

# Food Additives to Avoid

The food industry has become a huge, booming business. Companies are out to make food cheaper, faster, and tastier. They want us to consume more and more of it. The focus has shifted away from food that is nourishing to our body to larger quantities of food that just satiates our appetite. In an effort to deliver this, the food industry has started using questionable chemicals that make food more shelf-stable, look more appealing, and taste better. The FDA has approved these chemicals, but long-term effects have not been studied. In addition, the bioaccumulation and combination of these chemicals in the body has also not been studied. Foods and products that contain these chemicals should be avoided.

INGREDIENT	FOUND IN	HEALTH HAZARDS
Arsenic	Poultry, some wines	EPA classifies inorganic arsenic as a "human carcinogen"
Aspartame	Sodas, gum, "diet" or "sugar free" products	Possible carcinogen (leukemia, lymphoma), weight gain and increased hunger, decreased insulin sensitivity, and neurotoxic effects
Azodicarbonamide	Breads, frozen dinners, boxed pasta mixes, and packaged baked goods	Linked to asthma
BHA and BHT	Cereal, nut mixes, gum, butter, meat, dehydrated potatoes, and beer	May be a human carcinogen (a cancer-causing agent) and an endocrine disruptor that can lower testosterone and the thyroid hormone thyroxin (T4)
Brominated vegetable oil (aka BVO)	Sports drinks and citrus-flavored sodas	Competes with iodine for receptor sites in the body, which can lead to hypothyroidism, autoimmune disease, and cancer. The main ingredient, <b>bromine</b> , is a poisonous, corrosive chemical, linked to major organ system damage, birth defects, growth problems, schizophrenia, and hearing loss
Coloring agents: blue #1, blue #2, yellow #5, yellow #6, red #3, red #40	Cake, candy, cosmetics, macaroni and cheese, OTC medicines, sport drinks, soda, yogurt, pickles, and cheese	Most artificial colors are made from coal tar, which is a carcinogen. Some are linked to hyperactivity and behavioral effects in children
Mercury (methylmercury)	Fish, shellfish (see chart below for types of fish highest in mercury)	CNS issues: cognitive thinking, memory, attention, memory, language, fine motor and visual spatial skills. In addition, impairment of peripheral vision, disturbances in sensations, lack of coordination of movements and muscle weakness

Monosodium Glutamate (MSG)	Flavor enhancer added to fast food, Chinese food, canned soups, canned vegetable, dips, crackers, processed meats	Excitotoxin (damages nerve cells), headaches, fatigue, depression, rapid heart rate
Olestra (aka Olean)	Fat-free potato chips	Depletion of fat-soluble vitamins and carotenoids. Side effects include oily anal leakage
Potassium bromate (aka brominated flour)	Rolls, wraps, flatbread, bread crumbs, and bagel chips	Associated with kidney and nervous system disorders, gastrointestinal discomfort (See bromine above).
Sodium Benzoate	Preservative found in salad dressings, jams, condiments, fruit juices, dips, cheese, mouthwash, toothpaste, cough syrup, lotion, and other cosmetic products	May be a human carcinogen, a cancer-causing agent
Sodium Nitrate	Bacon, ham, hot dogs, lunch meats, smoked fish, corned beef	Preservative that has been linked to various types of cancer
Sucralose	Sodas, gum, "diet" or "sugar free" products	Reduction of healthy intestinal bacteria (by up to 50%), weight gain, increased pH, and neurotoxic effects
Synthetic hormones: rBGH and rBST	Milk and dairy products	Linked to breast, colon, and prostate cancers
Trans Fats (Partially hydrogenated oils and Hydrogenated Oils)	Fried fast food, baked goods, crackers, cereal, margarine, shortening	Shelf-stable fat that has been shown to cause heart disease by increasing LDL or "bad" cholesterol



Food as Medicine is an in-depth course that will address some fundamental questions behind how our diet impacts our health and well-being and how it contributes to the progression of chronic disease.

**Every Tuesday from 2:30 – 4:30 PM**

**Please call 316-682-3100 for more information**