Top 10 Chemicals Food Labels Won’t Tell You About

Unless you grow all of your own food, you have no way of knowing exactly what you’re putting into your body. Even then, up to 90 percent of all ground water contains at least trace amounts of pesticides and herbicides due to run-off. A simple can of green beans or a bottle of water can contain toxins that aren’t even listed on the label.

The bottom line: food labels are confusing and often misleading. For that matter, many of the chemicals in your food aren’t even LISTED on the label. Those are the ones that we’re going to discuss today.

1. **GMOs**

During the Green Revolution that occurred post-WWII, scientists started fiddling with genetically hybridizing different types of wheat and in order to increase yield and disease resistance. The movement was led by a guy named Norman Borlaug, who actually won the Nobel Peace Prize for “saving 1 billion lives.”

One of the initiatives that he led developed a new, high-yielding species of a semi-dwarf wheat that, when grown with certain pesticides and fertilizers, increased wheat yields exponentially. The goal of solving world hunger was met but many believe that it was at the cost of the nutritional value of wheat and the health of the general population.

{adinserter survivalmd}GMOs are also used in growing soybeans and cotton. Though the USDA declares that GMOs are safe, there are independent studies that show that they aren’t.

These studies have shown that foods that have GMOs may be linked to organ failure and sterility in later generations of

lab animals. GMO wheat may also explain why so many more people are developing issues with gluten, though the studies comparing gluten levels in GMO wheat compared to wheat grown 100 years ago are divided.

2. Artificial Sweeteners

Basically, aspartame, saccharine, sucralose and sorbitol are man-made chemicals used to add sweetness to food without adding calories. The FDA says they're safe even though they've been linked, depending on which one you look at, to central nervous system damage, cancer, metabolic changes, dizziness, headaches and hallucinations (which I personally think is a side effect of central nervous system damage, but that's just my opinion).

They also may cause over-eating because your brain thinks that it's getting sweets because your taste buds say so, but when no carbs show up, the craving continues. Also, people think that since it's no-calorie, they can eat with abandon. Products with artificial sweeteners often contain other undesirable chemicals as well.

3. Potassium Benzoate and Sodium Benzoate

These are often added to foods and carbonated beverages to prevent the growth of mold, give a product longer shelf life, and to prevent fats from going rancid. Benzene, the chemical additive in both, is a known carcinogen and has also been linked to thyroid damage, heart problems, asthma, skin problems, allergies, and can affect estrogen levels. But at least your food won't go bad. Hmph. You'll often see these listed as BHA, BHT, or TBHQ, if they're listed at all.

4. Artificial Flavorings and Colors

Yeah, candy corn looks pretty with its stripes and soda is more eye-catching with colors that match flavors. Cake mixes look great with those little sprinkles on top and cereal is

definitely more appealing to kids when it contains a rainbow of colors. However, the old saying, pretty is as pretty does applies here and let me tell you, artificial colors are pretty ugly in that context.

Artificial colors are made from coal-tar derivatives. Artificial flavors are made by using various chemicals that emulate the flavor. Both are linked to skin problems such as rashes, hyperactivity, headaches, allergic reactions, asthma and fatigue. Artificial flavors may also negatively affect beneficial enzymes, your thyroid and RNA, which, in a nutshell, protects your DNA strands. Often, if a food contains one, it contains the other. Not so pretty now, huh?

Some names to look for include Tartrazine (yellow 5), Blue 1, Green 3, Red 40, and yellow 6. Basically, if it's processed and lists artificial colors, you should probably avoid it.

5. Fake Fats and Oils

For decades, butter and lard have been blacklisted as being horrible for your heart and your health in general. To replace it, hydrogenated and partially hydrogenated oils, shortenings, margarine and olestra were created. Now, some of these may be listed as palm oil, soybean oil and other natural-sounding stuff, but the bottom line is that the hydrogenation process ruins any health benefits that the oil may have started with.

All of them contain high levels of trans fats, which aren't natural fats at all. The food industry created them as "healthier" alternatives to natural fats because butter was deemed bad for us. Trans fats contribute to heart disease by increasing "bad" cholesterol levels while decreasing "good" cholesterol levels. Plus, butter is delicious and contains heart-healthy omega-3's so there's really no need to use a substitute.

I'll probably get flamed for saying that, so let me add that ANY fat should be used in moderation. If the idea of butter

doesn’t appeal to you, try coconut oil or nut oils such as almond oil. They’re much healthier than the fake stuff or butter.

Oh, and just FYI, olestra is indigestible and can cause GI disease, gas, bloating, diarrhea, bleeding and incontinence but hey, if you really want to eat the chips without absorbing the fat, go for it. Personally, I’d suggest making our own chips at home with a healthy oil or grabbing some broccoli instead.

10 Banned Foods That Every American Should Stop Eating

A Mercola Infographic

ATTENTION!

Many foods sold in the United States are already banned in other countries due to harmful additives, growth promotion, genetically engineered ingredients, or other dangerous practices.

What Are These Banned Foods and Their Health Risks?

1 FARM-RAISED SALMON

Raised on a wholly unnatural diet of grains (including genetically engineered varieties) and are given a concoction of toxic antibiotics, vitamins, drugs, and chemicals not safe for humans.

FARMED SALMON vs WILD-CAUGHT SALMON

While FARMED SALMON is much fattier than WILD SALMON, it contains 50 percent less healthful omega-3 fats and less protein.

FARM-RAISED SALMON have higher levels of harmful compounds such as PCBs, dioxins, toxaphene, and dieldrin, as well as mercury, than WILD-CAUGHT SALMON.

FARMED FISH do not have the pinkish-red color of WILD SALMON, so it has to be fed with synthetic astaxanthin made from petrochemicals.

FARMED SALMON are more likely to get infected with lethal fish viruses, including infectious salmon anemia virus (ISA), salmon alphavirosis, and piscine reovirus, than WILD SALMON.

RISKS:

90% of toxins from farmed salmon can cause a problem in your body, and can be passed on to your baby via breastfeeding or through your breast milk.

WHERE IT'S BANNED:

1975 Australia

2006 New Zealand

2006 Russia

2 GENETICALLY ENGINEERED PAPAYA

Most Hawaiian papaya is now genetically engineered to be resistant to ringspot virus, a threat that greatly devastated US crops in the 1990s.

In **2004**, Hawaii reported widespread contamination of papaya crops by GM varieties.

In **2008**, nearly 20,000 papaya seeds were found to be GMO, and 3,000 were found to be contaminated with GMOs.

RISKS:

Animals fed GE foods suffer a wide variety of health problems including stomach damage, multiple organ damage, reproductive problems, immune system damage, premature death, and near-complete sterility by the third generation of offspring.

WHERE IT'S BANNED:

The European Union

3 RACTOPAMINE-TAINTED MEAT

Also known as Paylean and Optaflexx, it is a beta-agonist drug for livestock (originally used to treat asthma) found to reduce the overall fat content of the meat.

In the US ractopamine is currently used as a muscle enhancer in:

45% of pigs

30% of raised-fed cattle

An unknown percentage of turkeys

Did You Know?

According to veterinarian Michael W. Fox, up to **25%** of ractopamine-fed pigs die in the road you buy from the supermarket.

Since 1998, **more than 1,700 people** have been injured — from vomiting pigs fed the drug.

In **February 2013**, Russia issued a long-term ban on US pork imports due to the presence of ractopamine.

RISKS:

Ractopamine is linked to reductions in reproductive function, increase of deaths in baby herds, and increased death and disability in — due/known to cause — cardiovascular problems, tremors, hyperactivity, nervousness/abnormalities, and behavioral changes.

WHERE IT'S BANNED:

160 countries as well as Europe

Russia

Mainland China

Taiwan

4 FLAME RETARDANT IN DRINKS

Brominated vegetable oil (BVO) originally patented by chemical companies as a flame retardant, is also found in citrus-flavored sodas and sport drinks from the US.

Approved for use in 1977 by the FDA, BVO has been shown to bioaccumulate in human tissue and breast milk. Animal studies have also found that it causes reproductive and behavioral problems in large doses.

Usually found in:

RISKS:

Bromine toxicity can manifest as skin rashes, acne, loss of appetite, fatigue, and in other symptoms.

Contains with iodine for tension store in the body, which can lead to iodine deficiency, cognitive decline, autoimmune disease, and cancer.

Linked to cardiac organ damage, thyroid problems, reproductive problems, and impaired learning.

WHERE IT'S BANNED:

Europe

Japan

5 PROCESSED FOODS WITH ARTIFICIAL FOOD COLORS AND DYES

More than 3,000 food additives — preservatives, flavorings, colors, and other synthetic ingredients — are added to US foods, including infant foods and foods targeted to young children.

In **2009**, the British government advised companies to stop using food dyes by the end of 2009. The EU also requires a warning on most foods containing dyes/coloring dyes.

Red 40, yellow 5, yellow 6, and blue 2 are the most popularly used dyes in the US.

Usually found in:

Mac and cheese

Cheddar flavored crackers

Jell-O, and many cereals for kids.

RISKS:

Research has linked this rainbow of additives to behavioral, cancer, birth defects, as well as altering the hyperactivity reactions in kids.

WHERE IT'S BANNED:

Norway

Austria

6 ARSENIC-LACED CHICKEN

Arsenic-based drugs are approved for use in animal feed in the US because they make animals grow quicker and make the meat appear pinker and fresher.

As of 2007, 70% of the **9 billion broiler chickens** produced annually in the US were still being fed Roxarsone, an arsenic-based feed drug.

In 2011, Pfizer announced it would voluntarily stop marketing Roxarsone, although there are still several others on the market.

RISKS:

Chronic arsenic exposure can cause anemia, keratosis, skin lesions, heart/vessel diseases, liver damage, diabetes, lung cancer, bladder cancer, and higher risk of miscarriage, stillbirth, low birth weight, and infant mortality.

WHERE IT'S BANNED:

The European Union

7 BREAD WITH POTASSIUM BROMATE

Brominated flour is "enriched" with potassium bromate. Commercial baking companies add it to make the dough more elastic and better able to stand up to bread hooks.

Usually found in:

RISKS:

Potassium bromate has been linked to kidney and nervous system damage, thyroid problems, gastrointestinal discomfort, and cancer.

WHERE IT'S BANNED:

Canada

China

The European Union

8 OLESTRA/OLEAN

Usually found in:

Chips

French fries

Olestra, aka Olean, created by Procter & Gamble, is a calorie- and cholesterol-free fat substitute used in fat-free snacks. It was approved by the FDA in 1996.

Time magazine named Olestra as one of the worst 50 inventions ever.

RISKS:

May be prone stool, leaks with fecal spotting/urgency.

Adverse intestinal reactions to the fake fat include diarrhea, cramps, leaky bowels, and stomach bellows.

Depletion of carotenoids and fat-soluble vitamins such as A, D, E, and K.

United Kingdom

Canada

9 PRESERVATIVES BHA AND BHT

Usually found in:

BHA (butylated hydroxyanisole) and BHT (butylated hydroxytoluene) are two preservatives.

BHA is known to cause cancer in rats, and may be a cancer-causing agent in humans as well.

RISKS:

BHA can trigger allergic reactions and hyperactivity, while BHT can cause organ system toxicity.

European Union

Japan

10 MILK AND DAIRY PRODUCTS LACED WITH rBGH

rBGH is a synthetic version of natural bovine somatotropin (BST), a hormone produced to cows' pituitary glands, to increase milk production.

Monsanto developed the recombinant version from genetically engineered E. coli bacteria and markets it under the brand name Posilac.

Approximately 1 in 5 US dairy cows are repeatedly injected with growth hormones.

In 1993, the UK Safety Agency ruled unanimously not to endorse or set safety standards for rBGH milk, which has effectively resulted in an international ban on US milk.

rBGH-injected cows suffer at least 16 different adverse health conditions, paving the way for the creation of inferior, contaminated milk with pus and antibiotics.

Usually found in:

Milk and dairy products

RISKS:

rBGH exposure can cause colorectal, prostate, and breast cancer.

WHERE IT'S BANNED:

Australia

New Zealand

Israel

European Union

Canada

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6. Sodium Nitrate and Nitrite

These lovely chemicals are used to preserve the colors and flavors in cured fish and meats and to prevent botulism. While preventing botulism is definitely a good thing, how about just sticking with fresh, unprocessed meats? If you eat hotdogs, deli meat or cured fish, you're likely eating one of these two chemicals. The problem with them is that they may combine with natural chemicals in your stomach and digestive tract to form nitrosamine, a known carcinogen. No Bueno.

7. MSG

Ahh, at last. MSG, or monosodium glutamate, has come under fire in recent years because of the side effects. It's used as a flavor enhancer for many foods, including restaurant foods (the most well-known being Chinese restaurants), potato chips, salad dressings, canned soups and many processed foods.

MSG may cause an array of side effects including, most commonly, headaches and nausea. It may also cause swelling, weakness, breathing problems, burning sensations and changes in your heart rate.

8. Mercury

Mercury is a naturally occurring mineral but, just like arsenic, isn't good for you at any level. It can cause serious neurological problems, up to and including death.

Fish absorb mercury through their gills. Unfortunately, our waters are so polluted that the levels have increased to toxic levels in many of the larger fish. The ones higher up the food chain are most affected because tiny fish may breathe small amounts of mercury, small fish eat tiny fish, then medium fish eat them, and large fish eat all of them. They absorb the mercury from every level.

Such fish include swordfish, tuna, king mackerel, and shark.

Mercury is also found in levels in shellfish. Your body can process small amounts of mercury so you can avoid this concern by limiting your consumption of these type of wild-caught fish to once a week or less.

9. BHA, BHT and Propyl Gallate

BHA, or Butylated Hydroxyanisole, BHT, or Butylated Hydroxytoluene, and propyl gallate are three preservatives found in hundreds of foods and cosmetics. Some examples are mayonnaise, vegetable oil, dried meats, chicken soup, many cereals, potato chips, and chewing gum. Like other preservatives, it's used to prevent spoilage and food poisoning but it can disrupt your hormones and your endocrine system. This preservative is found largely in processed foods.

10. BPA

This one is really one that sneaks in on you because it isn't ever listed on the ingredients. That would be because it's not directly in the food. It's used in plastic bottles and containers and in canned foods to line the cans to keep acids from eating through the sides and to prevent microbial contamination. It's used in plastic to preserve the integrity of the compound.

BPA, or bisphenol-A, is banned in many countries but is still in use in the US, though the FDA is making moves to ban it. Still, if you have a stockpile, your cans are lined with it. Also, your water polycarbonate plastic bottles may contain BPA.

BPA has been linked to delayed brain development and behavioral problems in kids, developmental problems with fetuses, and cancer later in life.

The real danger comes when the bottle is heated or the can is dented. Then BPA can leach into your food or the water. The best way to avoid contamination is to buy products that are

BPA free – look for the recycle sign and if it has a 7 inside of it, the container may contain BPA.

Don't buy canned foods that are dented, don't leave your water bottles in a hot car or somewhere else that will cause it to get hot, and don't microwave your food in plastic containers.

Though there are many different chemicals in your food, these are some of the top ones to avoid. Buy whole foods and wash them well before you use them. That will help get rid of pesticides and other chemicals that they may have been exposed to.

Read your labels and if you don't understand the ingredients, skip it. Would you let a stranger blindfold you and stick random things in your mouth? Of course you wouldn't, but that's basically what you're doing if you're eating foods with ingredients that you don't recognize.

Just be smart and don't eat processed garbage. That will be ¾ of your battle already won. This list is just a jumping-off point. If you have anything to add, please do so in the comments section below.

CLICK HERE to find out more about an awesome way to earn your food independence!

This article has been written by ***Theresa Crouse*** *for* *Survivopedia*.