

CONTROVERSIAL INGREDIENTS

Quick, portable foods are now the norm in modern society. Whether it's a toaster pastry, tube of yogurt, can of cola, or individually-wrapped slice of cheese, chances are the product is heavily processed and contains additives and chemicals to preserve its shelf life.



Did you know that these convenient foods – which commonly come with unpronounceable ingredients – may come at a dangerous price? Various food additives and chemicals have shown side effects which range from nausea and headaches to more serious conditions like cancer, Alzheimer's, and multiple sclerosis.¹ Be sure to read ingredient labels carefully, and consume more whole foods!

Below is a list of the 12 most pervasive and detrimental additives and substances commonly found in processed foods.

ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS

Artificial sweeteners are a combination of chemicals that exist to make our foods sweeter without the calories of sugar. Artificial sweeteners have been exposed in the media for a long list of side effects like headaches, nausea, anxiety, depression, dementia, skin rashes, and more.²

REFINED SUGAR

People in the U.S. consume 130-160 pounds of sugar per year.³ In other words, we're consuming half a cup of sugar a day and most of us aren't even aware of it. High consumption of sugar and the corresponding elevated insulin levels can cause weight gain, bloating, fatigue, arthritis, migraines, lowered immune function, obesity, cavities, and cardiovascular disease. It can also disrupt absorption of nutrients, cause osteoporosis, depression, PMS symptoms, and stress.⁴

MONOSODIUM GLUTAMATE (MSG)

MSG is a common food additive used to enhance flavor in a variety of foods. Canned vegetables, frozen entrées, fast foods, and soups are just a few products that contain MSG. Many people have experienced a variety of side effects which range from headaches, itchy skin, and dizziness to respiratory, digestive, circulatory, and coronary issues.⁵

ARTIFICIAL COLORS

The blues, reds, yellows, and greens you commonly see in yogurts, cereals, and juices don't come from natural sources. In fact, food coloring is usually a synthetic chemical produced by scientists to color foods and increase a product's visual appeal. Many colorings are derived from coal tar and can contain up to 10 parts per million of lead and arsenic, but still be recognized as safe by the FDA.⁶ Artificial colors can cause allergic reactions and increase hyperactivity in children with ADD.⁷

BUTYLATED HYDROXYANISOLE (BHA) AND BUTYLATED HYDROXYTOLUENE (BHT)

BHA and BHT are two food additives commonly used to prevent oils from going rancid. Studies have shown that BHA has caused stomach-focused carcinogens in trials involving mice, hamsters, and rats. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has deemed BHA "reasonably anticipated to be a human carcinogen." BHT is slightly less harmful than BHA, but should still be replaced with safer alternatives.⁸

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SODIUM NITRATE AND NITRITE

Sodium nitrate and nitrite are preservatives that are added to processed meat products to enhance red color and flavor. These compounds transform into cancer-causing agents called nitrosamines in the stomach. Noticeable side effects include headaches, nausea, vomiting, and dizziness.⁹

OLESTRA (BRAND NAME OLEAN)

Olestra is a synthetic fat created by Procter & Gamble that can't be absorbed by the digestive tract. Side effects include diarrhea, abdominal cramps, bloating, nausea, and vomiting. Olestra inhibits the absorption of some vitamins and minerals.¹⁰

BROMINATED VEGETABLE OIL (BVO)

Brominated vegetable oil is used to keep flavor oils in soft drinks in suspension. It's stored in body fat accumulates over time. This additive can lead to reproductive issues and birth defects. It's been banned in 100 countries. This additive is less-commonly used in modern food applications.¹¹

CAFFEINE

Caffeine is an addictive stimulant found in soft drinks, gum, diet pills, and pain relievers; it naturally occurs in coffee, cocoa, and tea. Caffeine causes calcium to be excreted from the bones, which can lead to osteoporosis and infertility.¹²

PARTIALLY HYDROGENATED OILS

Partially hydrogenated oils are made by reacting different varieties of oil with hydrogen. When this occurs, the level of polyunsaturated oils (good fat) is reduced and trans fats are created. These oils are added to products to enhance appearance and increase shelf life. They're associated with heart disease, breast and colon cancer, atherosclerosis, and elevated cholesterol.¹³

PESTICIDES

Every year more than two billion pounds of pesticides are added to our food supply. That's about 10 pounds per person per year. Many of the pesticides used throughout the world are carcinogenic. Pesticide consumption has been linked to birth defects, nerve damage, cancer, and other long-term effects.¹⁴

GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS (GMOS)

GMOs are plants or animals that have had their DNA modified. In the U.S., the majority of corn, soybean, cotton, and canola crops are now genetically modified. GMOs haven't been proven safe and some studies show GMOs may decrease immunity to diseases in plants as well as humans. They may also cause resistance to antibiotics and could have a negative impact on genetic function. Plants that are genetically modified to be resistant to disease, pesticides, and insecticides could diminish the need to use these strong chemicals. Conversely, they may build up a resistance and therefore require even larger amounts of chemicals than before.¹⁵

1. *Food Additive Side Effects* <http://geti.in/1hML84v>

2. *Negative Effects of Artificial Sweeteners*
<http://geti.in/TGIPET>

3. *Cut Back, Way Back, on Sugar, Says Heart Group*
<http://geti.in/115Ns0T>

4. *The Truth About Sugar* <http://geti.in/UrLYcd>

5. *Monosodium Glutamate (MSG): Is it Harmful?*
<http://geti.in/1uTwFWk>

6. *The Dangers of Artificial Food Colors*
<http://geti.in/115OkSY>

7. *Food Dye and ADHD* <http://geti.in/Swt9mh>

8. *Chemical Cuisine* <http://geti.in/115kByh>

9. *Ibid*

10. *Ibid*

11. *Ibid*

12. *The Effects of Caffeine on Osteoporosis* <http://geti.in/1llvgVi>

13. *Why is Hydrogenated Oil Bad for You?* <http://geti.in/SwtCVF>

14. *Health Problems Pesticides May Pose* <http://geti.in/1n4h2GZ>

15. *GMO Facts* <http://geti.in/1mEnm6u>