IARC Monographs on the Evaluation of Carcinogenic Risks to Humans. Volume 51. Coffee, Tea, Mate, Methylxanthines and Methylglyoxal. - International Agency for Research on Cancer. Lyon 1991. 513 pp. Sw. Fr. 80.00.

At the present, tea and coffee are the most popular beverages in the world. Approximately 1.5 milliard cups of coffee are drunk every day. The objectives of this IARC publication was to evaluate the possible carcinogenic effects of 3 beverages - coffee, tea and mate, then of 3 methylated xanthines (coffeine, theophylline and theobromine), and of methylglyoxal. The chapters on coffee, tea and mate contain the data on their production, use and chemical composition, and their biological data relevant to the evaluation of carcinogenic risks to humans, including the data on mutagenicity and antimutagenicity. According to the IARC Working Group, coffee is possibly carcinogenic to the human urinary bladder and tea is not classifiable as to its carcinogenicity to humans. Caffeine occurs naturally in more than 60 plant species. It is probably non carcinogenic and non mutagenic in higher organisms, but it can modulate the effects of xenobiotics. This publication is appendixed by a Glossary of the used terms, a summary table of the genetic and related effects, and by the activity profiles of the genetic effects.

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IARC Monographs on the Evaluation of Carcinogenic Risks to Humans. Volume 52. Chlorinated Drinking-Water; Chlorination By-Products; Some other Halogenated Compounds; Cobalt and Cobalt Compounds. - International Agency for Research on Cancer, Lyon 1991. 544 pp. Sw.Fr. 80.00.

One of the first reported uses of chlorination for the disinfection of water supplies was in England in 1887. The first Monograph of the IARC publication evaluates the biological hazards of this type of water disinfection and presents the data demonstrating that only the concentrates of chlorinated water are mutagenic in *Salmonella* and that there is inadequate evidence for its carcinogenicity in humans. The other Monographs deal with the genotoxic effects of the chemicals used in the water chlorination (sodium chlorite and hypochlorite slats) and with the chlorination by-products (*e.g.* bromodichloromethane, bromoform, halogenated acetonitrites). The last Monograph evaluates the genotoxicity and carcinogenicity of cobalt and cobalt compounds. This metal has widespread uses, mainly in alloys and it is a component of some industrial environments. The IARC committee came to the conclusion that there is sufficient evidence for the carcinogenicity of this metal in laboratory animals, but inadequate evidence for its carcinogenicity in humans. For all compounds evaluated in this publication, the activity profiles for the genetic and related effects, including the effects on plants, are presented.

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