

# Is Glyphosate Making Me Sick?

If you follow the news, you're probably aware of the controversy over whether glyphosate, the active ingredient in Roundup Weed & Grass Killer and many other herbicides, poses a significant threat to human health.

Nobody argues the fact that humans are exposed to this chemical. It is the most commonly used herbicide on the market and is commonly and frequently used to control weeds in crops and forests, on lawns and gardens, in industrial areas, and even in lakes and ponds to control unwanted aquatic plants. As a result, it is often dispersed in the air, where it may be inhaled, and it finds its way to our drinking water and food products, where it is ingested. Also, there is general agreement that glyphosate causes acute toxicity at certain concentrations.



Disagreements arise, however, over whether and to what degree exposure to low concentrations of glyphosate, such as those common in the environment, contribute to a variety of chronic

conditions, including cancer. For example, while California added glyphosate to its list of potential cancer-causing agents in 2017, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced just this month that it will not approve warning labels for products containing glyphosate because that would “constitute a false and misleading statement.”

Adding to the debate are a series of commentaries published by Anthony Samsel and Stephanie Seneff highlighting the potential pathways by which glyphosate *could* contribute to a wide range of chronic conditions followed by a rebuttal titled ““Facts and Fallacies in the Debate on Glyphosate Toxicity” by Robin Mesnage and Michael N. Antoniou, in which they conclude that the commentaries are a “misrepresentation of glyphosate’s toxicity [that] misleads the public, the scientific community, and regulators.”

In their critique of the commentaries, Mesnage and Antoniou are careful to point out that “the effects of glyphosate are well characterized at concentrations and doses causing acute toxicity, with outcomes increasing over time and in a dose-dependent manner.” In other words, they readily agree that glyphosate is a toxin at certain concentrations in the human body, but they disagree with the link that Samsel and Seneff propose between “exposures to environmental levels of glyphosate and the development of a wide range of chronic diseases,” citing as their reason for disagreement that the authors’ conclusions were not firmly evidence-based.

What gets lost in this often-contentious debate is the consumer, who is left to wonder “How concerned should I be?” and “What do I need to do to protect myself and my family?”

### ***How Concerned Should You Be?***

Until we have more conclusive evidence showing the safety or

potential negative impact of glyphosate on human health, we really do not know what degree of concern is appropriate. Currently, all we know is that 1) glyphosate is generally considered safe at levels of exposure typical in the environments in which we live, and 2) elevated levels of glyphosate in urine has been linked to a certain type of nonalcoholic fatty liver disease.

However, by focusing exclusively on glyphosate or any other toxic substance, we risk missing the big picture – the fact that we live and work in toxic environments every day. Even in the debate over the safety of glyphosate, we overlook the many other potentially toxic substances in the herbicides and pesticides we use. For example, one study found that a specific inert ingredient in Roundup called polyethoxylated tallowamine (POEA) was “more deadly to human embryonic, placental and umbilical cord cells than the herbicide itself,” but that news hasn’t make the headlines.

So, to answer the question of how concerned you should be, you should be as concerned about glyphosate as you are about all of the other potentially harmful substances that you and your family are exposed to on a daily basis, including toxic molds, antibiotics and growth hormones in meats and dairy products, air pollution, genetically modified foods, infectious agents from certain insect bites (such as ticks), chemicals in household cleaners and hygiene products, mercury in fish, and the list goes on.

Focus your concern not so much on individual toxins (unless you’re exposed to a very high concentration of a known toxin) and focus more on minimizing your overall toxic load – the buildup of any and all toxins in your system.

***What You Can Do to Protect Yourself and Your Family***

At BioDesign Wellness Center, we often work with people who are experiencing multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS) and Mast Cell Activation Syndrome (MCAS). Anyone suffering from either of these conditions should steer clear of a variety of environmental toxins including glyphosate and obtain regular medically supervised detoxing, since many toxins cannot be fully avoided. We help patients by taking a two-pronged approach to minimizing their toxic load:

1. Reduce exposure to potentially harmful substances.
2. Improve the body's ability to detox itself.

With that two-pronged approach in mind, here are some ways to reduce your exposure to potentially harmful substances:

- Eat fresh, organic, non-processed foods.
- Drink filtered water and avoid processed beverages that are high in sugar, high-fructose corn syrup, or artificial sweeteners and beverages with other additives.
- Have your home and workplace professionally inspected for mold and obtain mold remediation, if necessary.
- Do what you can to improve air quality in your home and workplace; for example, having the ducts professionally cleaned and having special air filters or air purifiers installed.
- Opt for natural household cleaners, laundry products, pesticides and herbicides, cosmetics, and personal hygiene products, and use them in moderation.
- If you have clothes dry-cleaned, let them air out outside for a few hours before bringing them into your home.
- Buy low VOC (volatile organic compound) furniture and house furnishings when you have a choice.

Even if you follow all of these precautions, you will still be exposed to some level of environmental toxins. The good news is that the human body is equipped to eliminate a wide variety of

toxins. Unfortunately for people with MCS or MCAS, their body's natural detox mechanism isn't enough. For these patients and others who suffer from toxic overload, we recommend a medically supervised detox, along with supplements to address any identified micronutrient deficiencies.

However, the first step is always a thorough physical examination, an examination of your health history, and targeted testing to determine what is really going on.

If you are not feeling 100 percent or are having trouble meeting your health and fitness objectives despite your best efforts, or if you are not getting the desired results from a conventional approach to healthcare, we encourage you to call us to schedule an initial consultation. Our patient care coordinator, Lori, would be happy to get you started. Call (813) 445-7770 to schedule a consultation or get answers to questions you may have about our approach to healthcare.

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