

# **How to Read Food Labels and Avoid Toxic Ingredients**

Grocery shopping has become hazardous to our health. We are told that whatever is sold from a grocery store shelf has been approved as safe, and the health-isle food is healthy. The truth is that there are actually many harmful additives in processed food and very little nutrition. It's difficult for the layman to know this when the chemicals are disguised or not labeled. Shopping with an untrained, uneducated eye is becoming detrimental to our health.

In the not too distant past, foods without pesticides and herbicides were the norm. Our soil was rich with nutrients and the ingredients we used for recipes were not enriched or processed. It was easier for families to eat more wholesome and natural foods baked from scratch. Nowadays, the majority of our food supply is manufactured in a laboratory from substances that were not intended for the body. Even cooking from scratch has become a health concern because the individual ingredients going into the freshly cooked food are either genetically modified or loaded with pesticides and herbicides. Without a trained eye and an understanding of how to read labels, even home cooked meals can be hazardous to your health.

## **Processed Food, Comes In a Package With Ingredients Listed**

If you are sick, do not trust anyone else with your health, especially not a corporation. That means you prepare your own food. Processed foods are stripped of many of the natural nutrients, and when fortified, it's done with synthetic vitamins and minerals that are not bioavailable. Food products are often bleached, pasteurized, deodorized, and have chemical

ingredients added to them that are not put on the ingredients label. Often times, artificial preservatives are used in order for the product to taste fresh when it's purchased a few years later. There are preservatives that do not have to be listed.

But everyone eats processed foods sometimes, so how do we make the best choices? The first dead giveaway that a product is laden with food additives and chemicals is the long list of hard to pronounce ingredients that don't sound like food. Unfortunately, the food additives lurking in most packaged foods are dangerous to your health. Studies have shown that many of these toxic additives can make you fat, and are a catalyst for the onset of debilitating diseases such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, hormonal imbalances, and more.

**Related: *Foods That Feed Candida***

## **Enriched and Fortified = Synthetic Nutrients**

You can be certain that a product will contain synthetic nutrients if the packaging is labeled with the term "enriched" or "fortified" in the description. This ambiguous term describes most of the refined conventional grain products such as pasta and spaghetti, macaroni, white rice, and white breads. Baked goods will also usually contain this indication on the label. Lately, even the preferred organic versions of these grains also contain enriched ingredients, so be absolutely certain to check the labels and stand clear of "enriched" products!

Be aware that during the processing, all of the much needed natural nutrients are unfortunately stripped out of the grain to make it appear white. Then, synthetic B nutrients known as Niacin, reduced iron, thiamine mononitrate and riboflavin are added to the ingredients in order to make the food "appear"

healthy. Synthetic B nutrients are chemically derived using formaldehyde and petroleum and as you may have guessed, they are actually very unhealthy! In the long run, it is easy to avoid synthetic nutrients if you want to by purchasing organic whole grains and organic pasta without the “enriched” ingredients. In fact, Basmati and Jasmine rice are naturally white grains that can be found next to the conventional brands on the shelves of your local supermarket. Mix it up a little bit and try other healthier grains such as couscous, nutritious quinoa, organic polenta (corn meal—to avoid GMO), amaranth, brown rice, millet and more.

## **Genetically Modified Organisms, GMOs**

The four primary genetically modified cash crops in the USA and abroad are soy, corn, canola, and sugar beets. Derivatives of these foods can be found in over 70 percent of the products in your local grocery store, Whole Foods and Trader Joe’s included. The main reason the plants are genetically modified is so they can handle higher amounts of herbicide. Bacterial genes are inserted that allow them to survive doses of herbicide that would otherwise kill them under normal circumstances. Luckily for us, the current regulation ensures by definition that Certified Organic food cannot be GMO, therefore, it should be fairly easy to buy organic soy milk, tofu, tempeh, cornmeal, polenta, and canola oil if you visit the local health food store. The challenge comes with the packaged food. Most packaged foods contain fillers like soybean oil, soy protein, and high fructose corn syrup. Those packaged foods produced by healthy brands may have all organic ingredients but many do not.

The surest way to protect yourself from eating these foods is by making recipes from scratch from whole foods without fillers and preservatives.

**Related: *Understanding and Detoxifying Genetically Modified Foods***

## **High Fructose Corn Syrup**

High fructose corn syrup, a.k.a. HFCS is a sugar derived from corn. The corn from which it is derived is almost always genetically modified. Currently, it is unfortunate for the consumer that genetically engineered ingredients are not labeled in the U.S. Just knowing that corn is typically genetically modified will help you choose organic versions of corn products.

High fructose corn syrup has been known to cause gastrointestinal distress and elevated triglycerides. It is also associated with blood sugar problems, depression, fatigue, B-vitamin deficiency, hyperactivity, heart disease, diabetes, tooth decay, and periodontal disease. Large amounts of HFCS has caused tumors in mice and may cause a similar result in humans if consumed frequently.

**Related: *Is Agave Nectar Healthy?***

## **Sneaky HFCS Synonyms**

- Maize syrup
- Glucose syrup
- Glucose syrup
- Fructose syrup
- Tapioca syrup
- Dahlia syrup
- Fruit fructose
- Crystalline fructose
- Dahlia syrup

# **MSG – Monosodium Glutamate**

MSG is monosodium glutamate, a flavor enhancer added to most processed food to make it taste good. This substance crosses the blood-brain barrier and quite literally excites your brain cells to death. In infants and children, the blood-brain barrier is not fully developed, sadly making MSG even more harmful to young ones.

The harmful component of MSG is the glutamate. Glutamic acid is an essential amino acid found in protein and required for the human body to be healthy. It is the L-glutamic acid that is the part of the protein that your body needs. When glutamic acid is manufactured, it contains both L-glutamic acid and D-glutamic acid. D-glutamic acid occurs as a result of the manufacturing process only. It is not a part of the protein and your body does not have a need for it. MSG is a neurotoxin, making it highly toxic to your nervous system. There is a loophole in MSG regulation that allows food manufacturers to include some MSG in your food without labeling it. In order for food companies to list MSG as an ingredient, the glutamic acid content in the food must be 79% or greater. If there is 78% or less of glutamic acid in the substance, the food companies are not required to include MSG in the labels. They are also not required to list the chemicals that are used to derive certain ingredients on the label either. Therefore there is loads of MSG in foods that the untrained and uneducated shopper are not aware of. MSG can be hidden in many ingredients that the average consumer is not aware of. Ingredients that contain MSG but are not labeled MSG are known as clean label ingredients and used to deceive the consumer.

**“Clean Label Ingredients” You**

# Should Avoid

The “Clean label Ingredients” is a marketing phrase to replace “all natural.” There are many MSG “clean label” ingredients identified by Truth in Labelling.org that you should be aware of. The list includes, but is not limited to the following substances:

- Glutamate
- Glutamic acid
- Monosodium glutamate
- Magnesium glutamate
- Natrium glutamate
- Gelatin
- Calcium caseinate
- Sodium caseinate
- Textured protein
- Hydrolyzed protein (anything hydrolyzed)
- Yeast nutrient, yeast extract
- Yeast food
- Autolyzed yeast
- Vetsin
- Ajinomoto

# Ingredients That Contain MSG or Create MSG During Processing

According to Truth in Labelling, there are also quite a few ingredients that will often contain MSG or create MSG during the processing:

- Carrageenan
- Maltodextrin
- Malt extract, Malt flavoring
- Barley malt
- Citric acid

- Soy protein concentrate, soy protein isolate, soy protein
- Whey protein concentrate, Whey protein isolate, whey protein
- Seasonings
- Protease, Protease enzymes
- Pectin
- Natural Flavor, flavorings

**Related:** *MSG's Many Side Effects and Aliases*

## **Some Ingredients Work with MSG**

You should also be aware that some ingredients work along with MSG and their use typically suggests that the product has MSG in it. Truth in Labeling notes that these ingredients are not likely to be used as food additives if there were no MSG present in the product.

- Disodium 5-Guanylate
- Disodium 5-Inosinate
- Disodium 5-Ribonucleotides

## **Hydrogenated oils**

Fully hydrogenated oils may not contain trans-fat, but research shows that it may be worse than trans fat in that it lowers the good cholesterol more than trans fats and raises blood sugar levels. Hydrogenated oils are associated with heart disease, breast and colon cancer, atherosclerosis and high cholesterol.

Partially hydrogenated fats and oils contain trans fats and are also associated with heart disease, breast and colon cancer, atherosclerosis and high cholesterol. Even if a package claims that No Trans Fats are used, you must read the label to see if it contains partially hydrogenated oils because the government allows companies say "No Trans Fats" if

it contains less than 0.5 g of trans fat per serving.

**Related: *Everything You Should Know About Fat***

## **Cancer Causing Additives**

Nitrites and nitrates are used in processed meats and form powerful cancer-causing agents in your body. The FDA knows they're dangerous but allows these ingredients in food because they prevent botulism. Nitrite-free meats can be found in your health food store. But be sure to read the ingredients on the label and ensure that the food does not contain sodium nitrite, potassium nitrite or anything that has nitrite or nitrate in the name.

According to trusted sources, sodium benzoate is the most widely used preservative in the world. It is typically used in foods, beverages, foods, liquid supplements, toothpaste, oral care products and pharmaceuticals. Sodium benzoate has caused birth defects in lab animals. It can cause skin rashes, gastrointestinal issues, hyperactivity, neurological problems and more. When Sodium benzoate and potassium benzoate are used in a product that contains ascorbic acid or vitamin C, it can form benzene. Benzene is known to cause cancer and cancer kills.

## **Aspartame**

Aspartame is one of the most dangerous food additives on the market today. Drinks, candy, and chewing gum are potential sources of hidden MSG and/or aspartame and neotame. Aspartic acid, found in neotame and aspartame ordinarily causes MSG type reactions in MSG sensitive people. Aspartame is found in some medications, including children's medications. Neotame is relatively new and we have not yet seen it used widely in the United States. Aspartame is commonly known as Equal and Nutrasweet. In Europe, it's called E951. The FDA stopped

monitoring adverse toxicity reactions from aspartame in 1995, however before that 92 different adverse reactions from aspartame were reported. Recent studies have shown that aspartame causes cancer in amounts approved for human consumption and it is genetically modified. It's best to stay away from any products that lists aspartame as an ingredient. Beware of aspartame in chewing gum, breath mints, cereal, frozen desserts, ice cream, gelatin desserts, puddings, cookies, yogurt, frozen yogurt, fruit spreads, sugar-free maple syrup, hard candy, chewable vitamins, laxatives, supplements, medications, prescription drugs, orthodontic elastics, pediatric antibiotics and more! Read the ingredients on the labels very carefully and make sure you do not use any products that contain aspartame.

## **Sugar Negatively Affects the Absorption of Vitamins and Nutrients**

Contrary to popular belief, not all sugar is created equally and most of us are aware of the dangers of consuming too much sugar, whether it be processed sugar from GMO beets or natural sugars. Some of these dangers include well-known ailments like obesity, insulin spikes, high blood sugar, diabetes and yes, cancer. Too much glucose, a form of sugar can lead to deficiencies in the nutrients that reach your cells. What actually happens is the sugar reduces the absorption of the vitamins and minerals you are getting from the food you consume. There are a few specific vitamins that are affected by the surplus of sugar in your system. Because vitamin C and glucose use the same transporters to the blood, too much sugar intake will slow down the absorption of this nutrient in your body. This can be detrimental as vitamin C is responsible for cell tissue regeneration and a well-functioning immune system. Magnesium is a nutrient that becomes depleted by an over

intake of sugar. This is dangerous as magnesium is utilized by all metabolic functions of the body and too much sugar increases magnesium excretion by the kidneys.

I hope you are getting enough Vitamin D which is essential to protect the body from infections, autoimmunity, dementia inflammation and other diseases like cancer. Eating too much sugar in your diet will definitely increase vitamin D deficiency.

Calcium is another nutrient that the body needs. It's important for bone health among other things. Interestingly, vitamin D works with the calcium in absorption to the cells. In a roundabout way, too much sugar consumption inhibits the body's ability to take in this nutrient, because the less vitamin D in your system, the less your body is able to absorb calcium from your food.

**Related:** *Healthy Sugar Alternatives and More*

## **Be Mindful of the Ingredients in Your Food**

You can start living a healthier lifestyle today by being more mindful of the ingredients in your food. Unfortunately, there isn't much help from official sources because they are controlled by big corporations interested in raking in the cash – from government agencies to big agricultural and food companies, to research institutes and even congress. They lie and tell us that something is nutritious as long as it helps corporations make a fortune and keeps government officials in office. As a result, people are getting bad information about basic health information. Take control of your life and your diet today, you owe it to yourself!

### **Recommended Reading:**

- *What is Carrageenan?*

- *Kill Candida and Balance The Gut Quickly*
- *Detox Cheap and Easy Without Fasting – Recipes Included*
- *How to Cure Lyme Disease, and Virtually Any Other Bacterial Infection, Naturally*

## **Sources:**

- *Food Additives What's Safe to Buy and What's Not, Dr. Christine Hoza Farlow*
- *Health warning: How sugar depletes the human body of 5 essential nutrients – Natural Health 365*
- *Hidden Sources of MSG– Truth in Labeling*