

**COMMITTEE ON CARCINOGENICITY OF CHEMICALS IN FOOD,
CONSUMER PRODUCTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

BETEL QUID, PAN MASALA AND ARECA NUT CHEWING

1. This topic was deferred from the previous meeting on 9 November 1993. The paper CC/93/29 was circulated for that meeting, if Members have not retained that paper please contact the Secretariat for a further copy.
2. Since the preparation of CC/93/29 the attached paper [Thomas S, Wilson A (1993) A quantitative evaluation of the aetiological role of betel quid in oral carcinogenesis. *Oral Oncol, Eur J Cancer* 29B (4): 265-271] has been published. This is a review of the published epidemiology on betel quid and oral cancer.
3. Only three studies in the review clearly distinguish between all possible combinations of betel quid and tobacco, one shows an independent increased risk of oral cancer for betel quid alone. The other studies showed an increased risk when stratified by site, with an increased risk for buccal, lip and gingival cancers and the third study showed multiplicative increase in risk for betel chewers without tobacco, who smoke.
4. These studies support the conclusion that there may be a risk of oral cancer associated with chewing betel quid without tobacco.

Secretariat
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