



## **The Dirty Dozen: Harmful Ingredients to Avoid**

These 12 chemicals and additives are commonly found in food, supplements, and personal care products. They are linked to various health concerns, including hormone disruption, cancer, and neurological issues. Avoiding these ingredients is a key step toward holistic health.

### **1. Artificial Colors and Dyes (e.g., Red 40, Yellow 5, Blue 1)**

- ◆ What they are: Synthetic colorants used to make products look more appealing.
- ◆ Why to avoid: Linked to ADHD, hyperactivity, and potential carcinogenic effects.
- ◆ Where they are found: Processed foods, candies, drinks, and cosmetics.

### **2. High-Fructose Corn Syrup (HFCS)**

- ◆ What it is: A sweetener made from corn that is high in fructose.
- ◆ Why to avoid: Contributes to insulin resistance, obesity, and diabetes.
- ◆ Where it is found: Soft drinks, packaged snacks, sauces, and processed foods.

### **3. Trans Fats (Partially Hydrogenated Oils)**

- ◆ What they are: Artificial fats created by adding hydrogen to vegetable oil.
- ◆ Why to avoid: Increases the risk of heart disease, stroke, and diabetes.
- ◆ Where they are found: Margarine, baked goods, and fried foods.

### **4. Sodium Nitrate and Nitrite**

- ◆ What they are: Preservatives used in processed meats to maintain color and prevent bacterial growth.
- ◆ Why to avoid: Linked to an increased risk of cancer, particularly colorectal cancer.
- ◆ Where they are found: Bacon, hot dogs, deli meats, and sausages.

## 5. Phthalates

- What they are: Chemicals used to soften plastics and as solvents in fragrances.
- Why to avoid: Known endocrine disruptors, they may cause hormonal imbalances and developmental issues.
- Where they are found: Personal care products, plastic containers, and food packaging.

## 6. Bisphenol A (BPA)

- ◆ What it is: A chemical used in the production of plastic and resins.
- ◆ Why to avoid: Linked to hormone disruption, reproductive issues, and cancer.
- ◆ Where it is found: Canned foods, plastic containers, and water bottles.

## 7. Bisphenol S (BPS)

- What it is: A Chemical used as a substitute for BPA in many products labeled BPA free.
- Why to avoid: Can leach into food and beverages and disrupt the endocrine system, potentially affecting reproductive health, brain function, and metabolism.
- Where is it found: BPA-free plastics, receipts, and some food containers.

## 8. Bisphenol F (BPF)

- What it is: Another BPA alternative, often used in the production of plastics and resins.
- Why to avoid: Like BPS, BPF has been shown to have similar hormone-disrupting properties. It may also contribute to obesity, insulin resistance, and other metabolic issues.
- Where it is found: Some BPA-free plastics, food containers, and water bottles.

## 9. Artificial Sweeteners (e.g., Aspartame, Sucralose, Saccharin)

- ◆ What they are: Synthetic sweeteners used as sugar substitutes.
- ◆ Why to avoid: Can cause headaches, metabolic disruptions, and increase cravings for sweet foods
- ◆ Where they are found: Diet sodas, sugar-free products, and chewing gum.

## 10. Parabens

- ◆ What they are: Synthetic preservatives used in cosmetics and personal care products.
- ◆ Why to avoid: Linked to hormone disruption, particularly estrogenic effects.
- ◆ Where they are found: Shampoos, lotions, deodorants, and makeup.

## 11. Sodium Lauryl Sulfate (SLS)

- What it is: A surfactant used to create foam in personal care products.
- Why to avoid: Can cause skin irritation, allergic reactions, and disrupt the skin's natural barrier.
- Where it is found: Shampoos, body washes, and toothpaste.

## 12. Propylene Glycol

- ◆ What it is: A synthetic compound used as a humectant in cosmetics and food.
- ◆ Why to avoid: Can cause skin irritation, allergic reactions, and disrupt the immune system.
- ◆ Where it is found: Cosmetics, food, and pharmaceuticals.

## 13. Glyphosate

- ◆ What it is: A herbicide used in agriculture, particularly in genetically modified crops.
- ◆ Why to avoid: Linked to cancer, hormone disruption, and gut health issues.
- ◆ Where it is found: Non-organic grains, produce, and processed foods.

## 14. Artificial Fragrances (e.g., Phthalates, Parabens)

- What they are: Synthetic chemicals used to create scents in personal care and cleaning products.
- Why to avoid: Can cause headaches, allergic reactions, and hormone disruption.
- Where they are found: Perfumes, air fresheners, cleaning products, and lotions.

## How to Avoid the Dirty Dozen

- ◆ Read Labels: Always check ingredient lists for these harmful chemicals.
- ◆ Choose Organic: Organic products are less likely to contain pesticides, GMOs, and synthetic chemicals.
- ◆ Go Natural: Opt for natural or homemade alternatives to cosmetics, cleaning products, and processed foods.

- ◆ Support Brands with Transparency: Look for companies that prioritize clean ingredients and third-party testing.