THE TUESDAY MINUTE

THIS WEEK'S TOPIC

Horrible Rice News

"*Porphyra-Zyme Chelates Arsenic: Take With Every Rice Meal.*"

Are you talking to your patients about the arsenic in rice and chicken? Because even eating organic rice could be short circuiting their health.

Arsenic is considered a class one carcinogen. But it is also related to cardiovascular complications like increased blood pressure, allergies, insomnia, type 2 diabetes, dermatitis, respiratory tract infection, muscle aches, headaches, weakness, convulsions, neuropathy, anemia, drowsiness and confusion. Arsenic is an immune toxicant, weakening the immune system.

Arsenic was used in the south for years as a pesticide to protect cotton from the boll weevil. Millions of pounds of arsenic, as pesticides, had been used for more than a century on millions of acres and is concentrated in the soil in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, and Texas. And it's not going away soon. The industry, knowing that arsenic has poisoned the soil, developed varieties of rice that can tolerate the high arsenic in the soil.

To give you an idea of arsenic safety levels, the upper limit for drinking water is 10 ppb. So, if someone drinks 8 glasses of water a day, that's 80 ppb.

Consumer Reports listed 31 samples of rice breakfast cereals from 9 companies. I averaged them and found one serving contained 315 ppb.

Also, Consumer Reports listed 73 different samples of rice. After taking out the highest and lowest levels of arsenic from 30 different brands, the range of one cup was from 65.5 ppb to 448 ppb, the lowest being from California.

A major concern is moms who ingest the greatest amounts of rice. The danger with toxic metals concerns children, as arsenic can cause DNA damage. Mom's bear chil-

dren with high arsenic levels as evidenced by elevated infant toe nail clippings. As little as ¼ cup of rice a day by mom can increase infant toenail arsenic by 16.9%.

Arsenic has been added to chicken feed since 1944. When arsenic-containing drugs are fed to chickens, the arsenic gets into their tissues, and then gets into our tissues. Here's how Dr. Michael Greger put it, "The arsenic from the drugs in the feed can get into our crops, into the air, and into the groundwater, and find its way into our bodies, whether we eat meat or not."

How much arsenic are we talking about? "Since we raise billions of chickens every year, if you do the math, we're talking about dumping a half million pounds' worth of pure arsenic into the environment every year, eventually ending up on our crops."

On the other side of the coin, a study with 200,000 people over a 26 year period concluded that people eating rice had the same incidence of cancer as people who didn't eat rice. So the rice industry has their talking points to continue to sell toxic products.

But arsenic is a cumulative poison and is still a class one carcinogen. Knowing we live in a toxic world should we add more poisons to our bodies? Maybe the statistics don't show a relationship between cancer and rice but when sick patients come in to your office should we be encouraging them to consume more toxins?

You can see an earlier Tuesday Minute when we addressed testing for toxic metals using Porphyra-Zyme as a chelating agent and collecting a fecal sample.

Let's take a look at a chart to evaluate how Porphyra-Zyme binds or complexes different metals. On the left hand column different metals are listed with their concentrations in parts per million. The firth one down is arsenic and the solution is 10 ppm. After dialysis or separation with Porphyra-Zyme against an aqueous solution of arsenic, 1.4 ppm remains. The last column to the right summarizes, a very impressive 86% of the arsenic is bound or complexed.

Obviously, if patients have toxic metals, they should be treated. But the big question is do you encourage all your patients to stop eating rice and chicken? I think it comes down to "the sickness factor." If they have a chronic condition, they should definitely stop putting poison in their body. If they basically "feel good", they can moderate their risk by cutting down and choosing alternative grains like quinoa, millet or oats.

Try to avoid processed rice as in rice chips or rice cakes which have significantly higher levels. Choose lower-arsenic varieties of rice, and learn ways to cook rice to lower arsenic even further.

When it comes to chicken, make sure patients eat limited amounts of free ranged chickens that are fed organic food, free of pesticides. For now when I eat limited amounts of either rice or chicken, I take 3-6 tablets of Porphyra-Zyme depending on the size of the meal.

Remember, arsenic is a cumulative poison and considered a class one carcinogen.

Thanks for reading this week's edition. I'll see you next Tuesday.