

Artificial Sweeteners

Artificial sweeteners are non-nutritive (zero calories per serving), high intensity sugar substitutes that include aspartame, acesulfame-K, saccharin and sucralose. Alitame and cyclamate are also artificial sweeteners, but are not currently approved by the FDA for use in the United States.

Equal, NutraSweet – contains Aspartame

Discovered in 1965, aspartame is one of the more common tabletop artificial sweeteners in the US today. It is made from a combination of the two amino acids aspartic acid and phenylalanine. During digestion, aspartame is broken down into these two individual amino acids. It is also broken down when exposed to heat, resulting in a loss of its sweet taste.

Aspartame is 160-220 times sweeter than sucrose. Like sugar, aspartame has 4 calories/gram, but since it is so sweet and such a small amount is needed for the sweetening effect, it is labeled as zero calories per serving.

The FDA has set the accepted daily intake (ADI) at 50 mg/kg of body weight. One packet of the sweetener contains 37 mg of aspartame and 12 ounces of diet soda contains about 200 mg of aspartame. By this standard, a person who weighs 60 kg (~132 pounds) could consume 3000 mg of aspartame or 3 grams (a total of 12 calories) daily. This is the equivalent of 81 packets of Equal or 15 cans of diet soda (180 fluid ounces). Aspartame is found in products like Diet Coke, Dannon Light Yogurt, Swiss Miss Fat Free Hot Cocoa Mix, and BreathSavers.

Foods that contain aspartame must carry a label warning consumers that the product contains phenylalanine for people who have phenylketonuria (PKU). If you have this disorder, you know it, since all infants in the US are screened for it at birth.

Sunette, Sweet One, Sweet' N Safe – contains Acesulfame-K

Discovered in 1967, acesulfame-K is 150-200 times sweeter than sugar and is another tabletop sweetener. Acesulfame-K is the result of the combination of acetoacetic acid and potassium to form a highly stable, crystalline sweetener. The chemical structure is similar to saccharin.

Acesulfame-K is usually used in combination with aspartame or other sweeteners because it enhances and sustains the sweet taste of foods and beverages and helps



extend the shelf life of the food product it is in. It is heat stable so it can be used in baked products. It does not provide calories since the body does not metabolize it and it is excreted in the urine without being changed.

Acesulfame-K is found in about 4,000 foods, including chewing gum, desserts, alcoholic beverages, syrups, candies, sauces, and yogurt. In the US it is found in Hershey's Lite Syrup and Fat Free Dutch Chocolate Hot Cocoa, Trident gum and sugar free Jell-O. It is used in more than 90 countries including the United Kingdom, Germany, Australia, and Canada. It was approved for use by the FDA in 1988 and has been evaluated 8 times since. It has been found to be safe for all segments of the population and does not have to carry any warnings on the products it is in. The World Health Organization has also review and found acesulfame-K to be safe.

Sweet' N Low, Sugar Twin – contains Saccharin

Saccharin was discovered at Johns Hopkins in 1879 and is estimated to be 200-700 times sweeter than sugar. It is calorie free because the body cannot break it down.

In 1977, after a study found it caused bladder cancer in rats all products that contained saccharin were required to be labeled with the following statement: "Use of this product may be hazardous to your health. This product contains saccharin which has been determined to cause cancer in laboratory animals." Studies have followed diabetics who have used saccharin for years and have yet to show an increase in the incidence of bladder cancer. On May 15, 2000 the U.S. government released a report on things known to cause cancer. When the list came out, it "de-listed" saccharin from the list of suspected carcinogens.

Even if you don't use the "pink packets," you likely are still getting saccharin. It is found in non-food products such as Listerine, Crest Toothpaste, Robitussin cough syrup, and Carefree chewing gum. It is also in salad dressing, jam, jelly, preserves and baked goods.

Splenda – contains Sucralosa

Discovered in 1976, sucralose is 600 times sweeter than sugar and does not contain calories. It is the only low calorie sweetener that is made from sugar. It is heat stable and can be used in cooking and baking or anywhere one would use sugar without losing its sweetness. Even though sucralose is a sugar molecule, it has been changed so that the body does not recognize it as a sugar or carbohydrate and passes through the body unchanged and unmetabolized. Substituting the hydrogen-oxygen groups on the sugar



molecule with 3 chlorine atoms creates sucralose. Chlorine is something we consume every day in our water and other foods we eat.

More about Aspartame

“Aspartame is an additive found in diet soft drinks and over 5,000 foods, drugs and medicine. It was approved in 1983 for use in carbonated beverages. However, there may be more sour than sweet when it comes to aspartame.

In reality, aspartame is a drug, not an additive in the sense many people associate with that word. It interacts with other drugs, has a synergistic and additive effect with MSG, and is a chemical hyper-sensitization agent. Aspartame can cause brain tumors and brain cancer and violated the Delaney Amendment which forbids putting anything in food that is known to cause Cancer. Detailed information on this can be found in the Bressler Report (FDA report on Searle).”

“According to the top doctors and researchers on this issue, aspartame causes headache, memory loss, seizures, vision loss, coma and cancer. It worsens or mimics the symptoms of such diseases and conditions as fibromyalgia, MS, lupus, ADD, diabetes, Alzheimer's, chronic fatigue and depression. Further dangers highlighted is that aspartame liberates free methyl alcohol. The resulting chronic methanol poisoning affects the dopamine system of the brain causing addiction. Methanol, or wood alcohol, constitutes one third of the aspartame molecule and is classified as a severe metabolic poison and narcotic.

Dr. Woodrow Monte in the peer reviewed journal, *Aspartame: Methanol and the Public Health*, wrote: "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 poison." Neurosurgeon Russell Blaylock, MD, author of "Excitotoxins: The Taste That Kills," wrote about the relationship between aspartame and macular degeneration, diabetic blindness and glaucoma (all known to result from excitotoxin accumulation in the retina).”

“The medical text, *Aspartame Disease: An Ignored Epidemic*, by Dr. H. J. Roberts is 1038 pages of symptoms and diseases triggered by this neurotoxin. The claim is made that aspartame has even caused the epidemic of obesity because it makes you crave carbohydrates so you gain weight, and the formaldehyde accumulates in the adipose tissue (fat cells) according to the Trocho Study. Further accusations are that aspartame is also responsible for the epidemic of diabetes as it not only can precipitate diabetes but simulates and aggravates diabetic retinopathy and neuropathy, can cause diabetics to go into convulsions and interacts with insulin. ”



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“The effects of aspartame are documented by the FDA's own data. In 1995 the agency was forced, under the Freedom of Information Act, to release a list of ninety-two aspartame symptoms reported by thousands of victims. It appears this is only the tip of the iceberg. H. J. Roberts, MD, published the medical text "Aspartame Disease: An Ignored Epidemic" -- 1,000 pages of symptoms and diseases triggered by this neurotoxin including the sordid history of its approval. [See Video "Sweet Misery, a Poisoned World"]”

“The FDA still refused to allow NutraSweet on the market. It is a deadly neurotoxic drug masquerading as an additive. It interacts with all antidepressants, L-dopa, Coumadin, hormones, insulin, all cardiac medication, and many others. It also is a chemical hyper sensitization drug so that it interacts with vaccines, other toxins, other unsafe sweeteners like Splenda which has a chlorinated base like DDT and can cause auto immune disease. It has a synergistic and additive effect with MSG. Both being excitotoxins, the aspartic acid in aspartame, and MSG, the glutamate people were found using aspartame as the placebo for MSG studies, even before it was approved. The FDA has known this for a quarter of a century and done nothing even though its against the law. Searle went on to build a NutraSweet factory and had \$9 million worth of inventory.”

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Posted: May 9, 2004

12:18 AM Eastern

by NWV Staff Writer

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