

## A Rough Guide to

# IARC CARCINOGEN CLASSIFICATIONS

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) classifies substances to show whether they are suspected to cause cancer or not. It places substances into one of five categories depending on the strength of evidence for their carcinogenicity.

| GROUP   | WHAT DOES IT MEAN?   | WHAT DOES IT INCLUDE?   |
|---|--|---|
|    | <b>CARCINOGENIC TO HUMANS</b><br><br>Sufficient evidence in humans.<br>Causal relationship established.          |    <br><br>Smoking, exposure to solar radiation, alcoholic beverages and processed meats.                   |
|   | <b>PROBABLY CARCINOGENIC TO HUMANS</b><br><br>Limited evidence in humans.<br>Sufficient evidence in animals.     |    <br><br>Emissions from high temp. frying, steroids, exposures working in hairdressing, red meat. |
|  | <b>POSSIBLY CARCINOGENIC TO HUMANS</b><br><br>Limited evidence in humans.<br>Insufficient evidence in animals.   |    <br><br>Coffee, gasoline & gasoline engine exhaust, welding fumes, pickled vegetables.           |
|  | <b>CARCINOGENICITY NOT CLASSIFIABLE</b><br><br>Inadequate evidence in humans.<br>Inadequate evidence in animals. |    <br><br>Tea, static magnetic fields, fluorescent lighting, polyethene.                           |
|  | <b>PROBABLY NOT CARCINOGENIC</b><br><br>Evidence suggests no carcinogenicity in humans/animals                   | <b>1</b> ONLY 1 CHEMICAL EVER PLACED IN THIS GROUP, OF ALL SUBSTANCES ASSESSED<br><br>Caprolactam, which is used in the manufacture of synthetic fibres.  |

THE IARC'S INDEX ONLY TELLS US HOW STRONG THE EVIDENCE IS THAT SOMETHING CAUSES CANCER. SUBSTANCES IN THE SAME CATEGORY CAN DIFFER VASTLY IN HOW MUCH THEY INCREASE CANCER RISK.

