

rBGH CAMPAIGN IN MASSACHUSETTS

WOMEN'S COMMUNITY CANCER PROJECT FACT SHEET (May 2007)

WHAT IS rBGH? rBGH is a genetically modified hormone that is injected into dairy cows to increase milk production 5-15%. Monsanto created this synthetic hormone, sold under the name Posilac, using the cow gene from Bovine Growth Hormone (a hormone naturally produced by the pituitary gland of cows) and DNA from a bacteria, Escherichia coli. It is estimated that about 35% of dairy cows in the US receive the drug.

HARM TO COWS AND TO THE QUALITY OF MILK The increased milk production comes at a high cost. The warning label given to farmers lists 20 adverse effects: 79% increase in mastitis (a contagious bacterial infection leading to painful inflammation of the udder); weight loss; aberrations of the reproductive system; alterations in the quality of milk. Mastitis leads to an increase of pus in the milk. Also the milk contains increased residues of the antibiotics used to treat the mastitis

HARM TO HUMANS

Antibiotics. Antibiotics in our milk and other dairy products can lead to antibiotic-resistant bacteria in our bodies making it harder to fight infection.

Increased cancer risk. rBGH increases milk production through the stimulation of another hormone, called insulin-like growth factor-1 (IGF-1). IGF-1 is a naturally occurring potent growth hormone and cell-death inhibitor that has been implicated in breast, colon, prostate, lung, and other cancers as well as abnormal cell growth. IGF-1 is chemically identical in humans and cows. This means that when we drink milk from rBGH cows we are adding the IGF-1 from that milk to our own IGF-1 levels.

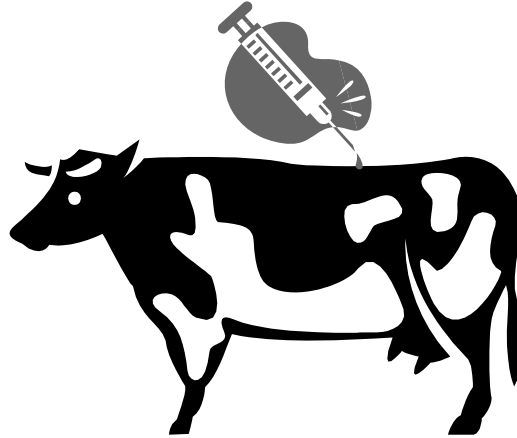
Labeling. Millions of people in the USA are unknowingly consuming rBGH dairy products. After pressure from Monsanto the FDA ruled that dairy produced from rBGH treated cows does not require a label. Monsanto has sued some of the companies that voluntarily labeled their milk rBGH-free.

Countries banning rBGH. The 25 nations of the European Union, as well as Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan have banned the used of rBGH. The United Nations food safety organization, Codex Alimentarium, has declined three times to declare the drug safe.

WHAT WE CAN DO: put pressure on schools, supermarkets, hospitals, coffee-shops, restaurants, etc, to use only rBGH-free dairy products. Buy organic products or products labeled "rBGH-free."

FOR MORE information: see WebPages and addresses on the other side of this sheet.

In truth, the story of what has happened with rBGH during the last 15 years speaks of the incredible power of the Monsanto Corporation and the dairy lobby to intimidate, silence its critics, and continue its relentless pursuit of profit while putting our health and lives at risk.



rBGH Web Resources

- [Food and Water Watch: Dairy](http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/food/dairy) (<http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/food/dairy>)
Information on this site includes a [rBGH Fact Sheet](#), a [list](#) of dairy companies nationwide that do not use rBGH, and the latest on a [campaign](#) to convince Starbucks to switch to rBGH-free milk.
- [Position Statement on rBGH](http://www.noharm.org/details.cfm?ID=1104&type=document) (.pdf)
(<http://www.noharm.org/details.cfm?ID=1104&type=document>)
The position statement of [Health Care Without Harm](#), an international organization working to make the health care sector safer for patients, workers, public health and the environment.
- [Campaign for Safe Food](http://www.oregonpsr.org/programs/campaignSafeFood.html) (<http://www.oregonpsr.org/programs/campaignSafeFood.html>)
Information on the Oregon chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility's campaign to boost the production of non-genetically altered foods.
- [rBGH & rBST Information](http://www.organicconsumers.org/rbghlink.cfm) (<http://www.organicconsumers.org/rbghlink.cfm>)
News and articles about the use of rBGH from the Organic Consumers Association.
- [Center for Food Safety](http://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/rbgh2.cfm) (<http://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/rbgh2.cfm>)
This site examines the issue of rBGH within a wider critique of genetic engineering. Includes a [list of experts](#) on genetic engineering and information on the history of rBGH and the FDA.
- [Environmental Research Foundation](http://www.rachel.org/bulletin/index.cfm?St=2) (<http://www.rachel.org/bulletin/index.cfm?St=2>)
The organization's newsletter, "Rachel's News," documents the research and controversy surrounding rBGH from 1994-2003. To read the articles, type "rBGH" in the search box on this page.

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