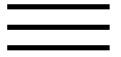


Evaluation of the nitrate drinking water standard with reference to infant methemoglobinemia and potential reproductive toxicity.

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Abstract

In view of published results of epidemiologic studies which suggested an association between nitrate in drinking water and human malformations, an assessment of the toxicology of nitrates and nitrites in relation to possible adverse effects on reproduction and development was performed. The current water standard for nitrate is based on protection from methemoglobinemia. A review of the animal data failed to provide evidence for teratogenic effects attributable to nitrate or nitrite ingestion. Adverse reproductive effects reported occurred at doses that were about one thousand times and higher than the estimated human intake. Neither nitrate nor nitrite experimental animals concentrated in the mammary gland or milk. The present assessment concludes that the maximum contaminant level of 45 ppm nitrate ion, or 10 ppm nitrate-nitrogen.

that the maximum contaminant level of 10 ppm nitrate ion, or 10 ppm nitrate nitrogen, adequately protects the very young from nitrate-induced toxicity, both pre- and postnatally.



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