



STARTING THE RISK ASSESSMENT APPROACH

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Review of a Risk Assessment Approach...

Reviewing the notions of Hazard and Risk

*Reviewing the various approaches to
achieve hazard characterization for
chemicals in food*



Studying the Hazard for Chemicals : TOXICOLOGY

Definition :

❑ From the Greek words τοξικός - toxicos "poisonous" and logos. Studies the adverse effects of chemicals on living organisms.

Mission:

❑ To identify possible hazards of chemicals and to investigate deleterious effects of chemicals on living organisms



Paracelsus (1493-1541)

The founder of
toxicology

Dosis sola facit venenum

It is the dose that makes the poison

Chemical	poisonous	mortal
Water		17 L
Kitchen salt		200 g
Ethanol		175-300 mL
Solanin	25 mg	400 mg

Reversible:

- ☐ Effects are completely reversible: when the toxicant is eliminated, the effect disappears
 - E.g. trichothecene – local on the skin - skin irritation (red discoloration)

Irreversible:

- ☐ Compound is not (or very slowly) eliminated or degraded: action persists because agent persists
 - E.g. chlorinated hydrocarbons
 - TCCD (= dioxin) => persistent chloracne
- ☐ Toxin binds covalently to essential macromolecules: action persists because the toxic effect persists even after elimination or degradation of the agent.
 - E.g. Aflatoxin-B1-8,9-oxide forms stable DNA-adducts lead to mutations and possibly cancer



Viktor Juschtschjenko
(Ukrainian President) 2006:
poisoned with TCCD in 2004
(chloracne)

Acute effects:

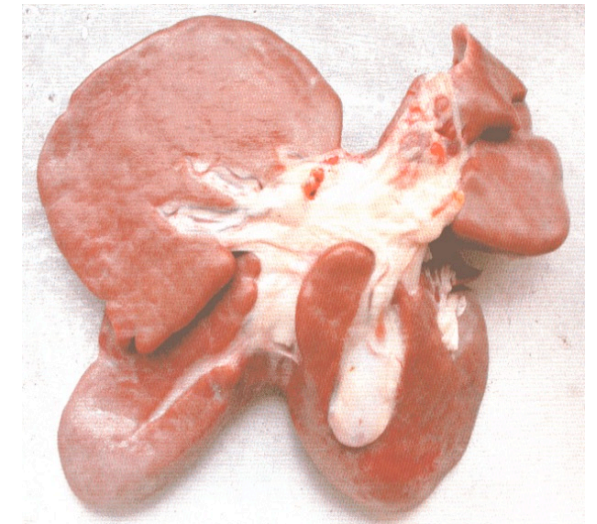
☐ Short exposure time (seconds to hours)

- High dose: cause is easily recognizable, dramatic symptoms
 - E.g. deoxynivalenol may cause vomiting (vomitoxin)

Chronic effects:

☐ Long exposure (weeks to years)

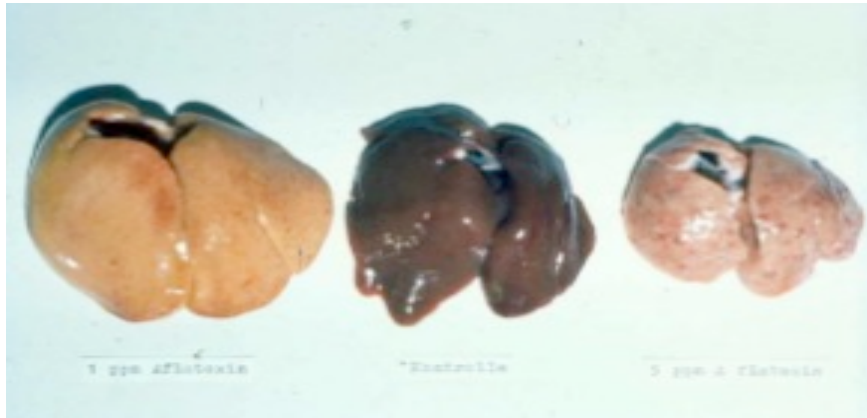
- Low dose can cause effects that are not easy recognizable. Symptoms may initially not be present or weak
 - e.g. ethanol → stomach (local) → gastritis → cirrhosis of liver (replacement of liver tissue by fibroid and scar tissue)



Example : Aflatoxin

Acute Toxicity

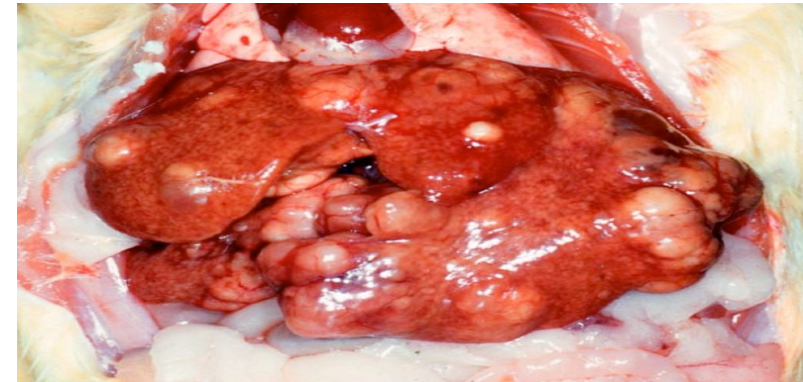
- ❑ Deterioration of liver and kidney function
 - ❑ Jaundice (yellow skin)
 - ❑ Emesis (vomiting)
 - ❑ Anorexia (no appetite)
- ❑ Ascites (fluid in the peritoneal cavity)
- ❑ Gastrointestinal haemorrhage (bleeding)



Effect of 1ppm (left) and 5ppm (right) aflatoxin on the liver
(control in the centre)

Chronic Toxicity

- ❑ Liver cancer
- ❑ Chronical hepatitis (inflammation)
 - ❑ Jaundice
- ❑ Hepatomegalie (abnormal size)
 - ❑ Liver cirrhosis*
- ❑ Immune suppression



Rat liver tumors (AfB1)

* replacing organ tissue by connective tissue

Assessing the Toxicity of Chemical: Methods

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General acute irritation and sensitization

▪ Acute toxicity studies:

- Acute oral toxicity
- Acute dermal toxicity
- Acute inhalation

▪ Irritation:

- Skin irritation in vitro
- Skin corrosion in vitro
- Skin irritation in vivo
- Chorioallantoic Membrane Vascular Assay (CAMVA) (replacement of the ocular irritation test)
- Sensitization (skin)



Studies with multiple application: subacute, subchronic and chronic studies

Reproduction and teratogenicity studies

Mutagenicity studies

Carcinogenicity

Special studies

- Immune toxicity, neurotoxicity etc.

Toxicokinetics and metabolism

Assessing Acute Toxicity of Chemicals – *in vivo*

- ❑ Goal: assess the risk of a single high dose of a substance
- ❑ May occur for example in an accident at work, after food poisoning....
- ❑ Endpoint = LD₅₀ or LC₅₀ (lethal dose, lethal concentration, killing 50% of the animals)
- ❑ Classically LD₅₀ with many animals/concentrations to assess 50% mortality exactly
- ❑ LD₅₀ determination is now prohibited and replaced with tests using less animals

Exposition	Animals	Treatment	Remarks
Oral	one species (rat/mouse) 3-10 animals (female)	Single gavage ≠ []	3 OECD guidelines Observation: 2 weeks Then killed and examined
Dermal	5 animals of each gender (rat, guinea pigs, rabbits)	during 24 hours (acute) ≠ []	On shaved back (at least 10% body surface)
Inhalation	rodents* 5 animals of each sex	during 4 hours ≠ []	Gas, vapor, aerosol (dust or mist: particle diameter 1-4µm)

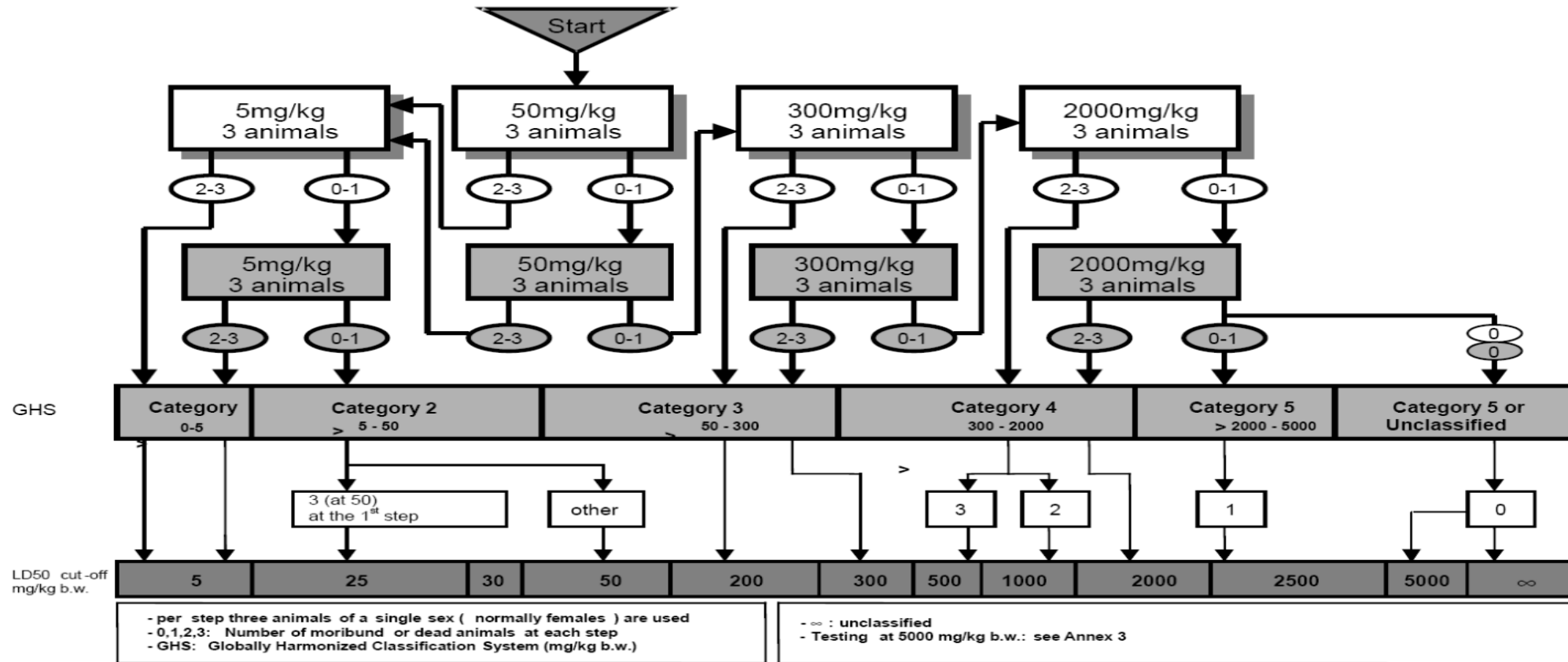
* = rat, mouse, guinea pig, hamster. Rabbits are not rodents!

Determination of Acute Oral Toxicity According to OECD Guideline 423

OECD/OCDE

423

ANNEX 2b: TEST PROCEDURE WITH A STARTING DOSE OF 50 MG/KG BODY WEIGHT



Goal:

- To investigate the effect of a “normal” exposure to a substance
- Mimics the effect of a sporadic (e.g. sunscreen), daily (medicine, aftershave) or whole life time (environmental or food contaminant (e.g. in bread)) contact with a substance

Duration of the study:

- Depends on the duration of exposure to a specific substance:
 - E.g. medicine: normal therapy period
 - E.g. environmental contaminant: whole lifetime
- Subacute, ≤ 28 days; subchronic, < 1 year; chronic >1 year
 - E.g. a carcinogenic study goes over the whole lifetime of the animal – for rat 24 months, for mice 18-24 months

Dose:

- Specific range-finding experiments can be carried out in a preliminary test
- One dose where no symptoms should occur (NOAEL)
- Second dose where only weak toxic relevant symptoms should occur
- Third dose should show clear toxic relevant effects (maximal tolerable dose = MTD, with weight reduction of ca. 10%)
- Control group and satellite groups (for example to test recovery) are added

Application method of the substance:

- According to the way of uptake in humans
 - E.g. food contaminants applied in the feed of the test animals
 - E.g. dust particles (workplace) applied via inhalation

Animals:

- ❑ Mostly rats: most endpoints are determined with this species
- ❑ Mouse or other rodents only if rat is not suitable (physiological reasons for example)
- ❑ Guidelines may require a second non-rodent species: e.g. canine (=dog) for pesticides or primates for (human) drugs

What is the relevant animal species?

Due to the high specificity of biopharmaceuticals, activity and toxicity can often only be tested in (non-human) primates

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Subacute, Subchronic and Chronic Studies (3)

Number and gender of animals:

- ❑ Depends on the guidelines. For rodents:
 - subacute and subchronic studies 5 to 10 animals in each group and for each gender
 - chronic studies 20 animals/group and/gender
 - cancerogenic studies 50 animals/group and/gender
 - For non-rodents (canine, monkey) less animals are used (3-4/group and/gender)

Observations:

- ❑ Are assessed regularly (daily, ¼ year....) depending on the parameter
 - clinical pathology/symptomatology:
 - E.g. wounds, lethargy, drinking and feeding behavior, bodyweight
 - ophtamology: eye check
 - haemathology: red and white blood cells.....
 - clinical chemistry: organ specific parameter of liver and kidney
 - analyses of the urine
 - necropsy, weight of animals/organs (organ toxicity), histopathology (e.g. tumors)

Evaluation of the experiment (endpoints):

- ❑ Repeated dose studies suitable for the derivation of dose response curves
- ❑ Is effect reversible?
- ❑ Determination of the Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level (LOAEL)
- ❑ Determination of the No Observed Adverse Effect Level (NOAEL)



