

## **Agency publishes study into the oral toxicity of cockle extracts**

A study has looked at the effects of cockle extracts that are given orally to mice. The study showed that shellfish extract, which gives atypical results in tests used to detect shellfish toxins, also rapidly produces adverse, but reversible, behavioural effects when given orally to mice. However, there were no signs of any specific damage to the animals internal organs. In contrast, cockle extract that did not give atypical results in the shellfish toxin test had no effect when given orally to the animals.

Analysis of the cockle extracts used in the study indicated that the effects observed could not be directly attributed to residual solvents that were used to prepare the extracts nor to a number of groups of known shellfish toxins.

The study shows that, in mice, the unknown agent that causes the atypical results in shellfish toxin tests remains active when it enters the body from the gastrointestinal system although it is less potent. The results of this study have been used to inform further studies to examine the nature of the atypical results in shellfish toxin tests.

A full report of the study (Toxicology study on cockle extracts. Project code-T05026) can be obtained from the Food Standards Agency Library ([library&info@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:library&info@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)).