As Hamilton has pointed out so obviously, the chances are remote that a pregnant woman could receive an intake of EDTA equivalent to 2 to 3 percent of her diet. However, Hamilton has apparently missed the point of our report. We did not undertake the study in order to test the toxicological effects of EDTA. Indeed, as we mentioned, it was already known that EDTA would produce congenital malformations in pregnant rats. Rather, the purpose of our experiments was to elucidate the mechanism by which this disturbance of embryonic development occurred. Because of our previous work with zinc deficiency, we suspected that EDTA might act to produce a deficiency of this element in the embryo. It seems to us that this information is of scientific interest, even if not of direct practical application.

Certainly more experiments need to be carried out with respect to the effects of lower levels of EDTA, but Hamilton surely does not mean to imply that research should not be published unless it is directly translatable into practical terms.

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Committee on Chemotaxonomy

An ad hoc committee on chemotaxonomy sponsored jointly by the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) and the International Association for Plant Taxonomy (IAPT) has been formed to look into the organization of international collaboration in chemosystematics. The committee consists of W. F. Grant (IAPT), chairman; T. Swain (IUPAC), secretary; J. B. Harborne (IUPAC); A. Löve (IAPT); T. J. Mabry (IUPAC); and B. L. Turner (IAPT).

The committee solicits comments from interested persons in biological sciences, biochemistry, chemistry, and the pharmaceutical sciences. These comments may be sent to the undersigned.

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