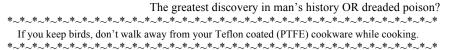
## **TEFLON**



Several times of the past few years I have read terrifying stories of people I know loosing their entire in house flock of birds because they were cooking and walked away from their chore later to find that their birds were dying suddenly and without explanation. Even though it has been widely thought that Teflon (PTFE) was the cause there has been very little research on the subject and nowhere could I locate a "gathering" of the information.

Here are some facts, opinions and warnings on the subject in a manner that I hope won't be to "scientific" to understand yet "scientific" enough for you to believe the warnings and remember that YOU have to take responsibility and be aware of the dangers and act accordingly. If you have birds in your home hopefully you will avoid dangers.

Overheated Teflon can produce a condition called Polymer Fume Fever.(humans)

- Symptoms: flu like illness with chest tightness and mild cough;
- Signs: leucocytosis; normal chest x-ray;
- Onset after exposure: 4-8 hours;
- Heavy exposure to: pyrolysis products of polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE,trade names Fluon, Teflon, Halon);
- Resolution: within 48 hours;

PTFE is the name of the product we are discussing. It is used in the manufacture of Teflon, silverstone, T-fal and other "non-stick" pots and pans. It seems as though, under normal conditions, these products are perfectly safe. It is when a pan or pot coated with these materials are left on the stove for a period of time where they had heated over 400 degrees C. and left to dry that the life threatening problem occurs. When this happens particles are released into the air and become deadly to birds and in some cases possibly humans and other household pets.

There is a known and demonstrated life threatening risk to your birds when you are using Teflon coated pans in a dry and overheated state. If you use cooking utensils coated with this material you RISK loosing your birds. YOU even RISK becoming sick if you burn your pans.

Here are some conclusions that I have drawn from my research:

Teflon itself is not dangerous, but its fumes are. It seems that pet birds can die from exposure to Teflon fumes. Heating pans empty to over 400 degrees C, releases the Teflon particles into the air and can cause a type of poisoning called Polymer Fume Fever. In fact this type of poisoning is very hard to diagnose and is hardly ever attributed to Teflon.

Don't walk away from your PTFE coated (Teflon, Silverstone, T-Fal, and others) cookware while cooking. If you are cooking with coated cookware please devise a plan of reminding yourself when they are on the stove. Set a timer that goes off every 10 minutes or so to REMIND yourself that your Teflon pans are on the stove and gave some other FAITHFUL reminder that your cookware us on the stove and your household is AT RISK. When you are finished cooking REMOVE the cookware or utensils from the stove surface just in case you forget to turn the burner off. When the pot or pan dries out and reaches a temperature above normal cooking temps Teflon particles become airborne and can cause poisoning to not only your birds but to YOU and your family as well.

As some have experienced this tragedy personally, once the particles are released in the air and you figure out what's happening, "IT"S TOO LATE"!!!! The fact is that Teflon (PTFE) gas been acclaimed as "one of the most useful materials known to man", by the scientific and commercial communities. Guess What?? They aren't about to do ANY negative PR on a product like that in our lifetime. It's going to be up to you to protect your birds and your family. Do something now, change your cooking habits now.

Another thing to remember is if you have nicked your non-stick surfaces you may be MORE apt to release particles even at lower temperatures.