

50 Unhealthiest Foods On the Planet

Source: *MSN Lifestyle*



Indulging in certain foods is a lot like going out really late before a big job interview. Sure, you knew it wasn't a great idea, but your FOMO was too great and you figured you could somehow still pull off the next day.

Wrong. And the same thing goes for your diet. You know that candy, bacon, and diet soda aren't the best bets for your health, but you likely didn't realize that, beyond adding flab to your frame, these foods are also laced with additives and chemicals that can harm your health to a point you can't really backtrack on. Then there are the stealthiest waistline saboteurs. You know, the foods that you think are healthy, only to discover years later that they're anything but.

Read on to discover some of the unhealthiest foods on the planet—and then stock up on these 40 Best Foods to Melt Love Handles instead!

1. Fast food iced tea

Harmful Ingredient: Propylene glycol alginate (E405)

What's a food additive that's also used as automotive antifreeze and runway de-icer? Sadly, there are a few, including this one. Propylene glycol alginate is a food thickener, stabilizer, and emulsifier, and it can cause cardiovascular or neurotoxic issues. And it's used in Dunkin Donuts iced tea, among others.

Eat This Instead: Did you know that steeping green tea in cold water for two hours actually makes it even more beneficial to your body than your regular steeping routine? Either way, green tea can help you melt major fat. People who did the The 7-Day Flat-Belly Tea Cleanse lost up to 10 pounds in a week!

2. Tilefish

Harmful Ingredient: Mercury

Ranked the #1 Worst Fish on Eat This, Not That!'s exclusive report on 40+ Popular Types of Fish—Ranked for Nutrition, you know tilefish must be pretty dangerous if it's deemed scarier than shark and swordfish. You might as well drink some battery acid with the amount of mercury in these ocean creatures.

Eat This Instead: Atlantic Mackerel, aka the #1 Best fish on our list!

3. Microwave popcorn

Harmful Ingredients: Diacetyl, perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and trans-fats

If you thought the movie you were watching was terrifying, you probably haven't taken a very close look at your popcorn. When air-popped, this snack has filling fiber and whole grains we love, but the microwavable varieties are an entirely different beast. Many major brands like Jolly Time and Jiffy Pop not only contain heart-harming trans fats but also line their bags with perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), the same toxic stuff found in Teflon pots and pans. What's more, butter-flavored favorites are almost always laced with diacetyl (DA), a chemical that has been found to break down the layer of cells that protects one of our most vital organs: the brain. Now that's some scary stuff!

Eat This Instead: Air pop kernels or make your own microwavable popcorn for a low-calorie snack. Here's how: Add your favorite popping kernels to a small paper lunch bag, fold the top down a few times. Then, zap it in the microwave until you hear only a few pops every five seconds. Challenged in the kitchen? We're also big fans of Quinn Popcorn. It's one of the only microwavable popcorns that's free of chemicals and won't wreak havoc on your waistline.

4. Fast food chicken nuggets

Chicken nuggets all start with chicken but also contain several synthetic ingredients from diglycerides to Red #40 to carrageenan. These chemicals help make overly-processed foods like chicken nuggets possible because that's what keeps the (very few) organic materials in the nuggets from going bad (or looking weird) after days spent traveling on the road or months in the freezer. But even if you buy them at the grocery store, you might not be safe. Check out our exclusive report of The Most Popular Chicken Nuggets—Ranked!

Eat This Instead: Organic chicken breasts cut into pieces, coated with egg and breadcrumbs, and baked in your oven. Voila! Homemade, healthy nuggets.

5. Fruit juice

Harmful Ingredients: Fructose

It's natural! It's packed with Vitamin C! It comes from Florida! What could be wrong? Well, while 100 percent fruit juice is a better pick than sugary drinks like Sunny D, even the all-natural stuff still packs up to 36 grams of sugar per cup—or about what you'd get from popping 4 Krispy Kreme glazed donuts into a blender and hitting frappe. What's more, most of the sweetness in juice comes from fructose, a type of sugar associated with the development of visceral adipose tissue—yep, that's belly fat.

Drink This Instead: Trick your belly into shrinking itself by filling your glass with some refreshing detox water. Just add fresh sliced fruit like oranges and grapefruit to plain ole' H2O and chill. The key is to keep the peels on: citrus peels are rich in the antioxidant d-limonene, a powerful compound that helps flush out toxins from the body and allows it to release stored visceral fat.

6. Candy

Harmful Ingredients: Artificial coloring, added sugar, saturated fats

You already knew all the artery-clogging fats and addicting sugars in candy weren't doing you or your family any favors, but you likely didn't realize that certain candies can make it more difficult for your little ones to concentrate. A few years ago, researchers discovered that the artificial colors, Yellow No. 5 and Yellow No. 6 (found in Butterfingers and M&Ms), promote Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) in children. In fact, Norway and Sweden have already banned the use of these artificial colors, and in the rest of the EU, foods containing these additives must be labeled with the phrase: "May have an adverse effect on activity and attention in children."

Eat This Instead: Amy's Natural Creamy Candy Bar. While this bar has about the same amount of calories, fat and sugar as Butterfinger, it's free of all artificial colorings. M&M fans should check out Unreal's Candy-Coated Milk Chocolates. It's a similar product, but free of all the scary chemicals. If there's no way you could ever trade in your go-to candy for another sweet, here's hoping your sweet of choice is made by Nestlé. By the end of 2015, the company will have phased out the use of all artificial dyes. If you have the time, try making one of these healthy desserts.

7. Sugary cereal

Harmful Ingredients: Butylated Hydroxytoluene (BHT), Butylated Hydroxyanisole (BHA), refined carbs, added sugar

There's no sugar-coating it: sugar wreaks havoc on the body. Consuming too much of the white stuff can lead to obesity, which often causes other health problems like diabetes and heart disease. And many cereals pack more sugar into one bowl than you'll find in a Boston Kreme Donut! To make matters worse, many popular varieties like Frosted Flakes and Fruity Pebbles

are also laced with Butylated Hydroxytoluene (BHT) or BHA (Butylated Hydroxyanisole), ingredients that are banned in the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and much of Europe because they are thought to be carcinogenic.

Eat This Instead: Cascadian Farms Chocolate O's and Nature's Path Peanut Butter Panda Puffs are both flavor-packed, low-sugar picks that don't contain any scary chemicals. We're also big fans of these 11 Brand Name Cereals for Weight Loss.

8. Diet sodas

Harmful Ingredients: Caramel coloring, brominated vegetable oil (BVO), Bisphenol A (BPA), aspartame

What do cancer-causing artificial colors, flame retardants and fat-causing fake sugars all have in common? They're ingredients in all your favorite diet fizzy drinks. Shove all that into a bottle laced with BPA, a chemical that's been linked to obesity, and you've pretty much got the worst drink ever. Nearly all popular diet sodas contain aspartame, an artificial sweetener that raises glucose levels, overloading the liver and causing the excess to convert into fat. And that's not all: The caramel coloring found in brown beverages like Coca-Cola and Dr. Pepper has been proven to cause cancer in animals and is a possible carcinogen for humans. If citrus-flavored sodas like Diet Mountain Dew and Fresca are your go-to, you're not off scot-free. Instead of caramel coloring they contain BVO, a chemical used in rocket fuel and flame retardants that may reduce fertility and can negatively affect thyroid hormones.

Eat This Instead: While Coca-Cola and PepsiCo have agreed to phase BVO out of their sodas, it's still actively used in sodas from Dr. Pepper/Seven Up Inc. Even so, all these drinks contain aspartame, and that's just not something we can get behind. If you're sick of plain ole' H2O, opt for one of these 5 Best Teas for Weight Loss or a cup of coffee instead.

9. Coffee creamer

Harmful Ingredients: Titanium dioxide, trans fats, added sugar

Coffee creamer and sunblock have more in common than you might think. They both contain titanium dioxide, an ultraviolet radiation blocker that doubles as a whitening agent. Besides lurking in many conventional creamers, it's also found in seemingly 'healthy' bottles like So Delicious' coconut milk-based variety. The additive has been proven to cause liver and tissue damage in mice, and may also have health implications in humans, according to a recent review of the chemical. Coffee creamer is also typically packed with trans fats, often hiding under its lesser-known name: hydrogenated oil. Pretty much all of Coffee Mate's products have this scary ingredient that has been shown to diminish memory in adults under 45 years old. If you're working hard or don't want to forget where you parked your car, this is one ingredient you should steer clear of.

Eat This Instead: Plain ol' cow's milk or unsweetened, organic soy milk both make for healthy additions to your morning cup. If you're looking for a hint of flavor, stick with a tablespoon of

one of Coffee Mate's Natural Bliss creamers. They're all made from nonfat milk, heavy cream, sugar and natural flavors—that's it! If you like your coffee iced we have a healthy recipe just for you.

10. Processed meats

Harmful Ingredients: Nitrate and salt

The bacon and sausage you enjoy for breakfast and the deli meats you use to make your lunch may be putting your life at risk. How? Many of these meats contain nitrates, a preservative that interferes with the body's natural ability to process sugar, which increases the risk for diabetes. It can also up your odds of developing thyroid and colon cancer. If that wasn't bad enough, most processed meats are also loaded with sodium, a known contributor to hypertension that can make you bloat and set you up to develop heart disease. Looking for other ways to steer clear of nitrates? Try these Meat Alternatives for Rapid Weight Loss.

Eat This Instead: At the deli counter, ask for Boar's Head All Natural Roasted Turkey Breast. It's free of nitrates and is relatively low in sodium. Applegate Natural's Natural Slow-Cooked Ham and Organic Bacon are also good picks that can be found in the meat and cheese section of your grocery store.

11. Deep fried foods

Harmful Ingredient: Hydrogenated Oil

Fried chicken, fried cheese sticks, fried calamari, French fries. You won't ever see these items marked as an "Eat This." They cause trouble for your body for a variety of reasons and can wreak havoc on your weight. But there's more: They're also linked to depression. Deep frying is usually done in partially hydrogenated oil. Hydrogenation is a process that turns vegetable oil into a more solid form, which makes it a more shelf-stable product. Anything that is cooked with hydrogenated oils and contains trans fats could potentially contribute to depression.

Eat This Instead: Bake your foods in the oven. Always.

12. Frozen entrees

Harmful Ingredients: Sodium and Trans Fats

From preservatives and artificial fillers to mountains of sodium that wreak havoc on your mood, frozen entrees are not to be trusted. So, you've been warned: These are the 48 Worst Frozen Foods in America.

Eat This Instead: Opt for organic, low-sodium, low-sugar frozen options that never (ever!) have trans fats.

13. Chinese food

Harmful Ingredient: Monosodium Glutamate

Chinese food is often loaded with MSG (monosodium glutamate), a flavor enhancer found in other types of food such as soups, processed meats, and more. Some research suggests that the chemicals in MSG cause a drastic increase in appetite, which seems appropriate as people who consume the most amounts of MSG are more likely to be overweight compared to those that have no MSG in their diet. Avoid these five Chinese Foods Not Eaten in China!

Eat This Instead: Steamed veggies and these other 8 Chinese Foods Approved by Diet Experts

14. Restaurant desserts

Harmful Ingredient: Sodium

And here you thought we'd say the sugar. And calories. And fat. And everything else. While that's all true, and restaurant desserts are dangerous because the portions are often oversized, it's the sodium content that many people don't even think about. That innocent looking dessert you see pictured above has a whopping 1,380 calories, 92 g fat (56 g saturated fat, 2.5 g trans fat), 700 mg sodium, 125 g carbs, and 86 g sugar. Check it out with its other evil friends on this list of 20 Restaurant Desserts With More Salt Than A Bag of Pretzels.

Eat This Instead: A small scoop of sorbet is a low-risk way to satisfy that sweet tooth at the end of a meal.

15. Monochromatic beige entrees

Whenever your plate is made up almost entirely off-brown hues of deep-fried junk, you know you're not in for anything remotely nutritious. (Or if it was once nutritious, it no longer is.) Appetizer samplers, fried fish, and chips, a plate of wings—if there isn't at least half the plate made up of vegetables, then you're setting yourself up for failure. You'll notice this is what several of the pictures look like in this exclusive list of The Worst Option on the Menu at 20 Popular Restaurants.

16. Energy drinks

Harmful Ingredient: Sucrose, Glucose, Caffeine

Ever wonder why all energy drinks taste like cough syrup? We can only imagine the number of broken Bunsen burners it took to come up with the now-familiar energy drink formula. No doubt this strange medicinal taste makes consumers feel like they're deriving real benefits from one of these cans. All they're really deriving, though, is an overpriced chemical cocktail with the caffeine content of a strong cup of coffee and a lot of sugar (or scary artificial sweeteners). P.S. - A University of Maryland study found energy drinks to be 11 percent more corrosive to your teeth than regular soda.

Drink This Instead: Green tea! It's all-natural and one of the best energy boosters around. There's a reason test panelists lost up to 10 pounds by drinking tea for a week with the The 7-Day Flat-Belly Tea Cleanse!

17. Ice cream

Harmful Ingredients: Soybean oil, titanium dioxide, artificial coloring

Most “premium” ice creams are overloaded with sugar and soybean oil, a fat that's been linked to weight gain. Some even contain harmful artificial coloring agents and titanium dioxide, an additive that gives sunblock its white hue!

Eat This Instead: To have your cake and eat it, too, stick with one of these Best Ever Ice Creams for Weight Loss. Alternatively, whip up one of these 9 Frozen Banana Ice Cream Recipes.

18. Bottled smoothies

Harmful Ingredients: Caramel coloring, pectin, fructose, xanthan gum

Busy mornings and grab-and-go breakfasts are practically synonymous—so it's easy to see the appeal of store-bought smoothies. They seem like the best way to get what you crave in a pinch. But the timesaving drinks have a downside: Compared to fresh-made drinks, most of them fall short on nutrition and are so calorie- and sugar-filled that you'd have to spend hours on the treadmill to burn them off. Be sure to avoid The Worst Smoothies at the Supermarket for Weight Loss.

Drink This Instead: Play it safe by blending up one of these 10 Smoothie Recipes for Weight Loss—all of them can be made in 5 minutes or less.

19. Breakfast biscuits

Harmful Ingredients: Trans fat

Making biscuits from scratch can take forever, and the majority of the packaged varieties are chock full of trans fats, an artificial fat—invented to make baked goods more shelf-stable—that's been linked heart disease. Each of Mary B's Buttermilk Biscuits carries three grams a pop (which is more than a day's worth). And though the nutrition label on Pillsbury Grands! Buttermilk Biscuits reads “0 grams” in the trans fat column, it's made with hydrogenated soybean oil—a dead giveaway that there are traces of the dangerous fat in the biscuits.

Eat this Instead: Not only do Thomas' “nooks and crannies” save you from the dangers of trans fats, but they also shave 90 calories from your plate. Smear some butter and mashed blackberries on those babies to amp up the flavor and add a hit of sweetness.

20. Maple syrup

Harmful Ingredients: High fructose corn syrup and caramel coloring

Famous syrup brands like Aunt Jemima and Mrs. Butterworth are made with two ingredients we're constantly telling readers to avoid: health-harming high fructose corn syrup and caramel coloring.

Eat this Instead: The best syrup for your waistline is a Grade A Medium Amber pure maple syrup. Since the flavor is so concentrated, a little goes a long way, saving you calories and sugar.

21. Farmed salmon

Harmful Ingredients: Omega-6s, PCBs

Atlantic salmon is the Kid Rock album release of the refrigerator section: Always bad news. By definition, all Atlantic salmon is farm-raised and packed with inflammatory omega-6s. Because salmon farmers feed their fish soy, farmed salmon has around 1,900 milligrams of the unhealthy fatty acid while wild salmon has just 114 milligrams. It gets worse: Farmed salmon are usually dyed pink, have been found to be high in PCBs (cancer-causing industrial chemicals that were banned in 1979) and have one-fourth the belly-flattening vitamin D of their wild cousins.

Eat this Instead: Wild salmon. It's high in omega-3 acids, which fight inflammation throughout the body.

22. Sports drinks

Harmful Ingredients: Wood rosin and artificial dyes

Whoever invented the Gatorade Dunk—the tradition in which winning sports teams dump coolers of the stuff on their coaches—was really on to something. One scan of the nutrition label and it's clear: The sports drink is better off seeping into the sidelines than your stomach. Sure, it provides critical post-workout electrolytes, like sodium and potassium, but it also serves up a hearty helping of calories and sugar. In fact, there are 56 grams of the sweet stuff (which is more than a day's worth) in a 32-ounce bottle. What's more, the beverage is teeming with stomach-churning additives like wood rosin and artificial dyes that have been linked to cancer and hyperactivity in children.

Drink This Instead: A better—and safer—way to replenish the electrolytes and water lost after a tough workout: Pick up a fork and knife. There are a number of all-natural foods that are just as hydrating as Gatorade and chock full of electrolytes and nutrients that aid muscle recovery and weight loss. Pick up some of these Healthy Foods Better For Hydration than Gatorade to reap the benefits.

23. Chef Boyardee beef ravioli

Harmful Ingredients: Caramel coloring, soybean oil, yeast extract, high fructose corn syrup

You might not see MSG on this ravioli's ingredients list, but its troublesome compound, glutamic acid, is found inside a couple of ingredients that are there, including yeast extract. After years of bad publicity surrounding MSG, considered a "flavor enhancer" in food-additive terminology, many manufacturers stopped including it and instead slipped through an FDA loophole: They don't have to mention glutamic acid if it's hidden in other ingredients. So what's the big deal about glutamic acid? A review compiled for the FDA recently concluded that the substance triggers some people to have reactions, including migraines, headache, nausea, changes in heart rate, and difficulty breathing.

Eat this Instead: When the craving for pasta strikes, whip up one of these 10 Pasta Salad Recipes for Flat Abs. Sure, they may take some time to cook up, but at least you'll have leftovers for days.

24. Doritos

Harmful Ingredients: Monosodium glutamate) Everyone knows that when you buy Doritos, you're bound to finish the entire bag—and it's no surprise. The recipe for the popular chip was specially designed so that no single flavor overpowers another. When foods lack a dominant flavor, people are less apt to feel full and, in turn, consume more, say researchers. What's more, one of the first ingredients on the food's label is monosodium glutamate (MSG), an additive that's been known to increase appetite and make foods taste more appetizing. And if you thought that Dorito breath was just a coincidental side effect of munching on the snack, think again. The powerful savory taste lingering in your mouth is an example of a tactic called "long hang-time flavor" that's used to lure snackers into going back for more. With all of these factors working against you, it's really no wonder you're defenseless when Doritos come around.

Eat this Instead: Beanitos Nacho Cheese White Bean Chips. A serving of these bean-based chips have a whopping 6 grams of belly-filling fiber, so you'll definitely be able to put the bag down once you've eaten your fill. Plus, they're free of MSG, which should let your natural willpower kick in.

25. Cheetos

Harmful Ingredients: Monosodium Glutamate, yellow 6

It's not your imagination: This orange, puffy snack melts the second it hits your tongue—a phenomenon scientists have dubbed "vanishing caloric density." And it's definitely not an accidental quality of your chips, either. Food developers know that when foods melt quickly, it tricks the brain into thinking you're not eating as many calories. In turn, snackers wind up eating a much larger serving. The sound Cheetos make when you bite into them was also specially developed to get you hooked. The crunchy sound makes them taste more appetizing, likely because we associate the sound with freshness, according to a recent Oxford University study.

What's more, Cheetos are doused with MSG, which has been shown to increase appetite and make foods taste even more delicious. Plus, Cheetos are one of the 8 Most Addictive Foods in the World.

Eat this Instead: Blue Diamond Natural Almond Nut-Thins in Cheddar Cheese. These rice and almond-based crackers offer a Cheeto-esque taste with three grams of hunger-busting protein per serving. Most importantly, they're free of those tricky vanishing calories that cause us to overeat.

26. Oreos

Harmful Ingredients: Palm oil, alkali processed cocoa, high fructose corn syrup

Oreos don't come with a warning, but maybe they should! Not only are they filled with palm oil, a fat that promotes fat-causing inflammation, but Oreos have also been shown to be more addictive than both cocaine and morphine, according to a 2013 animal study. To come to this finding, researchers fed rats rice cakes, Oreos or gave them injections of cocaine or morphine and found that the cookies had the greatest effect on the pleasure center of the brain—which likely explains why it's so hard to eat just one. A second group of researchers found that among all the foods out there, cookies were one of the most difficult to eat in moderation.

Eat this Instead: Nothin' But Chocolate Coconut Almond Granola Cookies. These chewy bites don't quite look or taste like Oreos, but they sure are a lot healthier—and far less addicting. Made from a delicious combination of almonds, oats, chocolate, coconut, cane sugar, spices and espresso powder instead of a mound of processed ingredients, this treat is kinder to your waistline than the traditional twist-and-lick combo. These Best Cookies for Your Weight Loss Meal Plan are also solid nutrition-packed picks.

27. Canned soup

Harmful Ingredients: Monosodium glutamate

Typically dubbed a healthy, soothing meal, soup truly is one of the least suspicious diet saboteurs of them all. What makes it so addicting? Besides being appealing because of its low cost, many popular brands add monosodium glutamate, a flavoring agent that increases appetite and causes migraines. While we weren't too shocked to learn that all of Maruchan Ramen Noodles—a popular college staple—are laced with the ingredient, we were miffed to learn that some of Campbell's condensed soups are loaded with it, too.

Eat this Instead: Progresso, Campbell's V8 Soups, and Pacific Foods Soups are all MSG free. Sticking with those brands will make it easier to keep your appetite and portions in check. If you have high blood pressure, be sure to look for soups with less than 500 milligrams of sodium per serving, too.

28. Bouillon cubes

Harmful ingredient: MSG, Yellow #5, Yellow #6

Monosodium glutamate, better known as MSG, Yellow 5 and Yellow 6 are just three of the unsettling ingredients found in a typical bouillon cube. The former has been shown to stimulate appetite while the latter two, both artificial coloring agents, may have adverse effects on activity and attention in children. To discover other items you should avoid adding to the pot on the stove, check out these 20 Worst Ingredients to Put In Your Soup.

Eat This Instead: Organic broth is available at most supermarkets.

29. Muffins

Harmful Ingredients: Soybean oil, high fructose corn syrup, and trans fats

That innocent-looking muffin may just give you a muffin top if you're not careful. Hey, the name had to come from somewhere, right? A typical blueberry muffin carries nearly 400 calories and a third of the day's fat, and eating half now and "saving the rest for later" is near impossible—likely because foods rich in carbs, fat and sugar can be downright addicting. A University of Montreal study found that mice who had been fed diets with high levels of those very nutrients displayed withdrawal symptoms and were more sensitive to stressful situations after they were put on a healthier diet. Plus, many commercial muffins are also spiked with waist-widening soybean oil, high fructose corn syrup and trans fats, an ingredient that's been shown to decrease brainpower and diminish memory.

Eat this Instead: Kashi Blueberry Waffles. Two of these low-sugar, high-fiber waffles serve up the sweet blueberry taste you crave for a mere 150 calories. Even if you topped them with a tablespoon of syrup, you'd still take in fewer calories and less fat and sugar than you would had you opted for the muffin. The winner here is obvious. Making breakfast at home? Try one of these hacks for weight loss.

30. Mac and cheese

Harmful Ingredients: Coloring agents Yellow 5 and Yellow 6

The glow-in-the-dark color of most mac and cheese products on the market doesn't exist in the natural world and shouldn't be ingested. Why? Well, according to the Center for Science in the Public Interest, studies have linked artificial food coloring to allergies, ADHD, and cancer in animals. Many of these dyes are made from coal tar — just like the products used to seal-coat industrial floors and kill bugs in lice shampoo. Yummy!

Eat This Instead: Pick an organic brand, which means no added artificial colors, no dairy from cows treated with synthetic hormones, and no genetically modified ingredients. Or make one of these Amazing Mac and Cheese Recipes for Weight Loss!

31. Tofu

Harmful Ingredient: Magnesium sulfate

Hardly what you might think of as a risky food item, virtually flavorless tofu — which is made by coagulating soy milk and pressing the resulting curds into soft white blocks — actually harbors a the nasty coagulant magnesium sulfate. Studies have shown it can cause cancer in laboratory animals.

Eat This Instead: Tofu that employs another coagulating agent, such as nigari salts, lushui or clean sea water.

32. Splenda

Harmful Ingredient: Sucralose

You don't want your liver and kidneys to swell while your thymus gland shrinks, but if you did, consuming lots of the artificial sweetener Splenda would be a fantastic way to do it.

Eat This Instead: Before sugar was widely available, people's go-to sweetener was honey, and it still stacks up. Although honey is high in fructose, it also contains a lot of cancer-busting antioxidants. Additionally, local honey has been said to help alleviate allergy symptoms.

33. Hot dogs

Harmful Ingredient: Orange B

There are plenty of good reasons not to eat hot dogs — their high levels of sodium and cancer-causing preservative nitrates are just two — but if you need another, here you go. The casing of many hot dogs is colored with a food dye called Orange B. High doses of it are bad for the liver and bile duct.

Eat This Instead: If you're looking for a juicy dog, opt for an organic option like Applegate Farms' Great Organic Uncured Beef Hot Dog.

34. Shortening

Harmful Ingredient: Trans fats

Mama's baby may like shortening bread, but that's because the infant's knowledge of what trans fats do to his body is patchy at best. Harmful trans fats abound in any food that lists shortening or partially hydrogenated oil as an ingredient. Trans fats will clog your arteries and cause obesity, but they'll also increase your risk of metabolic syndrome.

Eat This Instead: Choose healthier monounsaturated fats, such as olive, peanut and canola oils, and foods that contain unsaturated omega-3 fatty acids instead.

35. Dyed oranges

Harmful Ingredients: Citrus Red #1 and #2

This one's a shocker: Oranges are bought more swiftly when they're a little more orange than the color that was named after them. That's what led someone to hit upon the idea of spray-painting them so they'd appear ripe, even if they aren't. Both of these dyes can damage chromosomes and lead to cancer.

Eat This Instead: Opt for organic oranges, or engage in a little digging to discover if the color of your fruit is actually from a factory in New Jersey.

36. McDonald's milkshakes

Harmful Ingredient: Potassium sorbate

It's listed on Mickey D's website as an ingredient in their milkshakes, although food and chemical toxicology reports labeled potassium sorbate as a carcinogen after it was demonstrated that it tended to cause the cells of mammals to mutate.

Drink This Instead: You're better off creating your dream shake at home with organic ice cream, organic milk, and fresh organic fruits. Try one of these 56 Smoothie Recipes for Weight Loss!

37. Frozen fish and fish products

Harmful Ingredient: tert-Butylhydroquinone

This ingredient is used in many different food and non-food items, but the highest limit (1 gram/kg) permitted is for frozen fish and fish products. It's a preservative that's effective at extending storage life and, at high doses, could cause stomach tumors.

Eat This Instead: Always buy fresh or flash-frozen fish as opposed to anything fishy in the freezer aisle.

38. Soy veggie burgers

Harmful Ingredient: Soy protein

Soy protein is made from genetically modified soybeans (often grown in China) and then subjected to hexane, a chemical solvent that can literally explode.

Eat This Instead: You're far better off with a veggie burger like Amy's Sonoma Burger, which is made entirely of organic vegetables, quinoa, and walnuts.

39. Chewing gum

Harmful Ingredient: Butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA)

If you don't swallow it, can chewing gum count as a food? Yes, because BHA is being released into your mouth. Used as a food preservative, BHA is commonly found in chewing gum, butter, cereals, snack foods and beer. Not only has BHA have been shown to impair blood clotting when consumed in high quantities, but it's also been linked to the promotion of tumor growth. Which led it to be banned from food in the UK, Japan, and many other European countries.

Eat This Instead: If you've got a chewing habit, try sunflower seeds. Not only are they tasty, but they are also an excellent source of vitamin E, the body's primary fat-soluble antioxidant.

40. White flour

Harmful Ingredient: Chlorine dioxide

A bleaching agent, chlorine dioxide is used in a variety of ways, including water treatment and the whitening of flour. According to research undertaken by the Center for Science in the Public Interest, this chemical has been linked to cancer.

Eat This Instead: There are plenty of whole-grain and whole-wheat flours and breads that don't include bleach. Make the switch! Not only do they not contain chlorine dioxide, they're better for you in a variety of ways. Go with one of these 10 Best Brand Name Breads for Weight Loss!

41. White Sugar

Harmful Ingredient: Sugar (duh)

According to the CDC Americans eat a whopping 82 grams of added sugar a day—which is 37 grams above the recommended intake! There's a gross factor to white sugar, too: Refined white sugar is bleached in a process that entails running the sugar through "bone char" or "natural carbon"—both fancy terms for charred cattle bones. Confectioner's and brown sugar can also be culprits, as they are variations of white sugar. To cut your sugar intake, try these 30 Easy Ways to Stop Eating So Much Sugar.

Eat This Instead: Stick to organic cane or turbinado sugar; or consult this a list of char-free sugars.

42. Turkey

Harmful ingredient: Arsenic

You may know arsenic as a toxic chemical, but it's also handy at staving off parasitic infections in poultry. As recently as early 2011, a drug called Roxarsone — which was later found to contain traces of inorganic arsenic — was still being used in chicken feed for this reason, and because it made chicken meat appear pinker and fresher. Since then, the National Chicken Council has said that it is no longer using arsenic-based drugs. The National Turkey Federation, however, says Nitarsone, another arsenic-based drug, is given to turkeys during the first few weeks of their lives and in summer months. It's banned in the European Union. This stuff is bad

for more reasons than can be listed here, but all you really need to know is that it is listed as a class 1 carcinogen, meaning that it's highly toxic to humans.

Eat This Instead: Organic turkey. 'Nuff said.

43. Salad dressing

Harmful Ingredient: Sodium carboxymethyl cellulose

This catchy-sounding item is used as a thickening agent in salad dressing and, in high quantities, it can cause cancer.

Eat This Instead: Olive oil, balsamic vinegar, lemon juice, honey, mustard. These are just some of the whole ingredients you can use to concoct in your kitchen that will be far less likely to do you harm. Choose these Ingredients for Salad Dressing That Will Help Keep You Slim!

44. Baked goods

Harmful Ingredient: Potassium bromate (bromated flour)

Banned in Europe, Canada and even China, potassium bromate abounds here in the U.S. and is found in wraps, rolls, bread crumbs and bagel chips. This food additive is an oxidizing agent used in baking. It helps producers cook things faster. It's also been linked to kidney failure and cell deterioration.

Eat This Instead: This will take a little investigative work on your part, but take a moment to scan the ingredients list next time you're at the market. If you pick up a package with potassium bromate or bromated flour on the label, put it down and pick up something else.

45. Bottled water

Harmful ingredient: BPA (Bisphenol-A)

BPA is a hormone-mimicking chemical found in nearly all food packaging plastics, and it's potentially bad news. Active in just parts per billion, one of the things BPA is known for is causing men to grow breasts by disrupting their hormones. It can also promote cancer and render people infertile.

Drink This Instead: Join the increasing amount of people who want to stay hydrated but also remain alive and with little to no change to the size of their breasts by pouring filtered water into a metal flask or non-BPA bottle.

46. Beverage concentrates

Harmful Ingredient: Acesulfame-K, also known as acesulfame potassium or Ace-K.

This artificial sweetener is often used to make the bitter aftertaste of um...other artificial sweeteners. Acesulfame potassium is suspected of causing benign thyroid tumors. In rats, the development of such tumors took only 3 months. Consequently, the substance is believed to have carcinogenic properties.

Eat This Instead: Stevia. Of all the artificial sweeteners, this is the least offensive. Even if you don't trust the powdered stuff, you can still use the sweeteners by growing your own stevia plant.

47. Dried fruit snacks

Harmful Ingredients: Sulfites

Sulfites, which naturally occur in all wines and are added to some others, are used to keep prepared foods fresh. They're often used in dried fruit snacks. Asthmatics are at an elevated risk for reaction to sulfites (though anaphylaxis and life-threatening reactions are rare). Other reactions include fun stuff like sneezing, swelling of the throat, hives and migraine.

Eat This Instead: Get your dried fruits from a retailer like Whole Foods, which says that all of their dried fruits are 100% sulfate-free.

48. Foods coated with artificial chocolate

Harmful Ingredient: Polysorbate 60

Short for polyoxyethylene-(20)-sorbitan monostearate, this emulsifier is widely used in the food industry. Made of corn, palm oil and petroleum, this gooey mix can't spoil, and it often replaces dairy products in baked goods. It's commonly contaminated with 1,4 dioxane, a chemical which has been shown to cause cancer in animals.

Eat This Instead: Foods coated with real chocolate.

49. Pickles

Harmful Ingredient: Sodium and potassium benzoate

A professor of molecular biology and biotechnology tested the impact of sodium benzoate on living yeast cells and found that benzoate damaged their mitochondria, an important area of DNA in the "power station" of cells. Potassium benzoate, like sodium benzoate often shows up in seemingly innocuous foods such as apple cider, low-fat salad dressings, syrups, jams, olives, and pickles, and it's just as hazardous.

Eat This Instead: You don't have to go too far out of your way to find pickles without this additive. For example: Walmart carries Woodstock Farms Organic Baby Kosher Dill Pickles, which doesn't have either of the benzoate brothers on its ingredients list.

50. Jelly and jams

Harmful Ingredients: Pectin and added sugar

These classic spreads look innocent enough, but they're really just pieces of fruit smothered in calorie-laden sugar and pectin, a natural fruit fiber that makes the spread nice and sticky. What's so bad about natural fiber? Well, just as it causes jelly to stick to your fingers, pectin also sticks to health-boosting antioxidants like beta-carotene, lycopene, and lutein, carrying them out of your system before your body can benefit from them. Smuckers Strawberry Jam and Concord Grape Jelly both contain high levels of pectin and quite a bit of added sugar, so be sure to keep your distance.

Eat This Instead: Your safest bet is to top your peanut butter sandwiches with fresh pieces of fruit like banana and strawberries. You'll get a similar taste with none of the added sugar or pectins. Not willing to ditch your spread? Try Polaner All Fruit Spreadable Fruit Apricot. Apricots are naturally low in pectin, and the spread is free of added sugars. Looking to take your peanut butter and fruit sandwiches to the next level? Try using a better nut butter.