

# **Healthful or Harmful?**

**Cutting through the myths, lies and shenanigans of  
food manufacturers' health food claims**

**By Consumer Health Advocate Frank Mangano**



**Frank Mangano  
Author & Researcher**

## **Introduction**

The reason I decided to publish this report is because I am sick and tired of seeing food manufacturers manipulate, lie, bamboozle and outright endanger the lives of innocent people thinking they are taking steps toward achieving optimal health.

While I feel everyone should do whatever it takes to protect their precious health, this is a free a country and everyone is entitled to make their own choice. If your choice is to not preserve your health, so be it. It's your decision. However, if you're a person who wants to live a healthy lifestyle and to be proactive about it, you need to know that there are companies out there who will mislead you into consuming poisons that claim to be "healthy." This is tyranny in its purest form from money hungry food manufacturers.

The fact is that unless you are an expert in the field of health, chances are you'll go to your local supermarket and stock up on a bunch of products that you think are good because the label says things like "no artificial ingredients," "all natural," "no preservatives," "sugar free," "no cholesterol," "no fat" or "low fat," and "vitamin fortified," among a number of other deceiving terms.

But the truth is there are more than 3,000 chemicals on the market today being put into food that is being marketed to you as safe or healthy. How is this legal? You might ask.

Well, at the present time, there is no requirement for food ingredient lists to include the names of chemical containments like perchlorate, heavy metals, PCBs, bisphenol or other toxic substances found in the food. To sum things up and make it really clear: the ingredient lists do not list what is actually in the

food. Instead, the list contains things that the manufacturer wants you to *believe* is in the food.

The so-called "requirements" that are currently in place are nothing more than another conspiracy between the government and food manufacturers. At one point, food manufacturers didn't want to list any ingredients at all. They claimed that disclosing their secret ingredients or recipes would ruin their business. Eventually however, through the movement of consumer activists, the requirements changed...a little bit.

## **Part One – The Tricks of the Trade**

Food manufacturers are big businesses dependent on big revenues that will take whatever steps necessary to protect their profits. Listed below are the top 5 tricks of the trade that food manufacturers use to deceive you into thinking the product is healthier than what it actually is:

**1.) Hide The Poison** - The first trick is to use innocent sounding names to conceal the dangers behind the real ingredients. Take sodium nitrate for example, it doesn't sound so bad but in reality it's a recipe for death! This stuff has been documented to cause a number of different types of cancers as well as brain tumors. Pick up a bottle of strawberry yogurt and take a look on the back. You may see an ingredient called carmine. This is what gives the yogurt its color. Doesn't sound too bad, right? Wrong! Carmine is made up of bodies of red cochineal beetles that have been smashed to bits.

**2.) Outright Lies About The Ingredients** - Don't let the name of a product fool you into thinking it's healthy. In reality, the food product has nothing to do with what's actually in it. I've seen tons of fruit products with absolutely no fruit in them at all, guacamole dip containing no avocados, cheese crackers with no cheese, soups with labels claiming "no added MSG" but are actually loaded with them.

**3.) Add Some Great Sounding Ingredients to the List (In Tiny Amounts)** – Take a good look at most "herbal" shampoos on the market and you'll see most have no detectable levels of real herbs in them at all. For food companies, it's no different. Often, they will throw in a super food or a healthy sounding berry into the ingredient list, but it's often in such a miniscule amount that it offers no benefit whatsoever. This trick known as

“label padding” is popular among junk food manufacturers who want to make their poison seem healthy.

**4.) Spread the Sugar Thin** – By distributing sugars among many ingredients, food manufacturers can avoid putting them in the top three on the ingredients list. Ingredients are listed in accordance to their content amount in the food. Using a combination of corn syrup solids, high fructose corn syrup, sucrose, dextrose, brown sugar and other sugar ingredients enables the manufacturer to spread them so thin that they don't appear at the top of the list. You as the consumer read the package and think, “Hey, this stuff contains hardly any sugar,” when in reality it could be made up of many different forms of sugar.

**5.) Manipulate the Serving Size** – When all else fails (or even if it doesn't, for that matter), manipulating serving sizes is another deceptive method to make food seem as though it's not as bad as it is. Take trans fatty acids for example. Everyone knows how bad these are and if you don't, you've probably been living under a rock for the past few years. Trans fatty acids are so unhealthy that even billion dollar companies like McDonald's had to eventually eliminate them from their menus. The FDA, however, has created a loophole for the food companies to use to conceal the trans fatty acids in their products. In a nutshell, the FDA rules that food companies can claim their product has ZERO trans fats on their label as long as the food contains 0.5 grams or less of this poison. So basically, according to the FDA, zero equals 0.5. Try telling that to a government agency when it comes to your taxes. This absurd ruling is further perverted when the food companies purposely reduce their serving sizes to levels just small enough to bring the trans fats down to 0.5 grams per serving. Trans fats can be found in hydrogenated oils, which are used to make products like crackers, corn chips

and potato chips. How many bags of each have you seen with “NO TRANS FATS” on the front? My guess is a lot.

Now that you know what to look out for, here are my top 10 tips for reading ingredients lists on labels:

- 1.) Because ingredients lists are not required to list contaminants, it’s best to stay away from anything that may contain them. To do so, choose organic, minimally processed or raw fresh foods.
- 2.) Words like “raw” or “sprouted” are indicative that what you are eating is good for you. Grains and seeds that are sprouted are much healthier than those non-sprouted. Whole grains are healthier than enriched grains.
- 3.) Fancy sounding herbs or ingredients at the bottom of the list are worthless, so don’t think for a second that they are providing any sort of benefit (unless you’re the size of a mouse, that is).
- 4.) Many people think brown products are better than white products by default. This again is another gimmick. Brown sugar is the same as white sugar; it’s just been colored brown. The same is true of brown eggs. Brown bread could be just as bad as white bread; unless of course it is made with whole grains.
- 5.) The word “wheat” is one of the most misrepresented (and misunderstood) words used by food companies. For example, any type of flour derived from wheat can be called “wheat flour”; even flour that has been processed and bleached a hundred times over. What you should be looking for is “whole grain wheat flour”. That’s the good stuff.

6.) Keep an eye out for ridiculously small serving sizes, as the amount of sugar, fats, calories or anything else for that matter can easily be manipulated with small serving sizes.

7.) Ingredients are always listed in accordance to their content amount in the product. Simply put, the first 3 ingredients make up most of what you are eating.

8.) Most natural and pure foods consist of only a handful of ingredients. If you're looking at a long ingredients list, chances are the food should be left on the shelf.

9.) If for any reason you start seeing words you don't recognize or sound like chemicals, avoid the product entirely. Remember, if it walks and talks like a duck, it probably is.

10.) Be skeptical of products that say "No Trans Fat" but have a laundry list of alphabet soup ingredients. Remember, the FDA has given companies the OK to make "no trans fat" claims even when their products have trace amounts. But trace amounts are still dangerous to consume.

## **Part Two – The Hidden Poisons**

Now that we understand the methods by which money hungry food manufacturers lie and deceive us, let's get right down to the nitty-gritty. Section three will cover in detail the ..... harmful ingredients and why you should avoid them at all costs.

Before we begin, let's talk about what a food additive really is. A food additive is anything that is put onto or into a food or drink that was not present when the food was in its natural state. These include preservatives, stabilizers, taste enhancers, coloring and sweeteners, among many other things.

Listed below are the top 6 poisons to avoid at all costs:

**1.) Artificial sweeteners** – Common names of products contain artificial sweeteners include Sweet and Low, NutraSweet and Equal. For years, saccharin held the top spot but the countless studies showing it to cause cancer in lab animals helped it to lose popularity. Today, however, aspartame reigns supreme as the most widely used artificial sweetener out there. Nearly ever single form of diet drink contains this sweetener. It is also used with supplements, medications, and packaged food products. The NutraSweet, Spoonful and Equal sweeteners you see on the market are made with aspartame. Aspartame is made up of roughly 50% phenylalaine (an amino acid), 40% aspartic acid (another amino acid) and about 10% methanol or methyl alcohol (wood alcohol. It's no wonder this stuff accounts for over 75% of the adverse reactions to food additives reported to the US Food and Drug Administration). Methanol is a cumulative, human-specific toxin which may not necessarily be detoxified by the body. It takes the body fives times longer to eliminate methanol than a similar amount of ethanol (ethyl alcohol), which is the alcohol commonly found in alcoholic beverages like wine, beer and



whiskey. Ethanol found in foods that contain methanol, however, actually protects against the harmful effects of naturally-occurring methanol. This protective effect does not exist with aspartame. In order for the wood alcohol in aspartame to be detoxified by the body, it must be converted by the body into two toxic metabolites: formaldehyde and then into formic acid. The result of this process is called metabolic acidosis and it could be significantly linked to excess acidity in some people, which brings with it a host of different risks including cancer.

Aspartame has been suggested to trigger or mimic the following conditions:

- Fibromyalgia
- Systemic lupus
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Hypothyroidism
- Alzheimer's disease
- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)
- Epilepsy
- Grave's Disease
- Lyme Disease
- Chronic Fatigue Syndrome
- Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma
- Men Éire's Disease
- Epstein-Barr Syndrome

**1.) Trans Fats** – Trans fats can be found in crackers, microwave popcorn, snack chips, muffins, cakes, French fries and just about anything else containing hydrogenated oils. Research indicates that trans fats are twice as dangerous for the heart as saturated fat and are responsible for an estimated 30,000 – 100,000 premature heart disease deaths annually. In 2006, trans fats were required to be eliminated from the recipes of many fast food restaurants but tricks by food manufacturers to hide them in their products still remain alive and well (see section 1). The reason why trans fats are so unhealthy is because they boost LDL cholesterol levels (the “bad” kind) and lower HDL cholesterol levels (the “good” kind). Additionally, trans fats raise levels of artery-clogging lipoprotein and triglycerides. In case you haven’t gotten the point, this stuff is outright deadly.

**2.) High-Fructose Corn Syrup** - This liquid sweetener can be found in bacon, spaghetti sauce, soft drinks, ketchup, and beer among other things, and each American consumes an estimated 63 pounds of it per year. Recent research is beginning to suggest that high-fructose corn syrup may raise the risk of heart disease and diabetes by upsetting the human metabolism. Experts say the chemical structure of high-fructose corn syrup promotes overeating and it also forces more heart-threatening triglycerides to be pumped into the blood stream by the liver. The body’s chromium reserves – which play an important role in healthy levels of blood sugar, insulin and cholesterol - may also be zapped with high-fructose corn syrup. So why is high-fructose corn syrup found in so many food products? Well, for starters, it costs less to make, mixes more easily with other ingredients, and is sweeter to the taste than most traditional sweeteners. Plus, it gives a nice color and texture to breads. Therefore, it’s not uncommon to find it in English muffins, whole-wheat bread and hamburger buns. It may also be listed “corn syrup solids,” “corn sweetener” or “corn syrup”.

**3.) Refined Grains** – Refined grains such as those found in white rice or white pasta, white bread, sugary low-fiber cereals and rolls can raise the risk of heart attack by 30 percent. A number of major studies have shown that eating more whole grains such as those found in brown rice, bran, cooked oatmeal, dark bread and whole grain breakfast cereals can lower the risk of heart disease by 20 to 30 percent. Conversely, those who choose refined grains have more incidents of high blood pressure, insulin resistance and heart attacks. When reading an ingredients list, beware of deceptive label claims like “wheat flour” or seven grain. In most cases, this is just as bad as the refined stuff.

**4.) Salt** – For the average person, the amount of sodium per day should be around 1,500 milligrams; that’s equal to about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a teaspoon of salt. For those over age 50, the daily amount should be around 1,300 mg and 1,200 mg for those ages 70 and older as blood pressure naturally elevates with age. “Ok,” you say, “All I have to do is avoid putting salt on my food.” What you may not realize, however, is that most of the sodium that one takes in isn’t put *on* the food; it’s put *in* it. Not all forms of sodium are bad, though. Sodium that’s naturally in foods is actually good for you because it replaces water lost through tears, sweat and other excretions. Aside from that, it helps regulate blood pressure; keeps the senses of touch, taste and smell working properly; as well maintaining the balance of fluid in the body. Sodium starts to become a problem when one starts taking in more than what’s needed. When this happens, the body retains fluid to dilute the excess sodium in the blood stream, which causes the heart to work harder, and the veins and arteries to constrict. The result is high blood pressure. If you’re eating processed foods like fast-food burgers, canned vegetables or soups, condiments like soy sauce or processed meats like deli cold cuts, you can rest assured that you are taking in more sodium than your body needs and setting yourself up for hypertension.

**5.) Monosodium Glutamate (MSG)** – MSG is a flavor enhancer used by food companies to mask sourness and bitterness as well as flavors that don't taste as good as they should. MSG is not an allergen, but a neuro-toxin, or nerve poison. The body reacts to MSG in the same way it would react to a drug. It is not yet known for sure if the problems associated with MSG are caused or aggravated by eating things containing MSG as reactions are dose-related. In some cases, people react to very small amounts. Symptoms of a reaction can include itching, high blood pressure, allergic reactions and headaches. The active ingredient in MSG is free glutamate, which may cause drowsiness, shortness of breath, dizziness, and brain damage, especially in children. In 1950, national consumption of MSG was around 1 million pounds per year. Today, it's over 300 million pounds. The reason behind these staggering numbers is the fact that MSG is concealed in many food and drink products as well as medications. Once again, with a green light from the FDA, food manufacturers have found a way to hide this stuff. They either list the ingredients that contain MSG rather than listing the MSG itself, or they use free glutamates instead of MSG. Take broth for example; it can be listed as an ingredient on a label and in fact contain MSG, but the ingredients in the broth are not required to be listed. Therefore, the label can legally say "NO MSG". MSG does occur naturally in many foods like apples, oranges, mushrooms, tomatoes, grapefruit and potatoes. In natural forms, however, people sensitive to MSG do not react with symptoms to proteins that contain either bound or free glutamic acid. They do however react to the glutamic acid of MSG in its free form, especially if it's been created through an artificial manufacturing process like fermentation.

The ingredients and/or products listed below ALWAYS contain MSG:

- Glutamate

- Monopotassium glutamate
- Autolyzed yeast
- Gelatin
- Glutacyl
- Yeast nutrient
- Textured protein
- Hydrolyzed protein
- Calcium and sodium caseinate
- Glutamic acid
- Glutavene
- Accent and Zest

The products and/or additives listed below OFTEN contain MSG:

- Barley malt
- Subu
- Pectin
- Bouillon
- Tamari
- Broth and stock
- Worcestershire sauce
- Anything enzyme fortified, protein fortified, fermented or ultra-pasteurized
- Kombu extract
- Milk solids in low fat milk products
- Soy sauce and extract
- Protease enzymes
- Carrageenan
- Ajinomoto
- Mei-Jing and Wei-Jing
- Seasonings (the word seasoning)

- Whey protein isolate and concentrate
- Malt extract & flavoring

Additionally, two food additives used to enhance the effects of MSG are disodium inosinate and disodium guanylate.

The list described above is by no means complete and/or final. Every day new products containing MSG are manufactured but it is the most informative list I can produce at the present time.

**Other additives to watch out for include:**

- Caffeine
- Olestra or Olean
- Sulfites
- Saccharin
- NutraSweet
- Artificial colorings
- BHA and BHT
- Nitrites and nitrates

### **Part Three – What You Should Be Eating**

Now that we understand why the food industry plays the games it does when it comes to our health and their profits, and we know exactly how to pin out dangerous substances on an ingredient list, it's time for the good stuff.

Section Three of the Grocery Report will cover the foods that you *should* be eating every single day and why. Some call them super foods, some call them essential foods—I call them super-natural foods.

Before we go any further, realize that eating these foods only once in a while will cheat you out of the super-natural benefits they provide. Just as exercising once in a blue moon will not yield any life-changing results, neither will eating these foods every now and then. To truly enhance your level of optimal health, you must eat these foods every day.



## **Oatmeal**

First off, start your day with a *healthy* bang: oatmeal. And I'm not talking about the instant stuff here (most of that stuff should be listed in section 2). Rolled oats are what you should be looking for here, folks. Before going to bed, soak some rolled oats in water over night. When you wake up in the morning, cook them in boiling water. This deactivates the enzyme inhibitors that cause problems with digestion. To spruce up the flavor a little, you can add some raw butter or organic raw honey.

Oatmeal is high in all the B-vitamins as well as protein. A bowl of rolled oats with some organic almond milk is a much better choice for breakfast than some cholesterol loaded eggs with some nitrate induced ham.

Here's some interesting news. A study that was performed on millers (i.e. people who mill oats) found that when they ate the most of their own product, they were least likely to develop heart disease. Even in cases where the miller was not consuming as much as other millers, the incidence of heart disease was still lower than that of the general population.

## **Broccoli**

Most people weren't too fond of broccoli as kids. I, however, always loved it. But then again, a night on the town for me consists of heading over to my local health food store after 7 pm. But back to the broccoli. Aside from being very filling, it's loaded with carotenoids and a number of cancer-preventing micronutrients including sulfoxaphanes and indoles.

Now I know many people don't really like the taste of broccoli. If that's the case, my advice to you is this: eat it anyway and get used to it! This food is too beneficial to your health to pass up.

Here are some good ways to spruce up the taste of broccoli:

Cooking broccoli by steaming it or briefly boiling it removes some of the “harshness” from the taste. Plus, you get over 80% of the benefits this super-natural food has to offer when you prepare it in either of those two ways. Cooking it any other way especially in the microwave is a waste of time as you’ll wind up with only about 10% of the good stuff.

Another way to “kick up” the taste of broccoli is by adding a dash of some fresh lemon juice and/or minced garlic cloves. True, garlic doesn’t do much for your breath, but the documented health benefits of garlic are too good to pass up.

## **Avocados**

Study after study confirms that supplementing an already health diet with “good” fats will lower both your body fat as well as your blood pressure.

Most of the high fat content in avocados is monounsaturated which can help lower your LDL (bad) cholesterol without lowering your HDL (good) cholesterol.

Now for the best part: if, for some reason, you could never get your hands on another daily vitamin/mineral supplement again, you could simply eat avocados for the rest of your life and almost get the same benefits as if you still had the supplements. That’s how jam-packed with nutrients these delicious plant foods are. They’ll also put an end to a dying hunger very quickly. You can eat them plain or use them to whip up some tasty guacamole.

## **Lentils**

Heavy on health benefits and light on the wallet, lentils are another food I've been stuck on since childhood. Aside from being chock full of nutrients, lentils usually have a low glycemic index, meaning they're less likely to elevate your blood sugar and insulin levels in a snap, only to have you crash an hour later. But aside from making you want to hit the sack way before bedtime, spikes in both insulin and blood sugar cause fat to accumulate and are linked to a number of diseases.

For a plant food, lentils are also high in protein. Couple them with some organic brown rice and you easily get as much protein from them as you would from a juicy steak without all the fat and calories.

The high soluble fiber content in lentils can also help keep your LDL low.

Aside from having antioxidant properties, lentils are also high in magnesium, which helps keep bones strong.

## **Blueberries**

Now for a delicious treat. For the best taste, make sure they are fresh. You can buy them frozen, thaw them out and eat them. Mixing them with in your breakfast cereal is also a great idea.

What I like most about blueberries is that they have little to no seeds so you can chuck them right into the blender or your mouth with no mess.

Of all berries, blueberries have the most potent antioxidant properties and are packed with vitamin C.

Blueberries are also high in resveratrol, which is found in red wine and has been shown in numerous studies to keep the heart healthy. Blueberries however won't leave you staggering around the house and full of sulfates like red wine.

Blueberries get their dark color from the anthocyanidins, which are flavonoids that work synergistically with vitamin C and protein in the body to keep the arteries strong and healthy. In fact, one study found that people who eat blueberries on a regular basis have far fewer strokes than those who do not.

Blueberries' ability to help prevent age-related memory loss and improve cognitive function makes them a great choice for people with dementia or Alzheimer's disease.

## **Nuts**

While walnuts are highly beneficial, we shouldn't overlook the strengths of almonds and other nuts as well. Peanuts, however, in my opinion, should be avoided and make sure that you are not allergic to tree nuts.

So why do I consider nuts supernatural foods? Well first off, they are high in magnesium, which is not only good for controlling blood sugar levels but it is essential for good heart health as well.

Walnuts specifically are a favorite of mine because within them are several variations of vitamin E. Studies also suggest that walnuts contain a good amount of a cancer-fighting antioxidant called ellagic acid. Oh, they taste great, too.

Arginine can also be found in high levels in most nuts. This heart shielding amino acid keeps blood pressure at a good range and keeps arteries flexible and responsive.

Anyone that knows me knows I love to snack. Nuts make for a great snack because they're high fiber, fat and protein content make them very filling. And there's no need to worry about weight gain either as multiple studies have shown no weight gain in people adding 500 calories a day of nuts to their diet.

The heart health with nuts doesn't stop there either. They are also high in sterols, which have been shown to be beneficial to the heart in numerous ways.

## **Extra Virgin Olive Oil**

Aside from serving as a healthy way to increase fat in the diet, you can also use this supernatural food to enhance the taste of other foods.

Multiple studies have indicated that by including healthy fats like extra virgin olive oil in the diet can help shed those unsightly pounds and keep them off. Perhaps one of the contributing reasons to this finding is the fact that olive oil keeps you feeling full even when consuming smaller amounts of food.

Aside from that, extra virgin olive oil will fulfill your craving for fat in the diet. But unlike other fatty foods, olive oil is not loaded with sugar and processed nutrients making it a good long term choice to include in the diet.

The fat in extra virgin olive oil is mostly monounsaturated fat, unlike polyunsaturated fats, which I consider to be lethal.

Be sure to get extra virgin olive oil and not just plain olive oil, as extra virgin is higher in antioxidants and is a product of higher quality.

## **Tomatoes**

Aside from serving as a nice, refreshing flavor booster for salads and appetizers, tomatoes are packed with vitamin C. Even some vitamin A can be found in these delicious supernatural foods. Inside tomatoes is a yellow fluid which surrounds tomato seeds and also provides ample protection for the heart as well.

Let's not forget about the lycopene in tomatoes. This carotenoid helps promote heart health and serves as a protective shield for certain types of cancer.

You can enhance the health benefits of tomatoes by cooking them. Try using some fresh garlic and extra virgin olive oil. Studies have shown a decreased rate of prostate cancer in men who eat the most cooked tomato foods.

## **Garlic**

I once watched a documentary on the people of Italy on how some of them can live up to 115 years old. Perhaps one contributing reason for this phenomenon is the fact that they consume garlic nearly every day.

Garlic's antiviral and antibiotic properties have earned it the nickname of "nature's medicine." While garlic itself may not serve as a cure for a viral or bacterial infection, it certainly can reduce your chances of getting sick quite significantly. Combine it with some vitamin C and Echinacea and what you have is what I call an infection shield.

Aside from lowering blood pressure in some people, garlic can also reverse symptoms of heart disease by contributing to healthy blood vessels, helping remove calcium deposits in the arteries and reducing the levels of homocysteine in the blood.

## **Green Tea**

Last but not least, something that not only serves as a great way to warm your body on a cold winter morning, but also as a way to reduce chances of breast cancer as well: green tea. One study showed promise of green tea having the ability to cause the self-destruction of cancer cells in a test tube environment.

High in antioxidants and moderate in caffeine, green tea can keep you sharp without all the hazards associated with coffee.

An ancient Chinese proverb says, "Better to be deprived of food for three days than tea for one." Now, I don't know if I agree with that, but the fact remains green tea is a true elixir to your health that has been shown to be effective in treating high cholesterol levels, infections and impaired immune function just to name a few things.

I hope this report has equipped you with the knowledge you need to avoid being lied to and deceived into thinking what you're consuming is good for you when in fact it often isn't.

Your health is your most precious asset. Guard it with your life.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frank Mangano". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Founder, [Natural Health On The Web](#)