

Food Ingredients to Avoid

WHE's Top 12

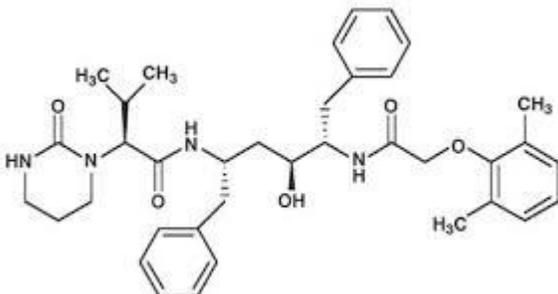


Processed Food Can Contain Harmful Ingredients

Butylated Hydroxyanisole? Potassium Bromate? Processed food can contain many ingredients. Many of these ingredients serve a particular purpose, such as sweetening, preserving, and coloring food to perfection. However, perfect food comes at a price, and not all of the ingredients that companies put into processed food are healthy for us to eat. There are hundreds of different ingredients, and not all are created equal. Some ingredients are not harmful to humans, others are okay in small quantities but dangerous in large amounts, and then there are others that we should try to avoid completely.

The following list highlights 12 processed food ingredients that consumers should avoid:

1. **Benzoate Preservatives (BHT, BHA, TBHQ)** are compounds that preserve fat and keep them from going rancid. Ingesting foods containing these ingredients may result in hyperactivity, angiodema, asthma, rhinitis, dermatitis, tumors and urticaria. They can also affect estrogen balance and levels and have been linked to serious thyroid damage.
2. **Brominated Vegetable Oil (BVO)** is a chemical that boosts flavor in many citric-based fruit and soft drinks. It can increase triglycerides and cholesterol, and damage liver, testicles, thyroid, heart and kidneys.
3. **High Fructose Corn Syrup (HFCS)** is a cheap alternative to cane and beet sugar. It is not metabolized by the liver and increases risk for type-2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, stroke and cancer.



4. **Monosodium Glutamate (MSG)** is a flavor enhancer used by restaurants and also by companies in processed foods. This ingredient may stimulate appetite and cause headaches, nausea, weakness, wheezing, edema, change in heart rate, burning sensations and difficulty in breathing
5. **Sodium Nitrate and Nitrite** preserves, colors, and flavors cured meats and fish. These ingredients can combine with chemicals in stomach to form nitrosamine, which is a carcinogen. They are also believed to cause colon cancer and metabolic syndrome, which can lead to diabetes.
6. **Olestra** is an indigestible fat substitute found in some potato chips. This ingredient may inhibit the absorption of some nutrients and is linked to gastrointestinal disease, diarrhea, gas, cramps, bleeding and incontinence.
7. **rBGH or rBST** are synthetic versions of bovine growth hormones that can be found in nonorganic dairy products. These increased growth hormones in humans and/or cancer.

8. **Potassium Bromate** is an oxidizing agent that chemically ages flour much faster than open air. This ingredient bleaches dough, enhances its elasticity, and makes a bread product that is soft, fluffy and unnaturally white. Potassium Bromate may cause thyroid and kidney cancer.

9. **Hydrogenated or Partially Hydrogenated Oil** is a cheap, processed vegetable oil. Consumption of these ingredients have been linked with diabetes, coronary disease, and obesity. Hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oil contains high levels of trans fats, which raise bad cholesterol and lower good cholesterol, contributing to risk of heart disease.

10. **Azodicarbonamide** is a chemical used in foamed plastics and can also be used to bleach flour. Prolonged contact to this chemical may cause asthma and skin sensitization.

11. **Maltodextrin** is used as a thickener or filler in processed foods, pharmaceuticals, and artificial sweeteners. This ingredient interferes with the absorption of fat-soluble vitamins and causes a depletion of carotenoid.

12. Artificial Colors, Flavors, and Sweeteners

- **Artificial food colors** are chemical compounds derived from coal-tar that could potentially cause hyperactivity, anxiety, behavior disorders, migraines, and cancer. Blue 1 and 2, green 3, red 3, and yellow 6 have been linked to thyroid, adrenal, bladder, kidney, and brain cancers.
- **Artificial flavors** are linked to allergic reactions, dermatitis, eczema, hyperactivity and asthma. They can potentially affect enzymes, RNA and thyroid.
- **Artificial sweeteners** have been linked to headaches, cancer, dizziness, and hallucinations. They may also negatively impact metabolism.



Some warning signs of harmful ingredients that consumers can look for while purchasing food are:

- Ingredients that are difficult to pronounce
- Ingredients that are unrecognizable
- Ingredients that cannot be grown on a farm (and are probably made in a lab)

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Women for a Healthy Environment

412-404-2872

5877 Commerce St. | Pittsburgh, PA 15217

www.WomenForAHealthvEnvironment