

Masten, Scott (NIH/NIEHS)

From: Scott.Dixie@epamail.epa.gov
Sent: Thursday, September 11, 2003 8:40 PM
To: Masten, Scott (NIH/NIEHS)
Subject: Comments on July 16,2003 Proposed Toxicological Studies on 13 Chemicals

This communication is submitted in response to the request by the National Toxicological Program for comments on its proposal to undertake toxicological reviews of some 13 chemicals. I am interested primarily in two of these substances, Chondroitin sulfate (CAS No. 9007-28-7) and Glucosamine(CAS No. 3416-24-8) and urge that the recommendations to study them be acted upon affirmatively.

I am not a scientist and therefore cannot offer data to substantiate my request. However, I was diagnosed with arthritis three or four years ago (mild), but did not wish to take drugs -- as they say there is no cure. The doctor then suggested I take Tylenol Arthritis when needed for pain, which I did - and still do take when needed.

However, after a while I learned that a colleague was taking glucosamine chondroitin and was convinced that it really made him better. Another friend was also enthusiastic, and I began hearing more comments about it and noticing the extensive and varied offerings on the drugstore shelves. So I started and have now been buying and taking it for about two years, I think. I did switch to glucosamine with hydrogen chloride instead of the sulfate. Someone gave me the idea that it was to be preferred over the sulfate, but I've no idea why. So far so good. I have been uneasy because, as it is unregulated, it is impossible to know what I'm getting. I've also noticed that the labeling on the various brands can be very vague. I notice labeling because I work in the Office of Pesticide Programs and am fully aware of the significance of the label.

My friend who had the very painfiul arthritis has since died of cancer. It was, I understand, "all through his body."

I had breast cancer surgery shortly before seeing the first rheumatologist, and understandably, I am very much concerned about anything that could aggravate cancer.

I report to you also that three of my doctors - gynecologist, internist and new rheumatologist - have asked me to let them know how it goes. They hear a lot about it, but know little firm information. One doctor did say that she believes that it slows the progress of the arthritis.

This situation -- of widespread use but little information and no requirements on content or labeling or usage --is unacceptable. We have a right to know what the risks may be. I am but one of many who may be doing ourselves harm instead of the good we think we are doing.

I URGE YOU TO UNDERTAKE TOXICOLOGICAL STUDIES ON GLUCOSAMINE AND CHONDROITIN SULFATE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. PLEASE ALSO LOOK AT THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE SULFATE, THE CHONDROITIN AND THE HYDROGEN CHLORIDE., AND THE DIFFERENT POTENTIAL EFFECTS ON THE HUMAN BODY OF THESE THREE INGREDIENTS Thank you..

Respectfully submitted,

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