

Agenda Item 1: Welcome and introduction

1. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Agenda Item 2: Apologies for absence

2. Apologies for absence had been received from Professor Peter Aggett, Dr Anita Thomas, Professor David Richardson, Dr Mitchell (Northern Ireland), Dr Skinner (Scottish Office), Dr Tromans (Welsh Assembly), Dr Wadge (DH/JFSSG) and Mr Wenlock (DH).

Agenda Item 3: Minutes from previous meeting

3. The minutes were agreed by the Group without amendment.

Agenda Item 4: Matters arising

4.1 Current usage of vitamin and mineral supplements in the UK **EVM 00/05**

4. At the meeting held on 2 February 2000, the Group requested details on the range of dosages of nutrients available in single nutrient supplements, multi-vitamin preparations and other composite products and the market share of such products. A paper (EVM/00/05) was presented by Dr Derek Shrimpton which the members discussed. The members thanked Dr Shrimpton for his helpful paper. The following minor amendments were suggested:

- inclusion of information on the adult male (19-50 years) Reference Nutrient Intake (RNI) and Recommended Daily Allowances (RDA) (where available) before the paper is made available to the public;
- inclusion of separate information on levels of nutrients in supplements specifically targeted at children;
- inclusion of information on the levels of nutrients added to supplements to allow for losses during the shelf life of products.

Dr Shrimpton also agreed to review some of the information on upper levels in the light of data from other sources. Members were keen that the data should be made publicly available, although they recognised that some of it might be considered commercial-in-confidence. Dr Shrimpton undertook to check with the contributors that the data could be made available to the public.

4.2 Chemical contaminants in dietary supplements **EVM/00/10**

5. Dr Patrick Miller from the Food Contaminants Division in the Joint Food Safety and Standards Group (JFSSG) presented an overview of the occurrence of chemical contaminants in dietary supplements (EVM/00/10). Two examples were taken from recent JFSSG research and surveillance reports which covered metals and other elements in dietary supplements and licensed medicinal products (Food Surveillance Information

12. The Group agreed that the two issues for consideration were testicular effects, and heart failure with increased intakes of cobalt.

Agenda Item 7: Review of Molybdenum EVM/00/09

13. The Group was generally content with this review and risk assessment (EVM/00/09). They agreed that there are relatively few human data on the oral toxicity of molybdenum. The Group asked if the paper by Kovalsky could be translated and re-examined in detail. There were more animal data but these were largely from poor quality studies. The Group noted that most toxicity data was for hexavalent molybdenum.

**Agenda Item 8: Review of Nickel (EVM/99/24)
(Annex 4 Revised)**

14. It was noted that the risk assessment had been revised in light of advice provided by an expert dermatologist. The Group was generally content with this revised risk assessment (EVM/99/24). It was agreed that nickel sensitive subjects were a vulnerable group, though they might not be aware that they were sensitive to nickel.

15. The Group agreed that for a safe upper level to be set for the vulnerable groups, it would be helpful for an expert in this field to write a detailed commentary based on the available evidence and their experience of nickel as a contaminant.

[Dr Miller, Dr Reddy and Mr Scriven left the meeting]

**Agenda Item 9: Review of Copper (Revised EVM/99/19 Addendum)
(EVM/99/19 Annex 6 Revised)**

16. The Group was generally content with this revised review and risk assessment (EVM/99/19). The Group agreed that there are good animal data available which suggests a link between high copper intakes and gastrointestinal effects, kidney and liver damage. The Group reviewed papers which discussed the adverse effects of copper exposure. There were some human data available, but the estimates of dietary copper intake could be an underestimate because of the method used to assess the diet. In studies where the copper content of drinking water was not specifically measured, copper intake was likely to be an overestimate because of the default values used.

17. Members discussed whether copper in water would have the same effects as copper in a food matrix and asked for information on copper levels in water from hard and soft water areas.

[Ms Saunders left the meeting during this agenda item]

Agenda Item 10: Any Other Business

10.1 Review of Chloride

18. Since there were few data on chloride alone, the Group agreed that this nutrient would be considered in the review and risk assessment of sodium.

10.2 Parliamentary question on the work of the Expert Group

19. The Group were given for information details of recent Parliamentary Questions on food supplements asked by Mr Ronnie Fearn MP (Southport) including one on the work of the Expert Group (Hansard 27/3/2000, Col No:35W and 27/3/2000 Col No: 36W).

Agenda Item 11: Date of next meeting

20. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 24 May at 10.30am in room 137B Skipton House.

