



Commentary

Chemistry in the Question of Human Survival

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Introduction

When comparing the human species with other mammals, differences are observed in the forms and performance of biological “equipment”. It is well-known that the “son of man” is one of the mammals that for the longest time depends on its fellow creatures to acquire the minimum conditions for survival. It takes, for example, about a year to develop the ability to walk alone, whereas in the case of felines, this time is a few days.

However, in the fight for survival, the human being could count on an intellectual “equipment” that determined differences in relation to other animals. Water, food, clothing, shelter and energy were and are minimum requirements for individual and group biological survival, under the conditions imposed by the environment.

In the last two hundred years, the enormous expansion of chemical and physical knowledge has given materials an irremediable social and economic value. Associated with medicine and poison, well-being and doping, energy that heats and feeds, pollution, contamination and the purity of air, food, environments, fuel production, energy that heats and feeds, chemistry marked the historical evolution of the world and men.

The role of chemistry in health preservation, in applications in hygiene, cleaning, water treatment, environment preservation, food production and preservation, among other examples, as well as in medicine, in solutions to ensure longer life and quality of life for people.

Another point to be highlighted is the role of chemistry in environmental preservation, its importance in the treatment and preservation of water and soil, in the control of air quality, among others.

The first signs of familiarity with chemical processes in Brazil occurred with indigenous peoples. They extracted the dye from the plant’s annatto.

Chemistry is present in fundamental phenomena for the functioning of the human body, such as breathing and digestion. Furthermore, it is essential to generate technological innovation and economic development.