

Food Report on Additives

Avoiding toxins in our diet can help fend off serious health problems. Processed foods contain high levels of fat, oils, salt, sugar, artificial coloring as well as many preservatives. What processed foods don't contain is important nutrients.

Sweeteners are by far the most common food additives. These include sucrose, dextrose, corn syrup, sorbetol as well as artificial sweeteners such as saccharin, aspartame and sucralose. Sweeteners represent empty calories, but Americans still consume 28 billion pounds of sweeteners each year! That means an average of 150 pounds per person. Sugar consumption is being blamed for a major disease in the US – obesity.

Sucrose is table sugar or white sugar. Granulated table sugar is 99.9% sucrose. We may think we are being healthy by substituting raw sugar or turbinado sugar. Not so, as raw sugar contains 96% sucrose and turbinado sugar contains 95% sucrose. Also, turbinado sugar is really no better than granulated white sugar because it also has gone through all but the last steps of refinement.

Sucrose is hidden in spaghetti, frozen dinners, breakfast cereals, bread, ketchup, canned goods, fast foods, processed foods and of course, soft drinks. Some people sensitive to sugar will see an increase in blood fat. Sugar elevates serum triglycerides and increases the risk of heart disease.

Artificial sweeteners are even worse. Saccharin has been on the market for over 100 years. Saccharine has been shown to cause bladder cancer in experimental animals. The FDA proposed banning saccharine in 1977. However, Congress voted to make it exempt from the federal law that prohibits the sale of cancer-causing substances. Foods containing saccharine are required to have a warning label on them.

Aspartame is by far the most popular artificial sweetener. There are those that are sensitive to aspartame. Sensitivities include migraine, disorientation, ringing in the ears and confusion.

Sucralose has recently been approved by the FDA and is marketed as "Splenda". Studies show that it impaired the thymus gland and immune system of experimental animals. Its long term effects are still being studied.

Although consumption of table sugar has declined in recent years, high fructose corn syrup has risen to an average equivalent per person of 1 cup per day! High fructose corn syrup is found in almost all processed foods. There is a risk of cataracts and kidney stones, and in people with high blood pressure, any type of sweetener can elevate blood pressure even more.

Researchers have determined that sugar stimulates the exact same pleasure centers in the brain that morphine, heroin and cocaine do. Are you addicted to sugar and have tried to “kick the habit”? Next month I will discuss keys to successfully kicking the sweetener habit. Questions? Give me call at Rocky Plains Quality Meats 303-833-3791.