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PCB Studies Find No Link to Cancer

A scientific review of more than two dozen health studies dealing with human exposures to PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) fails to show a link between the chemical and human cancer.

The findings were presented at the national meeting of the American Chemical Society by Dr. William R. Gaffey, manager of epidemiology at Monsanto Company.

Dr. Gaffey, who conducted the review of the independent epidemiologic studies, said that while they have shown that exposure to PCBs can cause temporary skin problems, there are no clinically observable long-term health effects including the occurrence of cancer.

"The one fact on which all occupational studies of health effects agree is that there has been no clinical illness associated with PCB exposure other than dermatitis (skin disorder)," Dr. Gaffey said. "Studies of non-occupationally exposed populations have found neither dermatitis nor other clinical evidence of exposure-related effects."