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## **Environment > Poisons > A Controversial sweetener being used in children's medicines**

Green Party MP Sue Kedgley says she is very concerned to discover that 81 medicines which may be used by children and young people contain the controversial additive aspartame, which has been linked to a range of adverse reactions.

This is arguably the most controversial additive in the food supply. Why would such an additive be permitted to be used in medicines, which are supposed to make children get better, especially when there are less controversial sweeteners available?"

In response to a written question, the Minister of Health has confirmed Medsafe has approved 124 medicines containing aspartame, including 81 with dosage instructions for children or young people.

It worries me that many parents may not be aware that some prescribed and over the counter medicines they may be giving to their children may contain an additive that is linked with adverse reactions," Ms Kedgley says.

It is very important that parents do not stop their children from taking necessary medications, however, if they are concerned, they should ask their doctor or pharmacist if there is an equivalent medicine that does not contain aspartame," Ms Kedgley says.

The Green Party is calling on Medsafe to source medicines for children which do not contain the artificial sweetener aspartame following revelations that 81 medicines which may be used by children and young people contain the controversial additive.

Ms Kedgley is also calling on Medsafe to put pressure on pharmaceutical companies to reformulate their products, and in the meantime ensure medicines containing aspartame are clearly labelled with a warning so parents are aware of its presence and potential for side effects.

An adverse reaction linked to aspartame may actually be misdiagnosed as being a symptom of another illness resulting in the child being prescribed further unnecessary medications."

Another concern is that aspartame is not always clearly identified on many labels, Ms Kedgley says.

There should be a requirement that the word 'aspartame' appear prominently on the label, along with a warning statement that it has been linked to a range of adverse reactions."

The approved medicines which contain aspartame and have dosage instructions for children and/or young people are:

Anti-inflammatory Lozenges - Menthol and Eucalyptus Flavour Lozenge Amcal  
 Anti-inflammatory Lozenges - Raspberry Flavour Lozenge Amcal  
 Augmentin Duo 200 Powder for oral suspension  
 Augmentin Duo 400 Powder for oral suspension  
 Augmentin ES Powder for oral suspension 600mg/42.9mg per 5mL  
 Augmentin Forte Powder for oral suspension 250  
 Augmentin Powder for oral suspension 125  
 Berocca Performance Effervescent tablet

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Berocca Performance Effervescent tablet Original Flavour and Tropical Flavour  
Cellcept Powder for oral suspension 200mg/mL  
Children's Panadol 7+ Years Soluble tablet 250mg  
Chlorvescent Effervescent tablet  
Claramax Reditabs Tablet 5mg  
Curam Powder for oral suspension 125mg, 31.25mg/5mL and 250mg, 62.5mg/5mL  
E-Mycin Granules for oral suspension 200mg/5mL and 400mg/5mL  
Gastrolyte Powder Sachets Powder for oral solution fruit flavour and natural flavour  
Gastrolyte Pre-Mix Oral solution  
Gastrolyte-R Powder  
Gaviscon Chewable tablet 80mg/250mg/133.5mg – lemon flavour and peppermint flavour  
Gaviscon Cool Chewable tablet Cool Peppermint  
Gaviscon Double Strength Chewable tablet 160mg/500mg/267mg – lemon flavour and peppermint flavour  
Glycoprep-C Powder 6%w/w  
Imodium Melts Orodispersible tablet 2mg  
Konsyl Orange (Sugar Free) powder Powder for oral solution 60.3%  
Lemsip Cold & Flu Hot Drink Powder for oral solution 500mg Lemon & Menthol flavour  
Lemsip Cold & Flu Hot Drink Powder for oral solution Lemon flavour  
Lemsip Max Cold & Flu + Chesty Cough Powder for oral solution  
Lemsip Max Cold & Flu Direct Blackcurrant Oral granules and Lemon Oral granules  
Lemsip Max Cold & Flu Hot Drink Powder for oral suspension 1,000mg Lemon flavour and blackcurrant flavour  
Lemsip Max Cold & Flu with Decongestant Hot Drink Powder for oral solution Lemon flavour and Blackcurrant flavour  
Lemsip Max Flu Lemon Powder for oral solution  
Metamucil Lemon Lime Smooth Powder for oral solution 3.4g/dose  
Metamucil Orange Flavour Smooth Texture Powder for oral solution 3.4g/dose (sachet)  
Metamucil Orange Smooth Powder for oral solution 3.4g/dose (Jar)  
Moxlin Sugar Free Powder for oral suspension 125mg/5mL and 250mg/5mL  
Mucilax Powder for oral suspension 3g/dose (Orange flavour)  
Nucolox Powder for oral suspension  
Nurofen For Children Meltlets Orodispersible tablet 100mg Strawberry Flavour  
Nurofen Meltlets Orodispersible tablet 200mg – lemon flavour and mint flavour  
Orelox Granules for oral suspension 40mg/5mL  
Ospamox Powder for oral suspension 100mg/mL, 125mg/5mL, 250mg/5mL  
Panadol Cold & Flu Citrus Effervescent tablet 500mg  
Panadol Rapid Soluble tablet 500mg  
Paracetene Effervescent tablet 500mg/8mg  
Phenergan Elixir 5mg/5mL  
PicoPrep Powder for oral solution 0.64mg/g  
Redoxon Double Action Chewable tablet  
Redoxon Double Action Effervescent tablet 1000mg/10mg  
Singulair Chewable tablet 4mg and 5mg  
Synermox Syrup 125 Powder for oral suspension  
Synermox Syrup 250 Powder for oral suspension  
Throat Lozenges - Menthol and Eucalyptus Flavour Lozenge Guardian  
Throat Lozenges - Raspberry Flavour Lozenge Guardian  
Vicks Vital Lemon Throat Lozenge and Orange Throat Lozenge  
Videx Chewable/dispersible tablet 25mg, 50mg, 100mg and 150 mg  
Videx Chewable/dispersible tablet 25mg, 50mg, 100mg, 150mg and 200mg (mandarin orange)  
Vitaplus B Plus Effervescent tablet  
Volfast Powder for oral solution 50mg  
Zyvox Granules for oral suspension 20mg/mL

*For more information, please see the [green party website](#), or write to:  
Sue Kedgley MP*

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**Further Reading**

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