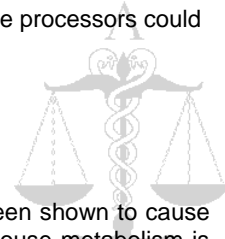


Call for Participants IST-2006 Workshop on Affective Computing

Environmentally distributed computing power (ambient intelligence) offers the potential to assist with location and state information and to control the environment. The speculation is that the intelligence could interpret information on behalf of the user and could tailor outputs and control responses to the mood of the user e.g. an irreversible step would be permitted only if the signs were that the user was acting rationally.

[Editor's note: this is just speculation at present. Increased decision latitude by remote processors could have liability implications].



31st Aug 2006 BfR news release

Indications that styrene has a tumorigenic effect in humans

Styrene is a liquid with a significant vapour pressure at room temperature. It has been shown to cause lung cancer in mice but not in rats or in epidemiological studies of humans. The mouse metabolism is efficient at degrading styrene in to styrene 7,8 oxide which is carcinogenic. The news release proclaims that the enzymes required to form styrene 7,8 oxide were once thought absent in human lung tissue but new research now shows them to be present. Their presence indicates the possibility that styrene is carcinogenic to humans.

[Editor's note: IARC last reviewed styrene in 2002. they observed that small amounts of styrene 7,8 oxide were found in exposed humans but that on balance their evaluation was: *There is limited evidence in humans for the carcinogenicity of styrene. There is limited evidence in experimental animals for the carcinogenicity of styrene.* 70% of inhaled styrene is absorbed into the body.]

TR Fennell et al. *Toxicological Sciences* (2006) Vol. 93(2) p 256-267

Kinetics of Elimination of Urinary Metabolites of Acrylamide in Humans

Acrylamide (AM) is generated within food during high temperature cooking. It is known to have adverse health effects e.g. neurotoxicity in man and, cancer in rats. This study establishes the rate of elimination of acrylamide and its metabolites.

Un metabolised AM was eliminated primarily in the 0–2 and 2–4 h urine samples, the maximal amounts of the metabolites were eliminated in the 8–16 h samples. Half life for AM administered orally was in the region of 3 hours; around 40% of AM passed through un-metabolised. The main metabolite of interest was glycidamide, thought to be carcinogenic. It was not clear whether or not this was the major primary metabolite.

YM Hung et al. *Am. J. Emergency Med.* (2006) Vol.24 p 714 – 716

Weight-reducing regimen associated with polymorphic ventricular tachycardia

This report following an emergency hospital admission. Weight reducing pills may not be subject to legal controls. In this case cardiac arrhythmia was induced by pills containing phentermine and chlorpheniramine. The 'medicine' was not licensed.

MC Michalski et al. *Trends in Food Science & Technology* 17 (2006) 423–437

Does homogenization affect the human health properties of cow's milk?

Homogenization is achieved through high pressure jetting of heated milk. Its nutritional properties are not the same as those of natural milk. Of note was the observation that children with milk allergies are more sensitive to homogenized milk.

A Elder et al. *Environ Health Persp.* (2006) Vol. 114 p 1172 - 1178

Translocation of Inhaled Ultrafine Manganese Oxide Particles to the Central Nervous System

The experiment confirmed that 30 nm manganese oxide particles passed from the nose directly to the brain (olfactory bulb) in exposed rats. There was an inflammation response where the particles accumulated.

