To Dye For: Food Dyes To Avoid

Have you ever been curious as to why things with grape flavor are purple in color, yet the inside of grapes are basically clear? The answer is food dyes. The FDA currently approves 9 artificial food colors, three of which are banned from human consumption in the European Union. There are numerous scientific studies indicating a link between food dyes and various illnesses.

Consumers associate certain flavors with certain colors. There is a positive correlation between the color purple and grape flavoring. So, manufacturers perpetuate that association by artificially dying their products to ensure their consumers will recognize that associated taste. This is how manufacturers market and sell their products, and this is how they get away with the use of dyes.

Therefore, it is extremely important to read the ingredient list on food labels and avoid consuming food dyes when possible. Beware of these dyes in your foods and think twice before consuming:

Blue No. 1: frosting, ice cream, blue-raspberry flavoring

Blue No. 2: candy, cereal, ice cream

Citrus Red No. 2: coloring skins of oranges (Not approved for use in EU)

Green No. 3: canned peas, mint jelly, sauces (Not approved for use in EU)

Orange B: hotdog and sausage casings (Not approved for use in EU)

Red No. 3: popsicles, cake-decorating gels, candy, chewing gum

Red No. 40: soft drinks, sport drinks, cocktail mixers, fruit snacks, yogurt, salad dressings

Yellow No. 5: ice cream, popsicles, hard candy, Jell-O, cake mixes, mustard, cereal, jam

Yellow No. 6: orange soda, jam, lemon curd, ice cream, chips, noodles

In your diet, it is best to strive for organic foods with natural coloring that hasn’t been lost in processing like fresh fruits and vegetables. If you recognize and can pronounce the ingredients on a product label, it is probably safe. The longer the ingredient list, especially if there are unfamiliar ingredients, the less safe it is. Skip it and go for whole, real foods every time.