

8 INGREDIENTS TO AVOID & **HEALTHY SWAP IDEAS**

For your pantry makeover, discard these items and replace with healthier versions.

#1

HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP:

(*sugar, corn sugar, cane juice, dextrose, sucralose, glucose): manufacturers have gotten really slick in hiding these, often there are 3-5 different kinds of sweeteners in one product. Look for sugar, cane syrup, high fructose corn syrup, cane juice, dextrose, sucralose, glucose, cane juice, etc. Remember the more sugar you consume the more you will crave. Unfortunately there is some kind of sweetener in almost every processed food product on the shelf. Mostly all HFCS is made from genetically-modified corn, and is the number one source of caloric consumption in the US diet. It has been directly linked to weight gain and the development of diabetes. If this isn't enough to scare people away from this harmful ingredient, HFCS is also a major contributing factor to cardiovascular disease, arthritis, and insulin resistance (the causing agent of Type 2 Diabetes) and high blood pressure. HFCS is found in soda, salad dressings, breads, cereals, soups, pizza sauce and even ketchup.

HEALTHY SWAPS: Mary's Gone Crackers, Tessemae's dressings and condiments, Bob's Red Mill gluten-free oats, millet, etc...

#2

ASPARTAME:

One of the most commonly used artificial sweeteners, and also referred to as a man-made poison. Aspartame is also an excitotoxin, like MSG, causing headaches, dizziness, and gastrointestinal damage. Research shows this "safe" and popular additive can destroy your immune system by consistent consumption. Some say it is like digesting poison. Many researchers conclude that aspartame is one of the most dangerous FDA approved substances available to consumers. Aspartame is found in NutraSweet, Equal, etc... and is abundant in sodas.

HEALTHY SWAPS:

[Quick Guide to Natural Sweeteners](#)

"IF IT CAME FROM A PLANT, EAT IT; IF IT WAS MADE IN A PLANT, DON'T.

~ MICHAEL POLLAN, FOOD RULES

#3

LOW-FAT & FAT FREE: Low-fat and fat-free products negatively affect your body because companies add more sugar and additives to keep the full-fat taste. Plus, all fat isn't bad for you. You need good fat for many reasons: it helps most organs function correctly, benefits the skin, and is needed so your body can absorb the fat soluble vitamins A, S, E, and K.

HEALTHY SWAPS: avocado, extra virgin olive oil, nuts, seeds

#4

MONOSODIUM GLUTAMATE (MSG):

MSG is found in processed foods like salad dressings, frozen meals, potato chips, canned soups and some flavored crackers. MSG is a dangerous ingredient as it's known as an excitotoxin, a neurotoxic chemical additive that harms nerve cells by overexciting them. Consuming MSG regularly damages and even destroys a large number of brain cells and can lead to serious health problems. Also, consistent consumption of MSG is linked to appetite stimulation and weight gain.

HEALTHY SWAPS: MSG is used to enhance the savory flavors in foods. Herbs such as garlic, savory, tarragon, rosemary and pepper add a spicy, savory flavor. Turmeric and cumin add warmth to any dish.

#5

REFINED VEGETABLE OIL:

(soybean oil, corn oil, safflower oil, canola oil and peanut oil): Vegetable oils are made by mechanical and chemical processes to derive the oil from the seeds. The process contains chemical solvents, extremely high temperatures, and bleaching, which removes the natural vitamins and minerals from the seeds. Also, most vegetable oils are hydrogenated, meaning the mechanical process creates trans fatty acids which are known to contribute to heart disease and some cancers. Vegetable oil is found in most processed foods such as crackers, granola bars, baked goods, and standard cooking oils.

HEALTHY SWAPS: Extra virgin olive oil, coconut oil, hemp oil, flax oil, avocado oil (cold-pressed). **Brand:** Spectrum

Consuming real, whole food is the best healthy swap, but this is real life and sometimes packaged foods enter your kitchen. Read labels and make sure the ingredients list is short.

#6

ENRICHED FLOUR: This ingredient is used as an additive in foods to increase the volume in breads and cereals. It has been shown to cause cancer in animals and is banned in Canada and many countries. In some US states, a cancer warning is used on the label, and the FDA has asked bakers to "voluntarily" stop using it. Enriched flour is the equivalent to putting pure starch in your system; very hard to digest. Your body reacts to enriched flour the same way it reacts to pure sugar, by going on sugar highs and lows. Enriched flour is found in most commercial baked goods in the US, including Wonder Bread and Sunbeam.

*Be careful of whole wheat, too. If you are eating clean, gluten-free options are the way to go. BUT avoid products with soy and additives as many gluten-free brands contain these ingredients. Also, with any bread, use sparingly if weight loss or maintaining a healthy weight is your goal.

HEALTHY SWAPS: Food for Life Gluten-free Brown Rice Bread (sprouted bread contains all enzymes and is healthier for you)

#7

TABLE SALT: Salt is a chemical and processed. Salt is not a natural element that digests properly or does anything our bodies. It is true that our bodies need sodium, but sodium and salt are completely different. Most salts sold in commercial supermarkets are synthetic and bleached. Salt's toxicity levels are so high, it drastically increases blood pressure and causes bloating and obesity.

HEALTHY SWAPS: Himalayan, Kosher and Celtic Sea Salt.

#8

ISOLATES: Soy protein and whey protein isolates are abundant in cereals, protein bars and shakes, etc... When you isolate, you process. You are not getting the full nutrients. So avoid these as much as possible. Try for concentrate instead. (Whey is an animal protein. Therefore it's not part of a plant-strong routine).

HEALTHY SWAPS: Pea, hemp, flax, rice protein. **Brands:** Vega, Sunwarrior, The Ultimate Meal, Amazing Grass