

## Re: Interesting article on B17 and cancer

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*Source:* <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.med.nutrition/2005-09/msg00136.html>

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- *From:* "MMu" <brilhasti@xxxxxxx>
  - *Date:* Tue, 6 Sep 2005 13:33:06 +0200
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"IanW" <whoever@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx> schrieb im Newsbeitrag  
[news:dfjggv\\$191\\$1@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:dfjggv$191$1@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)  
> <http://www.vialls.com/vialls/laetrile1.html>

>

> No idea whether it's true or not but I've often wondered how Eskimos get  
> away with eating so much meat and not suffering cancer/heart disease..  
> thought it might have been because they eat fresh wild meat, rather than  
> processed/preserved/farmed stuff most of the rest of us do.. but didn't  
> realise B17 was prominent in their diet (what are salmon berries? is that  
> roe?).

>

> Do you think there's any merit to these claims? I'm always skeptical of  
> any article that mentions "conspiracy theories", like those about drug  
> companies trying to scaremonger the use of B17 due to the cyanide thing..  
> also, does B12 really contain cyanide in the same way as B17?

>

Two studies:

Moertel CG, Fleming TR, Rubin J, et al. A clinical trial of amygdalin (Laetrile) in the treatment of human cancer. N Engl J Med 1982; 306: 201-206.

"One hundred seventy-eight patients with cancer were treated with amygdalin (Laetrile) plus a "metabolic therapy" program consisting of diet, enzymes, and vitamins. The great majority of these patients were in good general condition before treatment. None was totally disabled or in preterminal condition. One third had not received any previous chemotherapy. The pharmaceutical preparations of amygdalin, the dosage, and the schedule were representative of past and present Laetrile practice. No substantive benefit was observed in terms of cure, improvement or stabilization of cancer, improvement of symptoms related to cancer, or extension of life span. The hazards of amygdalin therapy were evidenced in several patients by symptoms of cyanide toxicity or by blood cyanide levels approaching the lethal range. Patients exposed to this agent should be instructed about the danger of cyanide poisoning, and their blood cyanide levels should be carefully monitored. Amygdalin (Laetrile) is a toxic drug that is not effective as a cancer treatment. "

Ann Pharmacother. 2005 Sep;39(9):1566–9. Epub 2005 Jul 12.

Life-threatening interaction between complementary medicines: cyanide toxicity following ingestion of amygdalin and vitamin C.

Bromley J, Hughes BG, Leong DC, Buckley NA.

Department of Clinical Pharmacology and Toxicology, The Canberra Hospital, Garran, Australia.

OBJECTIVE: To describe a case of severe accidental cyanide poisoning following a single ingestion of amygdalin with therapeutic intent. CASE SUMMARY: A 68-year-old patient with cancer presented to the emergency department shortly after her first dose (3 g) of amygdalin with a reduced Glasgow Coma Score, seizures, and severe lactic acidosis requiring intubation and ventilation. The patient also ingested 4800 mg of vitamin C per day. She responded rapidly to hydroxocobalamin treatment. The adverse drug reaction was rated probable on the Naranjo probability scale. DISCUSSION: Amygdalin and laetrile (a synthetic form of amygdalin) are commonly used as complementary or alternative medicine (CAM) for the treatment of cancer. Vitamin C is known to increase the in vitro conversion of amygdalin to cyanide and reduce body stores of cysteine, which is used to detoxify cyanide. Amygdalin has been used for decades by patients with cancer who are seeking alternative therapies, and severe reactions have not been reported with this dose. An interaction with vitamin C is a plausible explanation for this life-threatening response. CONCLUSIONS: This case highlights the fact that CAMs can produce life-threatening toxicity. This case also adds a further note of caution, namely, the potential for serious interactions between CAMs, particularly where there is no tradition of concomitant use.

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- *Follow-Ups:*
    - ◆ *Re: Interesting article on B17 and cancer*
    - ◇ *From: IanW*

Re: Interesting article on B17 and cancer

- **References:**

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- ◆ *From: IanW*

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