

# Opinions

## European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

"The sweetener [aspartame] and its breakdown products have been a matter of extensive investigation for more than 20 years including experimental animal studies, clinical research, intake and epidemiological studies and post-marketing surveillance. Aspartame was found to be safe for human consumption, a conclusion which was reconfirmed in the review carried out by the Scientific Committee on Food (SCF) in 2002.

"In 2007 the European Ramazzini Foundation in Bologna, Italy, published findings of a new study on the carcinogenicity of aspartame in rats. EFSA's ANS Panel adopted an opinion on this study in January 2009. The ANS Panel subsequently updated its opinion in March 2009 taking into consideration data submitted by the Ramazzini Foundation in February 2009. The Panel concluded that on the basis of all the evidence currently available, including the ERF study published in 2007, there is no indication of any genotoxic or carcinogenic potential of aspartame and no reason to revise the previously established Acceptable Daily Intake for aspartame of 40 mg/kg body weight. An earlier opinion, following the first study on aspartame by the European Ramazzini Foundation, was adopted by the former AFC Panel in 2006."

"Even though aspartame has been authorised for many years in many countries following thorough safety assessments, a degree of public concern about the safety of aspartame has continued. EFSA, together with its Advisory Forum made up of representatives of the risk assessment bodies in the EU Member States, is now working to address this public concern.

"EFSA adopted an opinion in 2006 reconfirming the safety of aspartame. This work is not being undertaken because of new concerns about the current safety assessments."

## May 2009

To visit the EFSA web site, please click [here](#).

## New Zealand officials dismiss the aspartame-formaldehyde link

21 August 2007

"There are many foods where formaldehyde is naturally produced as part of normal digestion. Tomatoes and citrus fruits produce far more than aspartame. It's normal and not at all harmful in the levels produced," says New Zealand Food Safety Authority expert toxicologist John Reeve.

"If these reports didn't get taken seriously by some people they would be laughable. However, people could be put off artificial sweeteners in favour of sugar, with its associated known contribution to obesity, diabetes and similar."

"Furthermore, claims saying that aspartame leads to unsafe levels of formaldehyde in people are just ridiculous."

Read the original statement in full at:

<http://www.nzfsa.govt.nz/publications/media-releases/2007/aspartame-and-formaldehyde.htm>

