

GETTING THE JUNK OUT

ADDITIVE CATEGORY: PRESERVATIVES

Includes: Sulfites, Sodium Nitrate/Nitrite, BHA/BHT, Potassium Sorbate

SULFITES

Sulfites, along with tartrazine, BHA/BHT and MSG, are the “Big Four” – the four main additives that are best avoided by people with food allergies or sensitivities, so definitely something to eliminate from your diet if you wish to eat clean.

NAMES	WHAT IT IS USED FOR	POSSIBLE REACTIONS	FACTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sodium sulfite • Potassium sulfite • Sodium bisulfite • Potassium bisulfite • Sodium metabisulfite • Potassium metabisulfite • Sulfur dioxide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preservative, antioxidant and disinfectant • Is naturally occurring or added to food to prevent spoilage by preventing bacterial growth and food discolouration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headaches • Behaviour disturbances • Hives • Weakness • Difficulty breathing • Acute asthma attacks • Dizziness • Abdominal pain • Diarrhea • Nausea / vomiting • Anaphylactic shock • Death-17 confirmed in US • Causes tumors in rats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asthmatics are particularly sensitive (many bronchodilators contain up to 6 ppm of sulfur dioxide) • Average intake from foods eaten at home is 2-3 mg/day • Average intake from the average restaurant meal is 25 – 200 mg • Destroys thiamine (Vitamin B₁) and are thought to destroy folic acid. • Products containing sulfites may release sulfur dioxide gas, which can trigger asthmatic attacks. • Sulfur dioxide destroys vitamin A as well as some B vitamins

WHERE IT IS FOUND

- Processed foods, condiments, fruit snacks, citrus drinks
- Wine, beer – bacterial inhibitor in wine brewing and distilled beverages
- Syrups and sugar – anti-fermentative in the sugar and syrup industries
- Fresh fruits and vegetables, prepared deli salads, dried fruits – anti-browning ingredient
- Potato products such as chips and fries, frozen items such as potato products and TV dinners
- Fish, shrimp
- Grapes, wine, raisins, particularly golden raisins, and other dried fruit – treated with sulfur dioxide as well as contain sulfites
- Balsamic vinegar – both naturally occurring and additional is added
- Hair dye, cosmetics, cleansers, bath preparations, deodorant, perfumes and moisturizers
- Medications – asthma, heart, steroids, antibiotics, pain medicines and muscle relaxants

References:

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3. Winters, Ruth (2005), *A Consumer's Dictionary of Cosmetic Ingredients*. New York, NY: Three Rivers Press
4. Bateson-Koch, Carolee (2002). *Allergies Disease in Disguise*. Burnaby, BC: Alive Books