



EWG'S GUIDE TO FOOD ADDITIVES

Chemicals linked to cancer, nervous system harm and immune system harm may be lurking in your pantry. But **EWG's Guide to Food Additives** is here to help you avoid the worst offenders. Plus, our guide highlights harmful chemicals that are used in food packaging and can migrate into food.

Chemical	Health Harm	Products That May Contain Food Additives*	Function
Brominated vegetable oil	Harm to the nervous system	Soda, sports drinks	Emulsifier
Potassium bromate	Increased risk of cancer	Bread, noodles, dough-based products	Dough conditioning
Nitrate and nitrite	Increased risk of cancer	Processed meat	Antimicrobials (meat preservatives)
Propyl paraben	Endocrine disruption	Corn tortillas	Antimicrobials (preservatives)
Butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA); butylated hydroxytoluene (BHT); propyl gallate; tert-butylhydroquinone (TBHQ)	Increased risk of cancer Change to the immune system	Processed meat, ready-to-eat cereal, flour-based snacks	Antioxidants (preservatives)
FD&C colors (Red 3, Red 40, Yellow 5, Yellow 6, Blue 1, Blue 2, Green 3)	Neurobehavioral problems in children	Candy, ready-to-eat baked goods, chips and snacks, cereal, soda	Synthetic colorants
Titanium dioxide	Change to the immune system in the digestive tract	Candy, ready-to-eat baked goods, ice cream	Mineral colorants
Acesulfame potassium, advantame, aspartame, neotame, saccharin, sucralose	Weight gain and change to metabolism	Diet beverages and other prepared beverages, ice cream	Non-nutritive synthetic sweeteners

* These are the most common categories where food additives can be found. The food additives included in this table can be found in many different products, including some not listed here. The only way to know whether a specific product contains a particular ingredient is to read the ingredient label.

FOOD PACKAGING CHEMICALS THAT CAN HARM HEALTH

CHEMICAL	HEALTH HARM
BPA	Endocrine disruptor
PFAS	Harm to the immune system and the developing fetus, increased risk of cancer
Phthalates	Endocrine disruptors

