is readily available via NZSFA and from manufacturers of aspartame-containing products. «**

It is as if... all the laboratories doing work in methanol toxicity vanished from the face of the earth 40 years ago

possibly linked to cigarette smoking, which is a source of methanol. And the chart I presented in the December/January issue of *Fitness Life* shows an abrupt and disconcerting rise in the incidence of breast cancer, which coincides exactly with the ramp-up of aspartame consumption after it was approved for sweetening carbonated beverages in the United States.

As a food scientist, I have been trained to detect food-borne disease. Breast cancer and MS are two conditions that I

in the world seems to have any time for poison studies. The considerable brain-power of medical research seems mesmerised by the quest for ever-more-expensive cures, while leaving the details of prevention to the "lesser" sciences. The reasons for this are obvious: to cure a poisoning, you need only to teach how to limit exposure... and there is no real money to be made from good advice.

Poison taints the 'swich licour' in which our tissues are 'bathed'. And to know the cause of any malfunction in our

**Have you ever experienced any adverse reactions to aspartame? Please tell us!  
Email [fit@fitnesslife.co.nz](mailto:fit@fitnesslife.co.nz)**

**To sign a petition against aspartame use in New Zealand, please visit  
<http://www.safefood.org.nz/homefram.html>**

**NB. This petition actually closes in April 2008 not November 2007 as stated on the website.**

