



Nutrition Fact Sheet

MSG & Other Additives to Avoid

MSG/E621

Monosodium glutamate is a sodium salt of glutamic acid and is used as a flavour enhancer in hundreds of processed, frozen and restaurant foods. It is known to be an excitotoxin, acting as an excitatory neurotransmitter and causing nerve cells to discharge an electrical impulse. It can overexcite cells to the point of damage or even cell death. Studies have shown that amongst the side effects of regular MSG intake are: depression, eye damage, disorientation, fatigue, headaches and obesity.

It acts directly on the neurological pathways of the brain and can disengage the 'I'm full' reflex, with a consequent impact on weight gain. It is addictive and has harmful side effects. Amongst the foods it is found in are Chinese food, many snacks, crisps, biscuits, seasonings, many Campbell's soup products, many frozen meals and lunch meats.

It comes disguised under many different names, so the smart consumer has to read labels. Amongst the many other names used by the food industry for MSG are:

Glutamate Textured protein	Natural flavour
Monosodium glutamate	Yeast extract
Hydrolyzed protein	Calcium caseinate
Protein hydrolysate	Yeast food
Textured protein	Sodium caseinate
Hydrolyzed Vegetable Protein	Autolyzed yeast
Monopotassium glutamate	Gelatin Yeast nutrient

Also, watch out for it in products such as:

Malt extract flavours & flavourings, barley malt natural pork flavouring, bouillon natural beef flavouring, stock natural chicken flavouring, broth seasonings, maltodextrin soy sauce extract, whey protein and whey protein isolate and concentrate, soy protein and soy protein isolate and concentrate, anything protein fortified or enzyme modified.

As consumers become more savvy, food producers become ever more clever at coming up with different names, so if you don't know what something is on a label, look it up.

High Fructose Corn Syrup (HFCS)

This is a highly refined artificial sweetener – despite its producers claiming it is natural. It is found in almost all processed foods. It comes with many potential problems and many researchers firmly believe that it is a major culprit in the global obesity epidemic. One explanation as to how it makes us fat is that it is metabolised differently to ordinary sugar, which gives off satiety signals when a certain amount has been consumed. HFCS does not as it does not trigger the release of insulin and leptin, which help to suppress appetite, nor does it suppress the production of hormones that increase hunger. Result = weight gain!

And if that wasn't bad enough, significant levels of mercury have been found in HFCS samples, a result of the way it is processed.

HFCS can also be found under these names: glucose corn syrup, inulin, glucose-fructose syrup, iso-glucose, chicory and fruit fructose, corn syrup, maize syrup, glucose syrup, tapioca syrup, dahlia syrup, fruit fructose and even crystalline fructose.

Aspartame/E951

Best known under the brand names NutraSweet, Spoonful and Equal, this is found in almost all foods labelled 'diet' or 'sugar-free'. There is plenty of research on the internet to alert you to the problems with aspartame. There are 90 documented symptoms associated with aspartame including headaches, seizures, nausea, depression, tachycardia, vision problems, vision loss, memory loss, tinnitus, anxiety attacks and breathing difficulties. It is also associated with triggering or making worse some severe illnesses including lymphoma, MS, chronic fatigue, Parkinsons, Alzheimers and fibromyalgia.

Similar to MSG it is an excitotoxin, potentially causing neurological damage. Aspartame-containing products when heated above 30° C (86°F), in a foodstuff, or improperly stored such as a diet drink stood out in the sun, risk having the aspartame convert to wood alcohol, or methanol, a deadly poison.

Official sources, in the face of tons of research to the contrary, still maintain that aspartame is safe.

Food Dyes

Artificial colourings are found in a wide variety of foodstuffs and drinks and can act as anti-nutrients, leading to behavioural problems and even a reduction in IQ. Here are the worst:

E133 or Blue 1 and Blue 2 – may cause chromosomal damage. Banned in some countries

E124 or Red 3 or Red 40 – now banned but still to be found in many products with long shelf life.

E110 Yellow and E102 Tartrazine – may cause chromosomal damage, causes adrenal and kidney tumours in laboratory animals and banned in many countries.

Sodium Sulphite (E221)

According to official sources at least 1 in 100 people are sensitive to sulfites in foods potentially triggering asthma, headaches and rashes. They are found mainly in wine and dried fruits.

Potassium Bromate

Used to increase volume in some flour and bread products, this is known to cause cancer in animals and can create problems for human in even small amounts. Most usually found in breads.

Sulphur Dioxide E220

Destroys vitamin B1 and Vitamin E. Not recommended for consumption by children and can cause bronchial problems, hypotension, flushing tingling sensations and even anaphylactic shock. Found in many beers and soft drinks, dried fruit and fruit juices, cordials, wines vinegar and potato products.

These are just a small sample of the many additives that are found in food and drink that can potentially be damaging to health.