

ASPARTAME: JUST THE FACTS PLEASE

Aspartame is a low-calorie sweetener that is used to sweeten a variety of foods and beverages. Aspartame is about 200 times sweeter than sugar therefore very little is needed to achieve satisfactory sweetening levels. Consequently, the calories in foods can be substantially reduced, and in many products virtually eliminated, by using aspartame in place of sugar.

The safety of aspartame has been affirmed not only by the FDA (Food and Drug Administration), but also by leading health groups including the World Health Organization and the American Medical Association. Over 200 scientific studies conducted by researchers at universities and health organizations throughout the world have established its safety.

For additional information regarding the safety of aspartame, refer to the following website addresses.

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY (ACS)

www.cancer.org/docroot/ped/content/ped_1_3X_aspartame.asp

The ACS is a nationwide community-based voluntary health organization dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by preventing cancer, saving lives, and diminishing suffering from cancer,

through research, education, advocacy, and service.

“Since aspartame is broken down into these components (aspartic acid, phenylalanine and methanol, which occur naturally in larger quantities in many other foods) before it is absorbed into the blood stream, aspartame in its initial form does not have the opportunity to travel to target organs, including the brain, to cause cancer.”

AMERICAN COUNCIL ON SCIENCE AND HEALTH (ACSH)

www.acsh.org/docLib/20060417_sugar_web.pdf

The ACSH is a consumer education consortium concerned with issues related to food, nutrition, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, lifestyle, the environment and health. This organization was created to add reason and balance to debates about public health issues and bring common sense views to the public.

“As with all modern food additives, aspartame underwent extensive safety testing prior to approval. Many additional studies have been conducted in the decades since aspartame went on the market. On the basis of this scientific evidence, authorities in numerous countries have approved and repeatedly reapproved the use of aspartame.”

AMERICAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION

<http://forecast.diabetes.org/magazine/food-thought/size-your-sweetener-options>

The American Diabetes Association’s mission is to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes.

“Most scientists (as well as the American Diabetes Association) maintain that Aspartame is a safe alternative to sugar for people with diabetes.”

AMERICAN DIETETIC ASSOCIATION (ADA)

www.eatright.org/About/Content.aspx?id=8363&terms=aspartame
www.eatright.org/Public/content.aspx?id=3796&terms=aspartame

The ADA is the largest organization of food and nutrition professionals (nearly 70,000 members) and its mission is to promote optimal nutrition and well-being for all people by advocating for its members.

“It is the position of The American Dietetic Association that consumers can safely enjoy a range of nutritive and non-nutritive sweeteners (including aspartame) when consumed in moderation and within the context of a diet consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.”

AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION (AHA)

<http://216.185.112.5/presenter.jhtml?identifier=4447>

The AHA’s mission is to reduce disability and death from cardiovascular diseases and stroke.

“Extensive investigation so far hasn’t shown any serious side effects from aspartame.”

CALORIE CONTROL COUNCIL (CCC)

www.caloriecontrol.org/aspartame.html

The CCC is an international nonprofit association representing the low-calorie, reduced fat food and beverage industry and assures that pertinent scientific and medical research is developed and made available to everyone.

“FDA and almost all scientists who are familiar with the data conclude that aspartame, and its use in a wide variety of products, is a safe and useful option for those individuals who prefer a low-calorie sweetener. Aspartame has been extensively studied in animals and humans for more than two decades, in more than 200 studies. Few compounds have withstood such detailed testing and repeated, close scrutiny, and the process through which aspartame has gone should provide the public with additional confidence of its safety.”

INTERNATIONAL FOOD INFORMATION COUNCIL FOUNDATION (IFIC)

<http://www.foodinsight.org/Resources/Detail.aspx?topic=EverythingYouNeedtoKnowAboutAspartame>

IFIC’s mission is to communicate science-based information on food safety and nutrition to health and nutrition professionals, educators, journalists, government officials and others providing information to consumers.

Prior to its approval, aspartame underwent one of the most thorough scientific reviews ever conducted, and regulators consider it one of the most widely tested ingredients in the food supply. The safety of aspartame has been affirmed by the FDA and leading independent health groups, such as the American Medical Association, the American Dietetic Association, and the American Diabetes Association.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS FOUNDATION (MSF)

<http://www.nationalmssociety.org/about-multiple-sclerosis/what-we-know-about-ms/what-causes-ms/disproved-theories/index.aspx>

MSF’s mission is to ensure the best quality of life for those coping with MS by providing comprehensive support and educational programs.

“No scientific evidence supports the claims on several Web sites that aspartame, an artificial sweetener used in many diet soft

drinks and other foods, causes MS.”

U.S. FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cdrh/cfdocs/cfcfr/CFRSearch.cfm?fr=201.21

The FDA’s mission is to promote and protect the public health by helping safe and effective products reach the market in a timely way, and monitoring products for continued safety after they are in use.

“The Food and Drug Administration has determined that aspartame when used at a level no higher than reasonably required to perform its intended technical function is safe for use as an inactive ingredient in human drug products, provided persons with phenylketonuria, who must restrict carefully their phenylalanine intake, are alerted to the presence of phenylalanine in the drug product and the amount of the ingredient in each dosage unit.”

These websites are current as of February 2010. Links to these sites are provided solely as a convenience. Merisant has selected these resource as having some value and relevance, but their development and maintenance are not under Merisant’s control. Therefore, Merisant is not responsible for the content, accuracy, opinions expressed, and other links provided by these resources.