

## **Melamine makes its way into US Infant Formula**

Comments by J. C. Spencer

Melamine compounds the importance for mother's milk and the need to enhance baby formula with glyconutrients. The royal sugars I discuss in my book, ***Expand Your Mind - Improve Your Brain*** are found in human mother's milk.

This toxic problem is caused by economics not reason. It is a matter of life and health for humans, especially infants. The toxin melamine is cheaper than powdered milk. Glyconutrients are more expensive. Most of the poison powder filler melamine comes from China. Traces of melamine in US infant formula leaves a trail of which companies import some of their raw material. This is explained in this article. While the FDA is playing down the importance of the levels of melamine found in US infant formula, any amount is not good and while it normally does not cause instant death, it can cause long term damage to the vital organs especially the kidneys as reported in our last article on melamine.

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## **FDA Finds Traces of Melamine in U.S. Infant Formula**

Associated Press

November 26, 2008 - San Jose, California - Traces of the industrial chemical melamine have been detected in samples of top-selling U.S. infant formula, but federal regulators insist the products are safe.

The Food and Drug Administration said last month it was unable to identify any melamine exposure level as safe for infants, but a top official said it would be a "dangerous overreaction" for parents to stop feeding infant formula to babies who depend on it.

"The levels that we are detecting are extremely low," said Dr. Stephen Sundlof, director of the agency's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition. "They should not be changing the diet. If they've been feeding a particular product, they should continue to feed that product. That's in the best interest of the baby."

Melamine is the chemical found in Chinese infant formula--in far larger concentrations--that has been blamed for killing at least three babies and making at least 50,000 others ill.

Previously undisclosed tests, obtained by The Associated Press under the Freedom of Information Act, show the FDA has detected melamine in a sample of one popular formula and the presence of cyanuric acid, a chemical relative of melamine, in the formula of a second manufacturer.

Separately, a third major formula maker told AP that in-house tests had detected trace levels of melamine in its infant formula.

The three firms - Abbott Laboratories, Nestle and Mead Johnson - manufacture more than 90 percent of all infant formula produced in the United States.

The FDA and other experts said the melamine contamination in U.S.-made formula had occurred during the manufacturing process, rather than intentionally.

The U.S. government quietly began testing domestically produced infant formula in September, soon after problems with melamine-spiked formula surfaced in China.

Sundlof said there have been no reports of human illness in the U.S. from melamine, which can cause damaging stones in the kidney or bladder and, in extreme cases, kidney failure.

Melamine is used in some U.S. plastic food packaging and can rub off onto what we eat; it's also contained in a cleaning solution used on some food processing equipment and can leach into the products being prepared.

Sundlof told the AP the positive test results "so far are in the trace range, and from a public health or infant health perspective, we consider those to be perfectly fine."

That's different from the impression of zero tolerance the agency left on Oct. 3, when it stated: "FDA is currently unable to establish any level of melamine and melamine-related compounds in infant formula that does not raise public health concerns."

It was not until the AP inquired about tests on domestic formula that the FDA articulated that while it couldn't set a safe exposure for infants, it would accept some melamine in formula - raising the question of whether the decision to accept very low concentrations was made only after traces were detected.

In China, melamine was intentionally dumped into watered-down milk to trick food quality tests into showing higher protein levels than actually existed. Byproducts of the milk ended up in infant formula, coffee creamers, even biscuits.

The concentrations of melamine there were extraordinarily high, as much as 2,500 parts per million. The concentrations detected in the FDA samples were 10,000 times smaller - the equivalent of a drop in a 64-gallon trash bin.

According to FDA data for tests of 77 infant formula samples, a trace concentration of melamine was detected in one product - Mead Johnson's Infant Formula Powder, Enfamil LIPIL with Iron. An FDA spreadsheet shows two tests were conducted on the Enfamil, with readings of 0.137 and 0.14 parts per million.

Three tests of Nestle's Good Start Supreme Infant Formula with Iron detected an average of 0.247 parts per million of cyanuric acid, a melamine byproduct.

The FDA said last month that the toxicity of cyanuric acid is under study, but that meanwhile it is "prudent" to assume that its potency is equal to that of melamine.

And while the FDA said tests of 18 samples of formula made by Abbott Laboratories, including its Similac brand, did not detect melamine, spokesman Colin McBean said some company tests did find the chemical. He did not identify the specific product or the number of positive tests.

McBean did say the detections were at levels far below the health limits set by all countries in the world, including Taiwan, where the limit is 0.05 parts per million.

"We're talking about trace amounts right here, and you know there's a lot of scientific bodies out there that say low levels of melamine are always present in certain types of foods," said McBean.

Mead Johnson spokeswoman Gail Wood said her company's in-house tests had not detected any melamine, and that the company had not been informed of the FDA test results.

The FDA tests also detected melamine in two samples of nutritional supplements for very sick children who have trouble digesting regular food. Nestle's Peptamen Junior medical food showed 0.201 and 0.206 parts per million of melamine while Nestle's Nutren Junior-Fiber showed 0.16 and 0.184 parts per million.

The head of manufacturing for Nestle Nutrition in North America, Walter Huber, said the company took samples alongside FDA officials who visited a manufacturing plant, and that those samples showed similar results to what FDA found for the two pediatric medical foods. Huber added that Nestle didn't find cyanuric acid in any of the samples.

Rep. Rosa DeLauro, who heads a panel that oversees the FDA budget, said the agency was taking a "marketplace first, science last" approach.

"The FDA should be insisting on a zero-tolerance policy for melamine in domestic infant formula until it is able to determine conclusively based on sound independent science that the trace levels would not pose a health risk to infants," DeLauro said.

The FDA's melamine guidance: <http://www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hottopics/melamine.html>