While Chemwatch has taken all efforts to ensure the accuracy of information in this publication, it is not intended to be comprehensive or to render advice. Websites rendered are subject to change.

External links from an Acrobat document will work better if opened in a web browser. To do this simply select:
- Edit
- Preferences
- Webcapture
then choose the in Web browser option
World Gossip – What’s Happening? (cont.)

• Dearborn plant workers exposed to hazardous levels of asbestos for decades
• Stress linked to miscarriages'
• High dose vitamin E death warning
• Risk of leukaemia high in older obese women

Round the World

• Climate change ruining Everest

In the Works

• Junk food adverts face TV ban

Greenline

• 20 years later, Rusk fertiliser spill concerns continue
• Safety of new flame retardant questioned

Technical Notes

Occupational

• Chromosome and DNA damage analysis in individuals occupationally exposed to pesticides with relation to genetic polymorphism for CYP 1A1 gene in Ecuador
• Comparison of capillary earlobe and venous blood monitoring for occupational lead surveillance
• Does occupational exposure to mineral fibres cause DNA or chromosome damage?
• Hepatic Effects in Workers Exposed to 2-Methoxy Ethanol
• Immuno-modulatory effects of mineral fibres in occupationally exposed workers
• Non-smoking coke oven workers show an occupational PAH exposure-related increase in urinary mutagens
• Occupational exposure to ionising radiation has no effect on T- and B-cell total counts or percentages of helper, cytotoxic and activated T-cell subsets in the peripheral circulation of male radiation workers
• Risk of upper aerodigestive tract cancers in a case-cohort study of autoworkers exposed to metalworking fluids
• Study of the coefficient of correlation between the concentration of selected toxic metals in hair and the level of aggression and degree of maladjustment of conscript soldiers for performance of military service
• Urinary catecholamines and salivary cortisol on workdays and days off in relation to job strain among female health care providers

Public Health

• An investigation on physical, chemical, and bacteriological quality of municipally supplied and well waters of the towns and city centre in the province of Nigde, Turkey
• Arsenic and heavy metal contamination and human health risk assessment in the vicinity of the abandoned Dongjung Au-Ag-Cu mine, Korea
• Association between maternal exposure to elevated ambient sulphur dioxide during pregnancy and term low birth weight
• Is medical control of herbal tea consumption necessary?

Safety

• Outdoor air pollution and lung cancer: recent epidemiological evidence
• Retrospective time-trend study of polybrominated diphenyl ether and polybrominated and polychlorinated biphenyl levels in human serum from the United States
• A new, safe and convenient procedure for reduction of naphthalene and anthracene: synthesis of tetralin in a one-pot reaction
• Analysis on the explosion of the steel cylinder containing liquid chlorine
• Catalyst sulphidation agents
• Chemical testing as support in providing safe and quality food and feed
• Detection of contamination of municipal water distribution systems
• Fire and explosion protection equipment and method for a high-bay warehouse in which hazardous chemical materials are stored
• Labour hygiene in the pyrometallurgical production of nickel
• Method for formation of a gas-air screen to protect the population against poisonous substances or chemical warfare agents
• Pellet cleaner compositions with good storage stability and easy handling and their manufacture
• Resistant starch: Safe intakes and legal status
• Safety and traceability of animal feed
• Secondary sodium battery modules with improved safety
• Stability of the operating conditions of ventilation systems of methane-rich mines
• Tablets containing calcium hypochlorite
• Transmission of CO2 - Safety and economic considerations

Medical

• Characterisation of Atrazine Biotransformation by Human and Murine Glutathione S-Transferases
• CYP1A1 allele distribution in lung cancer patients, middle-aged donor and elderly tumour-free subjects
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- Evaluation of DNA damage in patients with arsenic poisoning: urinary 8-hydroxydeoxyguanine
- Evaluation of the mercury exposure of dental amalgam patients by the Mercury Triple Test
- Relationship between environmental tobacco smoke and urinary cotinine levels in passive smokers at their residence
- Selective arsenic speciation analysis of human urine reference materials using gradient elution ion-exchange HPLC-ICP-MS
- The efficacy and safety of the new heparin-induced extracorporeal low-density lipoprotein precipitation system (Plasmat Futura) in comparison with the currently use system (Plasmat Secura)
- The safety of ethyl oleate is supported by a 91-day feeding study in rats
- Thermogenesis and weight loss in obese individuals: a primary association with organochlorine pollution

Environmental

- Backward estimation of exposure to organochlorines using repeated measurements
- Endocrine disruption and health effects of caged mussels, Elliptio complanata, placed downstream from a primary-treated municipal effluent plume for 1 year
- New environmentally safe detergent for cleaning of chemical equipment
- Preparation of adsorbent from fruit juice residues as raw materials and its use for removal of harmful matter and heavy metal ions from sewage leachates
- Safe and clean condensing unit for cooling system

SOFTWARE SUBSCRIBERS

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<th>Date</th>
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<td>Summary showed an incorrect expiry message 3 months early on some systems</td>
<td>For ChemGold: <a href="http://planetmirror.com/pub/chemwatch/chemgold/20042/chemgold042patch.zip">http://planetmirror.com/pub/chemwatch/chemgold/20042/chemgold042patch.zip</a></td>
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<td>ftp://planetmirror.com/pub/chemwatch/chemgold/20042/chemgold042patch.zip</td>
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Chemgold 2004/2 users may have found their summary screens incorrectly showing an expiry message three months early. This can be fixed by downloading the patch mentioned above or by installing 2004/3. Users having trouble with installing 2004/2 on network shares can either jump straight to 2004/3 where the installation issues have been overcome or install on the local machine and then copy the installation directory (by default c:\program files\chem; if you are installing ChemWeb there will be a folder called ChemWeb in your webroot directory; if you are installing ChemGold2 there will be a folder called ChemGold2 in your webroot directory; Installed 2004/3: Users installing ChemWeb / ChemGold2 over 2004/2 or 2004/1 may get a permission error. If you do get an error you need to remove the chemweb/chemgold2 directory from the webroot of your installation. This happens because 2004/2 and before incorrectly made this folder read-only to all users. If you see a note saying Error 1406, you should press the ‘Ignore’ button. the installation will be unaffected and they can complete normally. Also, for CG2 Intranet users who wish to create Unit Volumes greater than 100 000, please contact Chemwatch for a patch.

Emailing an MSDS

An alternative to saving an MSDS in HTML format from Chemgold II is to generate it as a PDF. This can be done very quickly and easily when using the right tool. One useful tool that I have found is called PDF Creator. This freely downloadable software can be found at http://sourceforge.net/projects/pdfcreator. From this page, select “Download” on the same line as “PDF Creator” from the “Latest File Release” section. From the new page select either:

PDFCreator-0_8_0_GNUGhostscript.exe OR
PDFCreator-0_8_0_AFPLGhostscript.exe

Save, Run & Install. Restart your PC.

Anytime you want to create a PDF, print the report as per normal except select PDF creator as the printer rather than your standard printer. Then press print. This will create a PDF.

Printing an MSDS as a PDF using PDF Creator is a much neater and easier way to communicate an MSDS via email. This tool can also be used in conjunction with Chemwatch (CW32) or any other program.
HAZARD ALERT
December 3
ABRIN

What is Abrin? [1]
- Abrin is a natural poison found in the seeds of a plant called the rosary pea or jequirity pea.
- The plant from which ABRIN is derived is used as an herbal remedy in many areas throughout the world.
- While it is similar to Ricin, Abrin is much more poisonous.
- Abrin can be made in the form of a powder (yellowish-white), a mist, or a pellet, or it can be dissolved in water.
- Abrin is a stable substance that can last for a long period of time in extreme conditions.
- Abrin’s source, the rosary pea, is found in tropical areas throughout the world.
- Abrin’s uses range from making beaded jewelry to medicinal healing, such as in the treatment to kill cancer cells.

How you could be exposed to abrin? [2]
- It would take a deliberate act to obtain abrin from rosary pea seeds and use it to poison people. Accidental exposure to abrin is not likely.
- You could inhale (breathe in) abrin if it is in the form of a mist or a powder.
- You could be exposed if you touch surfaces on which abrin particles or droplets have landed, or if particles or droplets of abrin land on your skin or in your eyes.
- You could ingest (swallow) abrin if it is in food or water.
- Pellets of abrin, or abrin dissolved in a liquid, could be injected into a person’s body.
- Abrin poisoning is not contagious. It cannot be spread from person to person through casual contact.

Exposure to Abrin: [3]
Abrin works by getting inside the cells of a person’s body and preventing the cells from making the proteins they need.

Without the proteins, cells die. Eventually this is harmful to the whole body, and death may occur. The major symptoms of abrin poisoning depend on the route of exposure and the dose received, though many organs may be affected in severe cases.

Initial symptoms of abrin poisoning by inhalation may occur within 8 hours of exposure. The likely symptoms are respiratory distress (difficulty breathing), fever, cough, nausea, and tightness in the chest. Heavy sweating may follow as well as fluid building up in the lungs (pulmonary edema). This would make breathing even more difficult, and the skin might turn blue. Excess fluid in the lungs would be diagnosed by x-ray or by listening to the chest with a stethoscope. Finally, low blood pressure and respiratory failure may occur, leading to death.

Following ingestion of abrin, initial symptoms may occur in less than 6 hours but usually are delayed for 1 to 3 days. Symptoms would include vomiting and diarrhea that may become bloody. Severe dehydration may be the result, followed by low blood pressure. Other signs or symptoms may include hallucinations, seizures, and blood in the urine. Within several days, the person’s liver, spleen, and kidneys might stop working, and the person could die.

Abrin in the powder or mist form can cause redness and pain of the skin and the eyes. Death from abrin poisoning could take place within 36 to 72 hours of exposure, depending on the route of exposure (inhalation, ingestion, or injection) and the dose received. If death has not occurred in 3 to 5 days, the victim usually recovers.

How abrin poisoning is treated: [4]
Because no antidote exists for abrin, the most important factor is avoiding abrin exposure in the first place. If exposure cannot be avoided, the most important factor is then getting the abrin off or out of the body as quickly as possible. Abrin poisoning is treated by giving victims supportive medical care to minimize the effects of the poisoning. The types of supportive medical care would depend on several factors, such as the route by which victims were poisoned (that is, whether poisoning was by inhalation, ingestion, or skin or eye exposure). Care could include such measures as helping victims breathe, giving them intravenous fluids (fluids given through a needle inserted into a vein), giving them medications to treat conditions such as seizure and low blood pressure, flushing their stomachs with activated charcoal (if the abrin has been very recently ingested), or washing out their eyes with water if their eyes are irritated.

How you can know if you have been exposed to abrin: [4]
If there is a suspicion that people have inhaled abrin, a potential clue would be that a large number of people who had been close to each other suddenly developed fever, cough, and excess fluid in their lungs. These symptoms could be followed by severe breathing problems and possibly death.

No widely available, reliable test exists to confirm that a person has been exposed to abrin.
ASIA PACIFIC
Vic - OHS reform
2004-11-22
The Occupational Health and Safety Bill 2004 was introduced in the Victorian Parliament on 17 November and the second reading took place on 18 November. The bill will implement the main findings of the review of the Occupational Health and Safety Act 1985 conducted by Chris Maxwell QC earlier in 2004 and modernise the OHS legislation to ensure that it meets the needs of a diverse range of workplaces. The new legislation is designed to be easier to understand, provide greater clarity about the safety obligations of all people in the workplace and promote participation by employers, workers and their representatives on health and safety issues, said Rob Hulls, Minister for WorkCover in a media release on 15 November.

AMERICAS
Air Quality, Chemical Substances, and Respiratory Protection Standards
2004-11-19
Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), Labor. The proposed rule published on August 29, 1989 (54 FR 35760) is withdrawn as of November 19, 2004. The Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) is withdrawing the remaining phases of its 1989 “Air Quality, Chemical Substances, and Respiratory Protection” proposed rule, and is providing further explanation of its September 26, 2002, Federal Register document regarding withdrawal of the proposed rule. MSHA’s 2002 decision to withdraw the remaining phases of the proposed rule was based on adverse case law, a change in Agency priorities, and the staleness of the rulemaking record. Although the September 26, 2002, document was intended to withdraw the rule as of that date, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit found that the document provided inadequate explanation of the Agency’s decision to terminate the rulemaking. The court ordered MSHA to either proceed with the Air Quality rulemaking or give a reasoned account of its decision not to do so. This document provides a reasoned account of MSHA’s decision to terminate the rulemaking and to withdraw the remaining phases of the Air Quality rule.
“http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/06jun20041800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2004/04-25678.htm"

Office of Hazardous Materials Safety; Notice of Application for Exemptions
2004-11-22
Research and Special Programs Administration, DOT. List of applications for exemption
In accordance with the procedures governing the application for, and the processing of, exemptions from the Department of Transportation’s Hazardous Material Regulations (49 CFR Part 107, Subpart B), notice is hereby given that the Office of Hazardous Materials Safety has received the application described herein. Each mode of transportation for which a particular exemption is requested is indicated by a number in the “Nature of Application” portion of the available on the website:
“http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/06jun20041800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2004/04-25887.htm” as follows: 1-Motor vehicle, 2-Rail freight, 3-Cargo vessel, 4-Cargo aircraft only, 5-Passenger-carrying aircraft. Comments must be received on or before December 23, 2004.
Trifluralin; Proposed Pesticide Tolerance – EPA

2004-11-24
Proposed rule. Comments must be received on or before January 24, 2005.
This document proposes to establish a tolerance for residues of trifluralin in mint oil under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA), as amended by the Food Quality Protection Act of 1996 (FQPA). The amendment substantially rewrote section 408 of FFDCA. As a result, the revisions made it necessary, once again, to establish tolerances on certain commodities, such as mint oils, that had previously been deemed unnecessary.

"http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/06jun20041800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2004/04-25941.htm"

Occupational Safety and Health Administration

2004-11-24
Updating OSHA Standards Based On National Consensus Standards; General, Incorporation by Reference; Hazardous Materials, Flammable and Combustible Liquids; General Environmental Controls, Temporary Labor Camps; Hand and Portable Powered Tools and Other Hand Held Equipment, Guarding of Portable Powered Tools; Welding, Cutting, and Brazing, Arc Welding and Cutting; Special Industries, Sawmills Direct final rule effective on February 22, 2005.
OSHA is issuing this direct final rule to delete from OSHA standards three references to national consensus standards and two references to industry standards that are outdated. Deleting these references will not reduce employee protections. By eliminating the outdated references, however, OSHA will clarify employer obligations under the applicable OSHA standards and reduce administrative burdens on employers and OSHA. These revisions are part of OSHA’s overall effort—also explained in today’s Federal Register—to update OSHA standards that reference, or that include language taken directly from, outdated consensus standards.

"http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/06jun20041800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2004/04-26045.htm"

Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act; Extremely Hazardous Substances List; Deletion of Phosmet – EPA

2004-11-23
Final rule effective December 27, 2004.
On November 12, 2003, the Environmental Protection Agency proposed to delete phosmet from the list of extremely hazardous substances (EHS) issued under the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA). Today, EPA is taking final action to delete phosmet from the EHS list. Facilities with phosmet on-site will no longer be required to comply with emergency planning and emergency release notification requirements. In addition, facilities handling phosmet will no longer have to file an emergency and hazardous chemical inventory form and Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for phosmet with their State Emergency Response Commission (SERC), Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), and local fire department, for amounts less than 10,000 pounds.

"http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/06jun20041800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2004/04-26162.htm"

Basic Program Elements for Federal Employee Occupational Safety and Health Programs and Related Matters; Subpart I for Recordkeeping and Reporting Requirements

2004-11-25
Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), U.S. Department of Labor.
Final rule effective January 1, 2005.
The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is issuing a final rule amending the occupational injury and illness recording and reporting requirements applicable to Federal agencies, including the forms used by Federal agencies to record those injuries and illnesses. The final rule will make the Federal sector’s recordkeeping and reporting requirements essentially identical to the private sector by adopting applicable OSHA recordkeeping provisions as requirements for Federal agencies. In addition to eliminating the problems in the existing system whereby injuries and illnesses suffered by some groups of employees, such as contract employees, are not recorded, this final rule will produce more useful injury and illness records, collect better information about the incidence of occupational injuries and illnesses at the establishment level, create reporting and recording criteria that are consistent among Federal agencies, enable injury and illness comparisons between the Federal and private sectors, and promote improved employee awareness and involvement in the recording and reporting of job-related injuries and illnesses. The final rule will also assist in achieving the stated goal in Executive Order 12196 that Federal agencies comply with all OSHA standards, and generally, assure worker protection in a manner comparable to the private sector. This final rule applies to all Federal agencies of the Executive Branch subject to Executive Order 12196, and does not apply to military personnel and uniquely military equipment, systems, and operations. The requirements of this final rule do not diminish or modify in any way a Federal Agency’s responsibility to report or record injuries and illnesses as required by the Office of Workers’ Compensation Programs under the Federal Employees’ Compensation Act (FECA).

"http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/06jun20041800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2004/04-25955.htm"
Public Health Assessments Completed
2004-11-29
AGENCY: Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).
This notice announces those sites for which ATSDR has completed public health assessments during the period from July through September 2004. This list includes sites that are on or proposed for inclusion on the National Priorities List (NPL), and includes sites for which assessments were prepared in response to requests from the public. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: William Cibulas, Jr., Ph.D., Director, Division of Health Assessment and Consultation, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, 1600 Clifton Road, NE., Mailstop E-32, Atlanta, Georgia 30333, telephone (404) 498-0140.

EUROPE
EU Scientific Committee on Consumer Products (SCCP)
2004-11-26
Questions:
Request for a scientific opinion: the potential skin sensitisation risks associated with the release of 2-mercaptothiazole (MBT) from natural rubber soothers, teats and consumer products

http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_risk/committees/04_sccp/docs/sccp_q_014.pdf

Request for a scientific opinion: Submission II on Benzoic acid, its salts and esters


Request for a scientific opinion: Safety review of Triclocarban (N-(4-chlorophenyl)-N?-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)urea) for other uses than as a preservative


Request for a scientific opinion: Safety evaluation of Ethyl lauroyl arginate HCI for its use in cosmetic products

http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_risk/committees/04_sccp/docs/sccp_q_017.pdf

Request for a scientific opinion: Tea Tree oil


Request for a scientific opinion: Safety evaluation of parabens (4-Hydroxybenzoic acid, its salts and esters)


Request for a scientific opinion: Safety assessment of Bishydroxyethyl bis(ethyl) malonamide (Questamide H)


Request for a scientific opinion: Safety evaluation of Hydrogen peroxide in tooth whitening products


Request for a scientific opinion: Safety evaluation of GLYOXAL (CAS No 107-22-2)


Request for a scientific opinion: Scientific opinion of the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment on the maximum concentration of fluorine compounds in children’s toothpastes

http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_risk/committees/04_sccp/docs/sccp_q_023.pdf

Request for a scientific opinion: Safety evaluation of 2-Mercapto-1,3-propanesulfonic acid (MBPS) from natural rubber

http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_risk/committees/04_sccp/docs/sccp_q_024.pdf

Request for a scientific opinion: Potential skin sensitisation risks associated with the release of 2-mercaptothiazole (MBT) from natural rubber soothers, teats and consumer products


Request for a scientific opinion: Safety evaluation of Ethyl lauroyl arginate HCI for its use in cosmetic products


Request for a scientific opinion: Tea Tree oil

http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_risk/committees/04_sccp/docs/sccp_q_017.pdf

Request for a scientific opinion: Safety evaluation of parabens (4-Hydroxybenzoic acid, its salts and esters)


Request for a scientific opinion: Safety assessment of Bishydroxyethyl bis(ethyl) malonamide (Questamide H)


Request for a scientific opinion: Safety evaluation of Hydrogen peroxide in tooth whitening products


Request for a scientific opinion: Safety evaluation of GLYOXAL (CAS No 107-22-2)


Request for a scientific opinion: Safety evaluation of Hydrogen peroxide in tooth whitening products


Request for a scientific opinion: Scientific opinion of the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment on the maximum concentration of fluorine compounds in children’s toothpastes

http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_risk/committees/04_sccp/docs/sccp_q_023.pdf

Request for a scientific opinion: Safety evaluation of 2-Mercapto-1,3-propanesulfonic acid (MBPS) from natural rubber

http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_risk/committees/04_sccp/docs/sccp_q_024.pdf

Request for a scientific opinion: Potential skin sensitisation risks associated with the release of 2-mercaptothiazole (MBT) from natural rubber soothers, teats and consumer products


Request for a scientific opinion: Safety evaluation of Ethyl lauroyl arginate HCI for its use in cosmetic products


Request for a scientific opinion: Tea Tree oil

http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_risk/committees/04_sccp/docs/sccp_q_017.pdf

Request for a scientific opinion: Safety evaluation of parabens (4-Hydroxybenzoic acid, its salts and esters)


Request for a scientific opinion: Safety assessment of Bishydroxyethyl bis(ethyl) malonamide (Questamide H)


Request for a scientific opinion: Safety evaluation of Hydrogen peroxide in tooth whitening products


Request for a scientific opinion: Safety evaluation of GLYOXAL (CAS No 107-22-2)


Request for a scientific opinion: Safety evaluation of Hydrogen peroxide in tooth whitening products


Request for a scientific opinion: Scientific opinion of the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment on the maximum concentration of fluorine compounds in children’s toothpastes

http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_risk/committees/04_sccp/docs/sccp_q_023.pdf

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Request for a scientific opinion: Tea Tree oil

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Request for a scientific opinion: Safety evaluation of parabens (4-Hydroxybenzoic acid, its salts and esters)


Request for a scientific opinion: Safety assessment of Bishydroxyethyl bis(ethyl) malonamide (Questamide H)


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Request for a scientific opinion: Safety evaluation of 2-Mercapto-1,3-propanesulfonic acid (MBPS) from natural rubber

http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_risk/committees/04_sccp/docs/sccp_q_024.pdf
EU – Risk Assessment: Scientific Committee on Consumer Products:

2004-11-29
Request for a scientific opinion: Safety evaluation of atranol and chloroatranol present in natural extracts (e.g. oak moss and tree moss extract)
Request for a scientific opinion: Submission I on the fragrance HYDROXYISOHEXYL 3-CYCOHEXENE CARBOXALDEHYDE (4-(4-hydroxy-4-methylpentyl)-3-cyclohexene-1-carboxaldehyde, HMPCC, Lyral)
“http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_risk/committees/04_sccp/docs/sccp_q_007.pdf”
Request for a scientific opinion: Submission I on the fragrance HYDROXYISOHEXYL 3-CYCOHEXENE CARBOXALDEHYDE (4-(4-hydroxy-4-methylpentyl)-3-cyclohexene-1-carboxaldehyde, HMPCC, Lyral)
“http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_risk/committees/04_sccp/docs/sccp_q_007.pdf”
Request for a scientific opinion: Submission II on the hair dye Acid Green 25
Request for a scientific opinion: Submission II on the hair dye Acid Blue 62 (Sodium 1-amino-4-(cyclohexylamino)-9,10-dioxoanthracene-2-sulfonate)
Request for a scientific opinion: Submission II on the hair dye Basic Brown 17
Request for a scientific opinion: Submission II on the hair dye 2-Amino-6-chloro-4-nitrophenol
Request for a scientific opinion: Safety assessment of CI 26 100 (CI Solvent Red 23)

Back to page 1
NOT TOO SERIOUSLY

Essential tourism information for Australia
The questions below about Australia are from potential visitors. They were posted on an Australian Tourism Website and the answers are the actual responses by the website officials, who obviously have a sense of humour:

Q: Does it ever get windy in Australia? I have never seen it rain on TV, so how do the plants grow? (UK).
A: We import all plants fully grown and then just sit around watching them die.

Q: Will I be able to see kangaroos in the street? (USA)
A: Depends how much you’ve been drinking.

Q: I want to walk from Perth to Sydney - Can I follow the railroad tracks? (Sweden)
A: Sure, it’s only three thousand miles, take lots of water.

Q: Is it safe to run around in the bushes in Australia? (Sweden)
A: So it’s true what they say about Swedes.

Q: Are there any ATMs (cash machines) in Australia? Can you send me a list of them in Brisbane, Cairns, Townsville and Hervey Bay? (UK)
A: What did your last slave die of?

Q: Can you give me some info about hippo racing in Australia? (USA)
A: A-fri-ca is the big triangle shaped continent south of Europe. Aus-tra- lia is that big island in the middle of the Pacific which does not... oh forget it. Sure, the hippo racing is every Tuesday night in Kings Cross. Come naked.

Q: Which direction is North in Australia? (USA)
A: Face south and then turn 90 degrees. Contact us when you get here and we’ll send the rest of the directions.

Q: Can I bring cutlery into Australia? UK)
A: Why? Just use your fingers like we do.

Q: Can you send me the Vienna Boys’ Choir schedule? (USA)
A: Aus-tri-a is that quaint little country bordering Ger-man-y, which is...oh forget it. Sure, the Vienna Boys Choir plays every Tuesday night in Kings Cross, straight after the hippo races. Come naked.

Q: Can I wear high heels in Australia? (UK)
A: You are a British politician, right?

Q: Are there supermarkets in Sydney and is milk available all year round? (Germany)
A: No, we are a peaceful civilization of vegan hunter gatherers. Milk is illegal.

Q: Please send a list of all doctors in Australia who can dispense rattlesnake serum. (USA)
A: Rattlesnakes live in A-mer-i-ca which is where YOU come from.

All Australian snakes are perfectly harmless, can be safely handled and make good pets.

HEALTH & HAZARD

How exercise protects the heart
2004-11-17

Although it is widely known that regular exercise makes for a healthy heart, scientists believe they have shown why this might be. It encourages new blood vessels to grow to supply muscle fibres and ultimately switches the muscles into aerobic metabolism. Unlike anaerobic metabolism that uses sugar for energy, aerobic metabolism breaks down fat for energy. The Duke University team spoke at an American Heart Association meeting.

The researchers studied what happened in mice when they exercised on a running wheel. Exercise training stimulated the production of a protein called vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF). VEGF encourages the growth of new blood vessels or angiogenesis. The number of capillaries supplying the exercising muscles increased and some of the muscle fibres that had been working anaerobically changed to work aerobically. Muscle in mammals is generally made up of two fibre types - slow-twitch fibres that need oxygen to work (aerobic) and fast-twitch fibres that can work without oxygen (anaerobic) by breaking down sugar. Lead researcher Dr Richard Waters said: “What we have shown is that increases in the capillary density occur before a significant change from fast-twitch to slow-twitch fibre type, and furthermore, that the changes in levels of VEGF occur before the increased capillary density.” The findings could be important for investigating the use of VEGF to treat diseases such as coronary heart disease and peripheral arterial disease where blood supply is inadequate, believe the researchers.

BBC News, 14 November 2004

“Toxin link to veterans’ illness
2004-11-17

The illnesses suffered by veterans of the first Gulf War appeared to be linked to toxins including nerve gas, according to a US report. The US Veterans Affairs Department said stress or mental illness did not explain most veterans’ complaints, but there was a probable link to toxins. The report, by the Research Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans’ Illnesses, said up to 30% of US Gulf War veterans had been afflicted by a “complex of multiple chronic symptoms over and above expected rates
Selenium may reduce colon cancer risk
2004-11-17
High levels of selenium in the blood may reduce the risk of colorectal cancer, according to a new study that suggests but doesn’t prove the mineral’s role as a preventive. Selenium is a trace mineral found in meats, grains, seafood and some nuts. However, how much you get varies according to where you live, because different areas have different concentrations of selenium in the soil. Those who live in areas where selenium intake is low have higher rates of colorectal and other cancers.

“Your risk of colorectal cancer can vary by the amount of selenium you consume,” said lead researcher Elizabeth T. Jacobs, from the Arizona Cancer Center. People with higher blood selenium levels tended to have a decreased risk of a recurrence of colon cancer.” Selenium may protect against not only colon cancer but also prostate cancer and lung cancer, Jacobs added. Jacobs and her colleagues collected data from three randomised trials of colon cancer patients: the Wheat Bran Fibre Trial, the Polyp Prevention Trial and the Polyp Prevention Study. Looking at the data from these trials, they were able to determine the effect of selenium in the development of new cancerous colon polyps in patients. The researchers found that those with the highest selenium levels had a 34 percent lower risk of developing a new colon cancer, compared with those who had the lowest selenium levels.

Yahoo News, 16 November 2004
“http://dailynews.yahoo.com/h”

Ozone link to premature deaths
2004-11-17
High ozone levels may be killing off city dwellers around the world, experts suspect. Peaks in air ozone levels were linked with peaks in premature death rates in urban areas across the US, researchers at Yale University found. Ozone pollution, from vehicles and power stations, has been linked before to increased hospital admissions and lung diseases such as asthma.


The researchers compared death rates with ozone levels for 95 large urban US communities between 1987 and 2000. They found an increase of 10 ppb (parts per billion) in the previous week’s ozone was associated with a 0.52% increase in the overall daily death rate and a 0.64% increase in cardiovascular and respiratory-related deaths. This would translate to 319 extra deaths in New York City and nearly 4,000 extra deaths across the 95 areas studied in the year 2000 alone, the researchers calculate.

BBC News, 17 November 2004
“http://news.bbc.co.uk/h/english/health”

Smoking and salt bad for stomach reflux
2004-11-17
People who smoke or use high amounts of table salt on their food appear to be at increased risk for gastro-oesophageal reflux, a disease in which stomach juices flow back into the oesophagus, European researchers report. In contrast, tea and alcohol, which have been identified as culprits in past studies, did not increase the risk. Gastro-oesophageal reflux is best known as a cause of heartburn. However, if severe and untreated, the condition can raise the risk of oesophageal cancer.

Dr. M. Nilsson, from the Karolinska Hospital in Stockholm, and colleagues used a large study group - 3,153 people with symptoms of reflux and 40,210 people with no reflux symptoms. The researchers’ findings appear in the medical journal Gut. The risk of gastro-oesophageal reflux increased as the number of years smoking rose. Compared with non-smokers, people who smoked for 1 to 5 years were 20 percent more likely to develop reflux, while people who smoked for longer than 20 years were 70 percent more likely. As noted, high salt intake also increased the risk of reflux. People who always put extra salt on regular meals were 70 percent more likely to develop reflux than people who never used extra salt. Also, eating meals of salted fish or meat more than twice a month increased the risk by 50 percent compared with never eating such meals. Certain lifestyle habits seemed to reduce the risk of reflux, such as eating bread high in dietary fibre and frequent exercise. Surprisingly, coffee intake, which has been tied to an increased risk of reflux in some studies, was actually linked to a decreased risk. However, the authors believe that the beverage may not really protect against reflux, rather patients with reflux simply avoid drinking coffee.

Yahoo News, 12 November 2004
“http://dailynews.yahoo.com/h”

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2004-11-17
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Yahoo News, 16 November 2004
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BBC News, 17 November 2004
“http://news.bbc.co.uk/h/english/health”
Computer use link to eye disease
2004-11-17
Heavy computer use could be linked to glaucoma, especially among those who are short-sighted, fear researchers. Glaucoma is caused by increased fluid pressure within the eye compressing the nerves at the back, which can lead to blindness if not treated. The findings, published in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, are based on 10,000 Japanese workers. The authors and experts recommend more research, particularly because being short-sighted is a known glaucoma risk.

Dr Masayuki Tatemichi, from Toho University School of Medicine, and his colleagues tested the sight of workers in four different Japanese companies, employing over 5,000 people each. Overall, 522 (5.1%) of the employees were found to have visual field abnormalities. Workers who were classified as heavy computer users were more likely to be long-sighted (hypermetropia) or short-sighted (myopia). Around a third (165) of these workers had suspected glaucoma. Upon further analysis, heavy computer use, suspected glaucoma and short-sightedness appeared to be interlinked.

BBC News, 16 November 2004
“http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/health"

Dearborn plant workers exposed to hazardous levels of asbestos for decades
2004-11-17
People who stripped minerals at a plant in Dearborn between the early 1950s and 1990 were exposed to hazardous levels of asbestos, according to a public health consultation released by state and federal officials. The former W.R. Grace and Company facility processed vermiculite, mined in Libby, Mont., that contained asbestos until 1990, the Michigan Department of Community Health said. The federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry worked with the state health department on the public health consultation about the W.R. Grace facility. The agency has linked some past exposures to asbestos, the state department said. Workers may have carried home asbestos fibers on their hair and clothing, but it’s hard to determine which people may have been exposed to asbestos, the groups said.

Google News, 9 November 2004

Stress linked to miscarriages’
2004-11-17
Stress could be linked to miscarriages, researchers have suggested. However, the study published in New Scientist magazine suggests giving at-risk women extra doses of the hormone progesterone could protect pregnancies. The cause of most miscarriages is never established, but they are usually attributed to abnormalities in the foetus or maternal health problems. In the initial phase of the research, scientists found that pregnant mice were deliberately stressed by factors such as loud noise levels, it created an imbalance in hormone levels. This leads to the immune system more hostile to the foetus, leading to the placenta coming under attack. The foetus is rejected because its blood supply cannot be sustained. The researchers found stress hormones such as cortisol are raised in the bloodstream, suppressing the production of progesterone - a hormone which is crucial to the maintenance of a healthy pregnancy.

Falling levels of progesterone lead to a fall in the levels of progesterone-induced blocking factor (PABF) trigger the production of molecules such as interleukin-4 and interleukin-10 within the immune system. In healthy pregnancies, these molecules tell the immune system to tolerate the foreign cells of the placenta and foetus. Following the research on mice, the team led by Dr Petra Arck, monitored the progress of 864 pregnant women. It was found that the 55 women who miscarried were more likely to have reported stress than women whose pregnancies continued. The 55 were also more likely to have had lower progesterone and PIBF levels.

BBC News, 11 November 2004
“http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/health"

High dose vitamin E death warning
2004-11-17
Elderly people could be risking their lives if they take even moderately high doses of vitamin E, evidence suggests. The latest study by Johns Hopkins University found people who took even half of the recommended current maximum dose had an increased risk of death. The authors told the American Heart Association meeting that policy makers should consider lowering the upper safety limit. But critics said the findings could be biased because although there are many types of vitamin E that come in tablet form studies, such as this one, tended to focus on synthetic rather than natural vitamin E. The current study’s authors acknowledged that because most of the people involved in the trial were aged 60 and older and had conditions such as heart disease, the findings might not apply to young healthy adults. Previous studies have suggested high dose vitamins, including vitamin E, can do more harm than good.
The Johns Hopkins team looked at 19 studies carried out between 1993 and 2004 involving more than 136,000 people. Nine of the studies looked at vitamin E alone and 10 looked at vitamin E in combination with other vitamin supplements. All compared vitamin use against dummy drugs. People who took daily vitamin E doses exceeding 400 “international units” (IU) per day (equivalent to about 270mg) had an increased risk of death by about 10% compared with those who did not. In the UK, the Food Standards Agency recommends a daily intake of between 3-4mg or 4.5-6 IU. It sets an upper safety limit of 540mg (800 IU) per day, which is twice as high as the level found to be harmful in the study. In the US, the safety limit is as high as 1,000mg or 1,500 IU per day.

BBC News, 11 November 2004
"http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/health"

Risk of leukaemia high in older obese women
2004-11-17
New research has found a higher risk of leukaemia among older overweight women, offering another piece of evidence that carrying extra pounds can increase your chance of getting cancer. University of Minnesota researchers concluded that being overweight or obese could more than double an older woman’s slight risk of getting acute myelogenous leukaemia, AML, one of the deadliest leukaemia’s, accounts for about one-third of the 33,000 leukaemia cases diagnosed annually in the United States.

The study, published in the November issue of Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention, found that the risk for AML was 90 percent higher among women 55 and older who are overweight, meaning they have a body-mass index of 25 to 29. BMI is a measure of body fat based on height and weight. The risk was as much as 140 percent higher among obese women in this age group - those with a BMI of 30 or more. By those definitions, a 5-foot-4 woman between 146 pounds and 174 pounds would be considered overweight, and obese if she weighed 175 pounds or more. While the study found a higher risk of AML among overweight older women, it did not find such a link with a slower developing type of leukaemia, chronic lymphocytic leukaemia.

Yahoo News, 10 November 2004
"http://dailynews.yahoo.com/h"

ROUND THE WORLD
Climate change ruining Everest
2004-11-17
Environmentalists are calling for Mount Everest should be put on a UN danger list because of global warming. Melting glaciers have swollen lakes and increased the risk of catastrophic flooding in the Himalayas, they say. The move to save the world’s highest peak is part of a new campaign to force reductions in emissions of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide. The campaigners are arguing that countries are legally bound to protect World Heritage Sites from damage. The group, including famous mountaineers and members of the UK-based group Friends of the Earth, will ask Unesco, the UN educational, scientific and cultural agency to put Nepal’s Sagarmatha National Park on its danger list. It will also submit petitions for the Belize barrier reef and the Huascaran National Park in Peru to be included in the list.

“Mount Everest is a powerful symbol of the natural world not just in Nepal,” said the director of Friends of the Earth Nepal, Prakash Sharma. “If this mountain is threatened by climate change, then we know the situation is deadly serious,” the director added.

“http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/health"

IN THE WORKS
Junk food adverts face TV ban
2004-11-17
Adverts for junk foods would not be shown on television before 2100GMT as part of a government plan to tackle obesity. Manufacturers and advertisers will be urged to agree a voluntary code of regulation, according to reports in two Sunday newspapers in Britain. The proposal is contained in the government’s Public Health White Paper, to be published this week.

Other measures include a new “traffic light” labelling system identifying unhealthy foods.

‘Traffic Light’ Proposal
Red light: Fatty, salty or sugary foods, to be eaten sparingly
Amber light: Fatty but nutritious, to be eaten in moderation
Green light: Fruit and vegetables, to be eaten often

This White Paper had been expected to back a ban on advertising junk food during children’s TV hours. But Ofcom figures showing 70% of children’s television viewing takes place between 6pm and 9pm prompted a move toward wider restrictions, reports said.

BBC News, 14 November 2004
“http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/health”
Safety of new flame retardant questioned
2004-11-17
The Environmental Protection Agency may be sacrificing public health and safety by moving too quickly to approve a new fire retardant to replace chemicals being taken off the market, scientists told a public health conference this week. At the end of this year, penta and octa are being taken off the market under a voluntary agreement reached between the EPA and their manufacturer, Great Lakes Chemical Corp. of Indianapolis, following studies that showed the chemicals are accumulating in the breast milk of American women at 10 to 100 times the levels measured in European women. In the last two years, studies have shown that exposure of laboratory animals in the womb to such chemical mixtures, known as PBDEs, can cause learning problems, lowered intelligence, early puberty and feminisation of male sex organs.

Little information is publicly available on the chemical components of a new fire retardant called Firemaster 550 that the EPA has approved to replace chemicals being taken off the market, scientists attending the American Public Health Association’s annual convention told a workshop on fire retardants. All that is known about Firemaster 550, which is actually a mixture of chemicals, is the general type of chemicals used in the mixture and that EPA officials and Great Lakes say it is less toxic and less likely to accumulate in the bodies of people than the fire retardants it is designed to replace, said Sonya Lunder, a scientist with the Environmental Working Group.

It is “naive,” Lunder said, to allow industry “to handpick the replacement” for chemicals that are being taken off the market because of health and safety concerns.

e.hormone News, 10 November 2004
“http://e.hormone.tulane.edu/news.html"