

by dizziness, headache, illness, and rapid heartbeat.⁵¹ The “carcinogen” safrole, responsible for the banning of sassafras, also occurs in nutmeg. Reviewing the work on safrole, Buchanan concluded that it is the most thoroughly investigated methylenedioxybenzene derivative. The oral LD_{50} for safrole in rats is 1950 mg/kg body weight, with major symptoms including ataxia, depression, and diarrhea, death occurring in 4 to 5 days. With rats, dietary safrole at levels of 0.25, 0.5, and 1% produced growth retardation, stomach and testicular atrophy, liver necrosis, biliary proliferation, and primary hepatomas. Reviewing research on myristicin, which occurs also in black pepper, carrot seed, celery seed, and parsley, Buchanan notes that the psychoactive and hallucinogenic properties of mace, nutmeg, and purified myristicin have been studied. It has been hypothesized that myristicin and elemicin can be readily modified in the body to amphetamines. The oral LD_{50} for nutmeg oil in rats, mice, and hamsters is 2600, 4620, and 6000 mg/kg, respectively. Buchanan et al.²⁰⁷ found no significant evidence of mutagenicity of myristicin.