

## “Artificial” and “Preservative”: Words of the Sick

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Last month I covered the tough story of nutrition with regard to cancer. In that article I promised a more detailed account of the artificial colors and nutrients we add to our food and the preservatives used to keep food beyond its normal lifetime. Most of us have no idea what these products are or how they came in to being. The most important thing that I have learned is that the introduction of these products into our diet directly correlates with increases in degenerative diseases such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease, lupus-and the list goes on.

We'll start with one that has been in the news a lot: MSG (monosodium glutamate). This product is used to intensify meat and spice flavorings. It is commonly found in Chinese restaurant food, salad bars and buffets. Side effects include headache, chest pain, numbness, irritability, and depression and in severe cases, memory loss and brain damage. It has recently been removed from baby food and can also be listed on labels as HVP (hydrolyzed vegetable protein) or natural flavorings.

Aspartame (AKA: NutraSweet/Equal) will get my blood boiling. Although found in almost every food list as low calorie or low fat, this product should have never gotten past the FDA. It has three major ingredients: methanol, aspartic acid and phenylalanine. Methanol is a neurological poison that cannot be broken into a non-toxic product. Its side effects include headaches, blindness, and permanent brain damage. Aspartic Acid is similar to MSG and can over-stimulate neural cells, causing cell death (excitotoxin). In plain terms, it kills brain cells. Phenylalanine causes permanent brain damage. So, in short, this “safe” product contains three chemicals that kill neurological/brain cells. I wonder why Alzheimer's and Parkinson's are on such a sharp incline in our population? Personal caution to anyone who uses this product on a daily basis: Stopping the product “cold turkey” can cause extreme muscle cramping and unmanageable headaches.

Nitrites are commonly found in processed and cured meats giving bologna, bacon, hot dogs, ham and other luncheon meats that pretty pink color. Combining nitrites and stomach acid creates a powerful cancer-causing agent. Mix nitrites with aspartame and you have created a strong cancer-causing agent. Makes you think twice about Diet Coke and pepperoni pizza. In the 1970's, nitrites were removed from baby food and in 1977, Germany banned nitrites.

Olean/Olestra, 1996's answer to eating potato chips and crackers, are known as fake fats. This product is a combination of soybean oil and sucrose that was manipulated to be too big to be absorbed in the intestinal tract. It has been shown to create tumors in lab animals and side effects include intestinal cramping and loose stools.

Monoglycerides and Diglycerides are emulsifying and defoaming agents. They are used a lot in bakery products to maintain softness. They are also found in beverages, ice cream, shortening, margarine, chocolate (Oh no!!!), whipped topping and some cosmetic creams. These have been linked to reproductive problems. Infertility is also on a sharp incline.

BHA (butylated hydroxyanisole) and BHT (butylated hydroxytoluene) are preservatives in beverages, ice cream, baked goods, potato chips and breakfast cereals. Known to be toxic to the kidneys and responsible for many allergic reactions, they are prohibited in England.

Aluminum and Aluminum Sulfate are additives in food, antacid, and cosmetics, including sweet and dill pickles, antiseptics, detergents and deodorants. It is known to aggravate kidney and lung disorders and aluminum deposits are found in the brain and linked to Alzheimer's disease.

Hydrogenated and Partially Hydrogenated Oil are commonly found in margarine, Crisco-type products and cheap oils used in chips, crackers, cereal, peanut butter, snack cakes, bread and everything in between. Many companies are preparing to label their food with a warning if the foods contain these oils. These chemicals are directly linked to colon cancer and heart disease.

Finally, I recommend avoiding colorings and dyes. Many artificial dyes and colorants have been removed due to their cancer-causing properties.

Read your labels and look at what you are eating. We need to remember the old adage "you are what you eat" and try to decrease degenerative disease. Modern medicine and alternative medicines have no cure or poor treatments for degenerative diseases and we need to take responsibility for our own health and treat our bodies like the machines they are. Next month we discuss diabetes.