

Peanut Blog

An ounce of information



Some peanut butter may cause cancer, liver damage: Hong Kong consumer council

According to the council, aflatoxins, which were found in some samples, can cause both acute and chronic poisoning in animals and humans.

HONG KONG – Three in five of 20 popular brands of peanut butter sampled by the city’s consumer watchdog were found to have cancer-causing toxins, while almost all samples tested are considered “high-fat”, the Consumer Council revealed on Wednesday, saying it may lead to liver damage.

The 20 peanut butter products sourced by the city’s consumer watchdog are “relatively popular in the market”, with prices ranging from HK\$3.9 to HK\$21.3 (50 cents to \$2.7) per 100 grams. Out of these samples, two brands, Yowe and Fuyuan, were found to contain higher levels of aflatoxin B1, a liver-damaging aflatoxin, than the European Union limit, said Kyus Siu King-wai, chairman of the publicity and community relations committee of the council.

The Consumer Council has forwarded the information regarding these samples to the city’s Centre for Food Safety (CFS) for further action. However, according to the CFS, the aflatoxin levels present in the samples meet Hong Kong’s standards and pose no health risk as long as they are consumed in moderation.

According to the council, aflatoxins can cause both acute and chronic poisoning in animals and humans, potentially resulting in acute liver damage, cirrhosis, cancer and even death. Aflatoxins are not easily broken down during normal cooking processes, and aflatoxin B1 is classified as a human carcinogen.

In addition, the test results revealed that 95 percent of the samples were classified as “high-fat”, with total fat contents ranging from 37.9 to 52.8 g per 100 g. According to the CFS, any food item containing more than 20 g of total fat per 100 g of food is considered “high-fat”.

Excess consumption of high-fat food over a prolonged period of time will lead to obesity and increase the risk of cardiovascular disease. Consumers are advised to pay attention to the serving size and enjoy peanut butter in moderation.

The council also revealed that all of the 15 models of medium-sized hard-shell suitcases tested were found to have varying degrees of wear or damage in durability tests, and the levels of phthalates (chemicals used to make plastics more durable) in one model’s carry handle exceeded the European Union limit by 45 times, posing possible risks to the male reproductive health, the growth of children, and fetal development.

The council noted that although, under normal circumstances, users might not absorb large amounts of these chemical substances through skin contact with handles containing phthalates, the risk may increase if the user has eczema or open wounds on their hands. Moreover, if users touch their mouth or food after being in contact with the relevant plastic parts, they might ingest phthalates through the oral cavity.

As such, consumers are advised to promptly wash their hands with mild soap or hand wash after touching the handles of suitcases.

The council also announced results of tests and surveys on skin peeling pads, the hefty surcharges for some overseas wedding photography service packages, and complaints about air ticket bookings, which doubled to 1,537 complaints for the first 10 months of this year, compared with 727 complaints last year.

Source: <https://asianews.network/some-peanut-butter-may-cause-cancer-liver-damage-hong-kong-consumer-council/>