

Franken-Foods: Defending Your Family's Future

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Franken-Foods are just like Frankenstein—artificially constructed, using dead parts, without a soul, killing without intent. They cause or contribute to a myriad of illnesses, some of which we call aging, weight gain, arthritis, asthma, autism, IBS, depression, heart disease, cancer, reflux, etc. We need to be informed and vigilant in removing them from our kids foods and our bodies, where they hide in our fat, muscle and brain ¹.

The federal government, despite the food industry lobbyists, is finally addressing the public health data, required changes in labeling and contents. Initially, with trans fats, the food industry responded not by reducing these fats, but by reducing the size of each serving, so if less than 0.5 grams per serving, it could list the trans fats as zero. Finally, due to consumer demand and other bad press, companies and restaurants are eliminating these toxic fats. While that is a step in the right direction, at the same time, the food industry uses misinformation to confuse issues ² and continually introduces new substances to produce food cheaply, with addictive taste and long shelf life, exactly the opposite of what we need for our health.

This list includes the eleven worst offenders—it is hard to keep the list short.

1. Heavy Metals. These include mercury, lead, arsenic cadmium, arsenic, and aluminum. Known food sources are fish, coal burning (released mercury settles in oceans and soil), smoke (including barbecue), preservatives and others. Aluminum is not only present in cans, but also in antacids, baking powder, and deodorants. While most of us have the ability to eliminate small amounts of these metals, some, especially children are vulnerable to amounts deemed “safe”. These limits do not correlate with current science—our understanding of the toxic effect of these metals increases, and the recommended limit decreases every year. While hard to avoid, we need to eat smaller fish, such as sardines. We need to avoid sources of aluminum. Certain foods and supplements can defend us against these compounds ^{3,4}.

2. Hydrogenated Oils. While being removed and outlawed, there are many hidden sources. For example, when foods such as french fries are cooked at high temperatures, even with good oils, these toxic oils form. They take months to eliminate from our cell membranes, where they confuse cell-to-cell signaling, contributing to diabetes, cancer, allergy, hormonal imbalance, ADHD, pain and other chronic diseases.

3. Genetically Modified Foods. Genes contain DNA which determines the sequences of amino acids in proteins. Genetically engineered or modified (“GM”) organisms, such as soy and corn (over 60% of the current US crop), contain synthetic sequences never seen over billions of years of evolution. While research demonstrates that GM food can cause illness in most species, and will ruin our environment, these foods and products were pushed through the governmental approval process by powerful lobbyists. Most of Europe has outlawed GM products. In the US, these mutant ingredients do not have to be labeled, and most Americans are not aware of their huge prevalence.

GM plants and organisms cannot be contained. Their pollen mixes in the air with that from non-GM organisms. GM bacteria, now used routinely in industry, can share it's altered DNA with other organisms, including animal hosts. It is hypothesized that

GM foods are in part responsible for increasing allergy and other illness ⁵.

4. Pesticides are used extensively in conventional agriculture. Certain pesticides banned in the US are exported to third world countries, who use the pesticides and then export their produce back to the USA. Many pesticides have a structure similar to estrogen, called “xeno-estrogens”. They contribute to early puberty in girls, infertility, breast cancer, declining testosterone and sperm counts in men, and other ills.

Conventional products such as butter or cheese are worse than milk because the pesticides are concentrated when these products are made. Everyday products, such as coffee, tea, and strawberries, and “healthy” foods such as spinach and apples, can be as toxic as food that we know are unhealthy. These toxins can remain in our bodies and accumulate for decades.

And while, individually, at low doses, they may not cause cancer or other diseases, it is virtually impossible to study the effect of hundreds of these chemicals as they accumulate in our body over decades, and generations, called “the cocktail effect”.

5. Artificial Sweeteners and Flavorings. These substances, such as aspartame, Splenda, MSG and others, have similarities to certain neuro-chemicals and can cause overstimulation of certain parts of our brain. They are linked to ADHD, Parkinson's disease, and other neuro-degenerative diseases. There is growing evidence that diet foods cause weight gain by confusing our metabolism and endocrine systems! It is better to have a bit of sugar than these toxins, which, like others, can reside within the body for decades.

6. Corn syrup is 10-20x sweeter and cheaper than sugar. Both corn syrup, sugar, and the fructose they contain confuse our pancreas, liver and adrenal glands. Most corn syrup is derived from genetically modified corn and further modified chemically. While giving us a brief burst of energy, the net result is a debt that we all recognize as sugar craving, fatigue, and a myriad of ills. Obesity and diabetes, now affecting children, is an epidemic that is bankrupting modern societies.

7. Conventional meats and eggs. Not only are these animals loaded with antibiotics and hormones, they are treated with extreme cruelty and damage ecology. These animals are fed GM corn and soy, as well as byproducts of other (sick) animals. If we saw how these foods were produced, we would never go near them! Many of us need some animal products to feel well. We need to eat less, but better quality animal products.

8. Plastics. The advantage and disadvantage of plastics is their durability. Once in our soil, water, and bodies they may not deteriorate for decades or longer. Many have the same characteristics as pesticides discussed above. While it is virtually impossible to live a plastic-free life, we all need to decrease our use of them, move back to safer materials such as glass, ceramic, iron and steel, and develop ways to detoxify our bodies and planet.

9. Commercial Dairy. We are the only species that regularly consumes another's milk. Conventional cow milk not only contains cow hormones, but the same GM proteins and pesticides discussed above, as well as antibiotics and artificial hormones. While organic dairy (including butter and cheese), or non-cow (goat, buffalo) products may be less toxic, they still are a source of allergy and inflammation for many. Pasteurization and

homogenization have been around only for a little over a hundred years. These processes certainly alter the nature of the milk, which some claim as a cause of modern milk's toxicity. Despite the marketing by the dairy industry, milk is not a good source of calcium Vitamin D or protein ^{2,6,7}.

10. Breakfast Cereals were first developed as "health foods" by people such as Kelloggs and Post. However, when one company started coating their cereal with sugar (to the outrage of the other companies) their sales took off, and all companies had to follow suit. Nowadays, breakfast cereals are no better than candy, to which cheap vitamins are added to rationalize their consumption. Heavily marketed to children, utilizing the "nag" factor, Moms relent to their begging children. In Europe, companies are not allowed to market to kids under 12 years old!

11. Fluoride, Bromine and Chlorine. These halides, used as disinfectants, are present in our water, soil, and food. They compete with iodine processing and are probably contributing to our epidemic of thyroid, breast, brain and other diseases. See a future article on this topic.

What Is Left to Eat? This information, while potentially overwhelming, is empowering once over the shock. The issue of "my kids and family won't eat healthy foods" is simply dealt with by continually educating ourselves, and by having only healthy foods in the house. Making small changes, one at a time, such as converting from conventional to organic products, is a powerful first step.

While organic produce food seems to be more expensive, it not only is free of chemicals, the quality and quantity of nutrients in organic food makes the price worthwhile, especially for our kids and anyone else that you love. There is data showing that kids who eat organic foods are healthier. Meals taste better and are more satisfying, reducing hunger and promoting weight loss.

You can think of many conventional produce as made of plastic. Though cheaper, they are empty of nutrients and full of petroleum derivatives.

When buying animal products, look for terms such as "Organic" and "Grass Fed". The words "natural", and "no added preservatives" may not mean that the foods are healthy.

We all need to invest in our health if we want our future generations to be healthier than us. The current trend is now in the opposite direction, with increasing illness in the children of industrial countries. The explosive growth of the organic and sustainable food industries demonstrates that we are not alone. The food industries will respond to our demands if we vote with our pocketbook for healthier choices.

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Footnotes and Reading Materials (Books followed by ISBN number)

1. See Dr. Cheikin's website, www.cheikin.com, for related articles and expanded bibliographies and tables
2. Campbell, TC & Campbell TM: The China Study: The Most Comprehensive Study of Nutrition... 2005. 1932-100-385.
3. ewg.org keeps current lists of the most and least toxic fish and produce
4. Evaluation and safe treatment of toxicities requires the supervision of a qualified health practitioner.
5. The Sierra club has produced a DVD on GM foods entitled "You're Eating What!".

6. Cordain, Loren: Paleo Answer. 2012. 978-1118-016-084.
7. Furhman, Mark: Disease-Proof Your Child. 0312-338-082
8. Ballentine, Rudolph: Radical Healing: Integrating the World's Greatest Therapeutic Traditions... 2000. 0609-804-847
9. Moritz, Andreas: Timeless Secrets of Health and Rejuvenation. 2007. 9780-9792-75753.
10. Pizzorno, Joseph: Total Wellness: Improve Your Health by Understanding... Prima, 1997, ISBN 0761-510-94X.

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