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Medications that Contain Aspartame

by [Anna Duggett](#) on June 11, 2012

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It was in 1965 when a chemist accidentally stumbled upon aspartame as a zero-calorie sweetener while creating a drug for ulcers. This accidental discovery was met with enthusiasm for a time, especially by health professionals and patients dealing with sugar-related conditions such as diabetes and obesity. Today, aspartame is a known and feared neurotoxin and carcinogen, yet it remains a common drug ingredient.

It is no secret that medicating children can be a challenge for both medical and non-medical professionals. This is especially true when a child is sick or feeling agitated due to health reasons. With drug sweeteners such as aspartame, it will be easier to gain the cooperation of the young patient. As a sweetener, aspartame can also be an ingredient in tablets that are meant to be chewed for the purpose of achieving an intended rate of metabolism of the drug. For example, to maximize pain-relieving benefits of an analgesic, the drug may come in chewable form. These are the most common reasons some medicines are formulated with aspartame.

Recognizing Medications that Contain Aspartame

Medications that contain aspartame do not always come with a label that says so. In fact, in most cases, the word could be deliberately omitted and replaced with its lesser known synonym, phenylalanine.

Therefore, any drug label that lists phenylalanine as an ingredient means the medicine does contain aspartame. In Australia, the phrase, "Phenylketonurics: Contains Phenylalaline" is a more popular way for drug manufacturers to show that a certain product contains aspartame. In Europe, this ingredient can be

referred to on a drug label as E951. In any case, any indication that a drug contains this sweetener should be taken seriously.

Companies that Make Medications with Aspartame

Despite its reputation, many drug manufacturers continue to use the sugar in their drug formulations. Johnson and Johnson Pharmaceuticals is one, along with Lederle Laboratories, which makes Centrum Jr., McNeil, which manufactures children's Tylenol, Miles Incorporated, AH Robbins Company, which makes Dimetapp chewables, Glaxo Pharmaceuticals, Pennex, Whitehall Labs, L. Perrigo, Hall Laboratories, Mediguard, Equate, Meijer, Raley's, P. Leiner, Lifeline Nutritional, and Pharmavite Corporation. While not all drugs manufactured by these companies actually contain aspartame, their pediatric formulations mostly do.

Prescription Medications with Aspartame

Although aspartame is technically considered a drug, there is a whole range of prescription medicines that list it as an additive, from antibiotics to transplant medication. The following are examples:

- Antibiotics/Antivirals
 - Amoxicillin 250mg chew tabs by WarnerChilcott
 - Amoxil 400mg chewable tablet 3.64mg/tablet
 - Augmentin 400mg/5ml suspension 7mg/5ml
 - Augmentin ES 600mg/5ml 7mg/5ml
 - Cefzil 250mg/5ml 28mg/5ml
 - Penicillin V Potassium for Oral Susp
 - Videx chewable tablet (all strengths)
 - Viracept powder for Oral Suspension 11.2mg/GM of powder
 - Zyvox 100mg/5ml suspension
- Antiemetics (anti-drowsiness)
 - Zofran ODT 4mg
 - Zofran ODT 8mg
- Antilipemics (anti-cholesterol)
 - Cholestyramine powder
 - Colestid flavored granules
 - Prevalite powder
 - Questran Lite powder
- Antipsychotics and Antidepressants
 - Remeron Soltabs
 - Zyprexa Zydis
 - Singulair 5mg chewable tablet
- Antacids
 - Pepcid 20mg RPD tablet (Famotidine)
 - Pepcid 40mg RPD tablet (Famotidine)
 - Zantac efferdose tablets and granules
- Migraine
 - Maxalt-MLT 5mg tablet
 - Maxalt-MLT 10mg tablet
- Transplant medication - CellCept Oral Suspension

Non-Prescription or Over-the-Counter Medications with Aspartame

There are more non-prescription than prescription aspartame-containing medicines being sold in the market today, especially those formulated for children. These include:

- Cold and Allergy Drugs
 - Alka-Seltzer Plus
 - Benadryl for kids
 - Childrens PediaCare Multi-Symptom Cold Chewables
 - Diabetic Tussin
 - Halls sugar free menthol cough suppressant
- Analgesics
 - Advil
 - Excedrin Quick Tabs Free
 - Motrin, Junior Strength chewable tablets
 - Tempra quicklets
- Antacids
 - Alka-Seltzer
 - Surpass antacid chewable gum extra Strength wintergreen flavor
 - Chooz antacid/calcium supplement
- Laxatives
 - Medilax chewable tablets
 - Maalox Quick dissolve Max Strength
 - Reguloid sugar free regular flavor
 - Citrucel sugar free fiber therapy
- Health Supplements
 - Flinstones vitamins complete or with calcium
 - Citracal Liquitab Effervescent tablets
 - Centrum Junior chewable tablets
 - Bugs Bunny complete, plus iron or plus extra Vitamin C chewable tablets
- Electrolyte Therapy
 - Pedialyte freezer pops
 - Kao Lectrolyte electrolyte replenisher unflavored or bubble gum
- Antiemetics
 - Dramamine chewable formula tablets
 - Nausea chewable tabs

There are over 5,000 medicines, foods and drinks that contain aspartame, and over 92 different symptoms are associated with aspartame poisoning today. The list of lawsuits against companies making products that contain this sugar is also getting longer, from NutraSweet to Spoonful to Canderel and more.

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