



12 FOOD ADDITIVES TO AVOID

Posted in [Diet & Nutrition](#) on **June 7th, 2008** by Lisa Musick

I remember the trips that I used to take to the grocery store when I was younger. I would go up and down the aisles, filling my cart up with colorful, pretty boxes and bags of processed foods that had been constant companions since I was a little girl. I never read a label or had even one thought or concern about the chemical additives that those so called “foods” had lurking in them. Ignorance truly was bliss.

It was a shortly lived bliss though, because I started getting really sick, in my early 20s, from eating a diet that was full of chemicals and low in nutrients. Educating myself about our food supply was a real eye opener and my health began to slowly improve with each new thing that I learned about food additives and other toxins to avoid.

It might not be pleasant learning all of this and I know, from experience, that it can be bothersome reading labels. But, you owe it to yourself and to your health to put in a little extra time and effort and to become informed. It just might save your life.



1. Sodium Nitrate/ Sodium Nitrite

- **What is it?** Nitrates/Nitrites preserve, flavor and maintain a red color in many processed meat products.
- **You can find them in:** Processed meat products-Bacon, sausage, ham, hot dogs, lunch meat, pepperoni, smoked fish, corn beef, canned meat. It's also found in some cheese.
- **Why you should avoid them:** Nitrites can form potent carcinogenic nitrosamines in the body. Nitrosamines are among the most powerful carcinogens known and even small amounts can lead to cancer. Studies

confirm that nitrates and nitrites can cause prostate, breast and stomach cancers in humans.

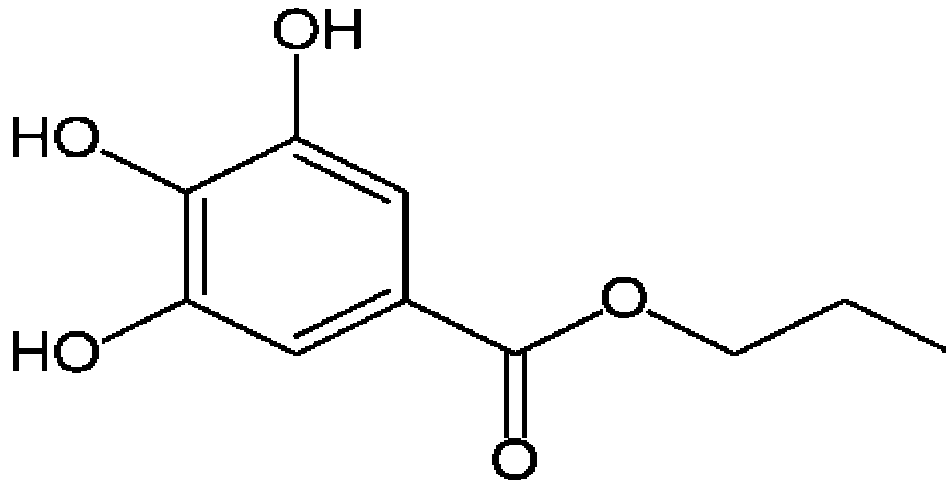
- Nitrates are associated with increased miscarriages, fetal deaths and birth defects in laboratory animals.
- Both US and Canadian regulatory agencies have lowered the permissible levels of nitrates/nitrites for use in processed foods.
- **Alternatives:** Health food stores offer a variety of nitrite/nitrate free meats.



2. BHA and BHT

(Butylated hydroxyanisole and butylated hydroxytoluene)

- **What is it?** BHA and BHT preserve many common processed foods
- **You can find them in:** cereal, chewing gum, potato chips, and vegetable oils.
- **Why you should avoid them:** Repeated studies show that BHA and BHT increase the risk of cancer and accumulate in body tissue, causing liver enlargement. They also slow down the rate of DNA synthesis and cell development.



3. Propyl Gallate

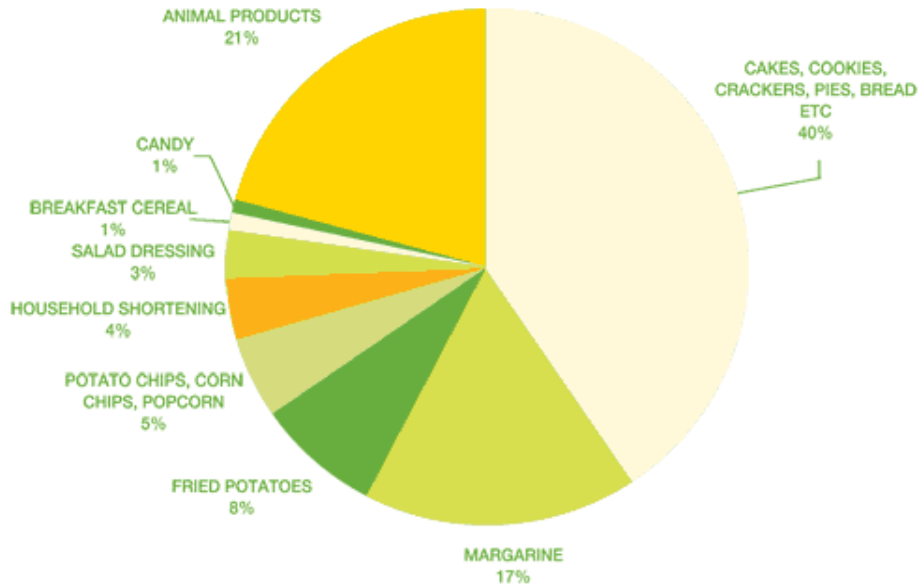
- **You can find it in:** some processed meat products, chicken soup stock and gum.
- **Why you should avoid it:** Propyl Gallate is a suspected carcinogen. It is also known to cause kidney, liver and gastrointestinal problems.



4. MSG (Monosodium Glutamate)

- **What is it?** Monosodium glutamate enhances flavors
- **You can find it in:** most canned soups, salad dressings, chips, crackers and frozen foods. It is also found in most spice and flavoring blends.

- MSG can be legally concealed on food labels behind harmless-sounding names like “natural flavoring”, “spices”, “seasonings” etc...
- **Why you should avoid it:** MSG can cause severe reactions in some people- headaches, nausea etc... Animal studies link it to damaging nerve cells in the brains of mice.
- mice.



5. Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil

- **What is it?** Hydrogenated vegetable oil sometimes goes by the name “partially hydrogenated vegetable oil.” It is more commonly known as a trans fat.
- **You can find it in:** Processed chips, microwave popcorn, crackers, cookies, pastries, pies, cakes, most fast foods, butter, margarine, lard, coconut oil, cottonseed oil & palm kernel oil etc...
- **Why you should avoid it:** Trans fats raise levels of “bad” LDL cholesterol and lower levels of “good” HDL cholesterol, which increases your chances of developing heart disease, having a heart attack, stroke or kidney failure.
- **Alternative:** Monounsaturated fats like Cold Pressed Extra Virgin Olive Oil, help to lower bad LDL cholesterol and raises good HDL cholesterol.
- cholesterol.



6. Aspartame:

- **What is it?** Aspartame is sold by the brand names Nutrasweet and Equal. It's found in 6,000 products worldwide.
- **You can find it in:** Diet foods- diet soft drinks & drink mixes, low calorie desserts, gelatins, puddings, frozen desserts, yogurt, some childrens vitamins etc...
- **Why you should avoid it:** Aspartame is responsible for 75 percent of the complaints that the FDA receives. The FDA has compiled a list of 92 Aspartame poisoning symptoms, from over 10,000 consumers. These complaints include- headaches, memory loss, seizures, vision loss, coma, and cancer.
- Aspartame was once listed as a "Biochemical Warfare Agent" by the Pentagon.
- For 8 years The US Food and Drug Administration did not approve Aspartame because of the evidence that was brought to light by numerous scientists, litigators and consumer groups, that aspartame damages the central nervous system and causes cancer in animals.
- **Alternatives:** Stevia and Xylitol are low calorie, natural sweeteners

Nutrition Facts	
Serv. size 1 stick (2.7g)	
Servings: 40 Calories 5	
Amount per serving	%DV*
Total Fat 0g	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Total Carb. 2g	1%
Sugar Alcohols 2g	
Protein 0g	

Not a significant source of other nutrients.
*Percent Daily Values (DV) are based on a 2000 calorie diet.

Made in U.S.A. Wm. Wrigley Jr. Company, Chicago, IL 60611 ©2002. Made of: sorbitol, gum base, glycerol, mannitol, natural and artificial flavors, maltitol, aspartame, acesulfame K, color added, BHT (to maintain freshness), blue 1 lake. Phenylketonurics: contains phenylalanine.



7. Acesulfame-K...(Sunette, Sweet-n-Safe, Sweet One)

- **What is it?** This is a relatively new artificial sweetener, approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in 1998.
- **You can find it in:** Diet soft drinks, baked goods, chewing gum, and gelatin desserts.
- **Why you should avoid it:** Acesulfame-K often is on many top 12 lists of additives to avoid because further study is needed in order to decide whether or not it is harmful to humans.
- Some studies showed this additive causes cancer in rats.
- **Alternatives:** Stevia and Xylitol are low calorie, all natural, safe sweeteners.



8. Food Colorings: Blue 1, 2; Red 3; Green 3; Yellow 6

- **Blue 1 and 2:** used in beverages, candy, baked goods and some pet food. It has been linked to cancer in mice.

- **Red 3:** used to dye cherries, fruit cocktail, candy and baked goods. Causes thyroid tumors in rats.
- **Green 3:** used to color candy and beverages. Has been linked to bladder cancer.
- **Yellow 6:** used to color beverages, sausage, gelatin, baked goods, and candy. Causes tumors of the adrenal gland and kidneys.



9. Olestra (brand name is Olean)

- **What is it?** Olestra is a synthetic fat that prevents fat from getting absorbed by your digestive system. It also prevents valuable fat-soluble vitamins (A,D,E & K) and carotenoids from being absorbed by the body.
- **You can find it in:** some brands of potato chips
- **Why you should avoid it:** More than 15,000 consumers have filed complaints saying that Olestra has caused health problems- gas, diarrhea and abdominal cramps so severe that they had to go to the emergency room.



10. Potassium Bromate

- **What is it?** Potassium bromate is a bleaching agent in white flour.
- **You can find it in:** breads, rolls and pizza dough
- **Why you should avoid it:** It is known to cause cancer in animals and humans. It is still legal for it to be used in the United States and Japan. The state of California has it listed as, “chemicals known to the state to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity” and requires a cancer warning on products that have Potassium Bromate as an ingredient.
- **Alternative:** Look for flour and bakery products marked “UNBROMATED”



11. White Sugar/ High Fructose Corn Syrup

- **Why you should avoid it:** Too much white sugar/high fructose corn syrup in the diet puts on the pounds, causes depression, rots teeth and messes

with blood sugar levels, which can lead to diabetes. It also leaches valuable vitamins and minerals out of the body.

- **Alternatives:** Maple Syrup (not the kind with High Fructose Corn Syrup, dye & synthetic “maple flavoring”), Brown Rice Syrup, Sorghum Molasses, Barley Malt Syrup and Date Sugar are all nutritious sweeteners that won’t put you on a blood sugar rollercoaster ride.



12. Sodium Chloride

- **What is it?** Sodium chloride is more commonly known as table salt. It enhances flavor and acts as a preservative. Processed foods have extremely high levels of sodium, so read those labels carefully.
- **Why you should avoid it:** Refined, table salt is 99.9% sodium chloride. During the refining process, naturally occurring minerals and trace elements are stripped away, then it’s blasted with high heat, bleached and chemicals like aluminum and anti-caking agents are added to it.
- Too much processed table salt intake burdens the kidneys and adrenal glands, depletes calcium and interferes with the absorption of essential nutrients. It also causes high blood pressure, heart attack, stroke.
- “Low-sodium salt” is even more toxic than table salt. More chemicals are added to the mix, in order to remove the sodium and stimulate the synthetic taste of salt.
- **Alternatives:** Flavor your food with herbs, a squeeze of lemon or lime, unrefined sea salt, Spike (an all natural salt substitute that has 37 herbs and spices) or Herbamare (a blend of sea salt and 14 herbs).

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