

Title:

Toxin In Your Drink

Word Count:

453

Summary:

People are always reminded to refrain from consuming too much sodas and softdrinks because they contain lots of sugar and can cause tooth decay. But never because they contain benzene. Benzene is a byproduct and chemical present in the atmosphere where there is presence of concentrated chemical pollutants. Benzene presence in softdrinks had been confirmed by a team of doctors in a research facility in Australia. This now posed a new barrage of health and medical concerns and ...

Keywords:

toxins, poisoning, health and medical

Article Body:

People are always reminded to refrain from consuming too much sodas and softdrinks because they contain lots of sugar and can cause tooth decay. But never because they contain benzene. Benzene is a byproduct and chemical present in the atmosphere where there is presence of concentrated chemical pollutants. Benzene presence in softdrinks had been confirmed by a team of doctors in a research facility in Australia. This now posed a new barrage of health and medical concerns and debates.

A spokesperson from the FSANZ (Australia's food board) confirmed benzene presence of the said substance and proceeded to outline and allay the health and medical fears the results posed. According to the FSANZ, benzene is formed when the ascorbic acid in the beverage reacts with the food additives used for the soda. However, the resulting benzene is very low and at negligible amounts. The agency also eliminated the risk of poisoning and health problems that could be caused by benzene presence. FSANZ asserted that a person would have to consume over 20 liters of softdrink to reach the amount taken in from polluted air. But they also emphasized that benzene, in any form, is undesirable in food and drinks. The agency also assured the public that they are indeed working with softdrink manufacturers to further reduce the amount of possible benzene formation.

Despite the assurance of the FSANZ, a toxic specialist, Kathy Hughes expressed

disappointment over the response of the FSANZ. According to her, it does not matter whether the benzene concentration is negligible or not, but the fact that it is in there and it is significant enough to be detected, should alert health and medical professionals. It is also imperative that consumption of softdrinks found with benzene should be stopped or else limited to adults since benzene can stunt the growth of the mental and physical faculties of children. She also stressed the significance of the surprising result of the combination of two relatively harmless substances: additives and ascorbic acid. She asserted that if two harmless and common substances used in food preparation resulted in a toxin, there could be much worse amounts in products that used the substances in higher concentrations. She called on to the FSANZ to reinforce more stringent measures not only on the finished products, but also on the substances used to make them. This is important to detect and stop possible toxin formation.

Lastly, perhaps it is better to limit intake of processed foods and beverages to ensure that less chemicals enter and pollute the body systems. Food safety should be a top priority for consumers and manufacturers alike. It is also wise to act on anything that raise health and medical problems immediately to avoid further complications.