

“Safe levels” of melamine in infant formula???

By Linda J. Smith
December 29, 2008

On November 28, 2008, the FDA shocked the world by establishing a “safe” threshold of 1 part per million of melamine in infant formula, provided a related chemical isn’t present. This decision was made days before China announced that 294,000 children have fallen ill from tainted milk, including 6 infants who died.¹

There is NO earthly reason for ANY melamine to be tolerated in infant formula! Every drop of mother’s milk, like every other mammal’s milk, is perfectly suited for the infant of that species. Every molecule of something OTHER than the mother’s milk replaces a molecule that the infant was biologically programmed to receive. For infants, “every drop counts.” Melamine fulfils absolutely no biologic need of human infants, and its presence replaces something else that the infant really does need.

Manufactured formula, even without additional plastic, is a well-established risk to the human infant. A 2004 NIH study attributed an excess 720 post-neonatal deaths in the USA to formula feeding. The authors used the more benign term “not breastfed” instead of correctly identifying formula feeding as the underlying reason for the excess deaths.² Forste reported in *Pediatrics* 2001³ that formula-fed African-American babies were 25% more likely to die than breastfed children in the USA. (The specific text reads "breastfed were 80% less likely." Do the math.)

Why put babies at even greater risk by tolerating the addition of plastic? The Codex Alimentarius (international regulatory body) does not permit experimentation with added or new ingredients in foods fed to children under 12 weeks old. Codex Standard 3.6 Purity Requirements states that “All ingredients shall be clean, of good quality, safe and suitable for ingestion by infants. They shall conform with their normal quality requirements, such as colour, flavour and odour.”

Melamine didn’t get into the milk by accident – it was put there by companies cheating milk safety regulators. The US needs to put into law the *International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes*.⁴ Our babies deserve protection!

1. Reuters. China raises death estimate from tainted milk to six. *Reuters*: Thompson Reuters; 2008.
2. Chen A, Rogan WJ. Breastfeeding and the risk of postneonatal death in the United States. *Pediatrics*. May 2004;113(5):e435-439.
3. Forste R, Weiss J, Lippincott E. The decision to breastfeed in the United States: does race matter? *Pediatrics*. Aug 2001;108(2):291-296.
4. WHO. *International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes*. Geneva: World Health Organization; 1081.