

# Acesulphame Potassium

Acesulphame Potassium (Ace-K) is a non-sugar sweetener that contains the mineral potassium. It was discovered in 1967 accidentally by a German chemist. It is 130-200 times sweeter than sucrose<sup>1</sup>.

## How is Ace-K made?

Ace-K was developed after the accidental discovery of a similar compound by chemists Karl Claus. After accidentally dipping his fingers into the chemicals with which he was working, Claus licked them to pick up a piece of paper<sup>1,2</sup>.

Ace-K is often blended with other sweeteners (usually sucralose or aspartame). These blends are thought to give a more sucrose-like taste<sup>1</sup>.

## Where is Ace-K used?

Ace-K is approved for use in a wide variety of foods and drinks<sup>1</sup>, including but not limited to:

- Fruit and vegetable juice products
- Water based flavoured drinks
- Electrolyte drinks; Brewed soft drinks
- Formulated beverages
- Flavoured milk
- Yoghurt and dairy based desserts; custard; ice cream
- Fruits and vegetables preserved in vinegar, oil, brine or alcohol
- Canned fruits and vegetables
- Confectionery, chewing gum
- Tabletop sweeteners

## How is Ace-K handled by the body?

Acesulfame K is not metabolised by the body and is excreted by the kidneys unchanged<sup>1</sup>.

## How do I know Ace-K is added to my food or drink?

Ingredients in packaged foods must be listed from greatest to smallest by ingoing weight including added water.

Ace-K must be labelled as follows: "Sweetener (950)" or "Sweetener (Acesulphame K)"

## Safety profile of Ace-K.

Food Standards Australia New Zealand ([FSANZ](#)) reviewed all the studies and has classified Ace-K as [Schedule 8](#) additive with permission for usage at GMP levels (Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code 2002).

In 2015, FSANZ conducted an assessment to increase the maximum permitted level of Ace-K in chewing gum<sup>3</sup>. FSANZ concluded that there was no public health and safety concern linked with the proposed increase in the permitted level of Ace-K in chewing gum.

Ace-K is also approved in more than 100 countries, including Japan, Switzerland, Norway, Canada and Australia<sup>1</sup>.

## IS Ace-K safe for every-body?

No population group has been excluded from using Ace-K. It is appropriate for any person wishing to reduce sugar or energy intake.

There are no warning labels or information statements required for products sweetened with Ace-K.

## Fast facts

### Safety

**Ace-K is safe for:**

**People with diabetes** and impaired glucose tolerance

### Pregnant women

Ace-K can be used pregnant by women and nursing mothers.

It is important for all pregnant women to consult with their doctors regarding nutritional needs during pregnancy.

### Children

Although foods made with low joule sweeteners are not usually recommended as part of a child's diet, the Ace-K in foods and drinks is not hazardous to a young person's health.

With obesity rates rising amongst Australian children and adolescents, Ace-K-sweetened beverages may help this group reduce their energy/kilojoule intake without compromising their overall diet.

### Sweetness relative to sugar

Ace-K has a sweetness of between 130 and 200 times that of sucrose<sup>2</sup>.

By having a very high sweetening power compared to sugar, non-sugar sweeteners are used in minute amounts.

### For more information

FSANZ [website](#)