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## **Kellogg Will Eliminate Artificial Ingredients in Cereal and Snacks**

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Kellogg, the world's largest producer of breakfast cereal, announced it will stop using artificial colors and flavors in its cereal and snacks by the end of 2018. Currently, about 25 percent of its North American cereals still contain artificial colors while about half contain artificial flavors. The announcement comes on the heels of similar news from competitor General Mills, which announced it would phase out all artificial ingredients in its cereal products by 2017.

### **Artificial Ingredients Have No Place in Your Breakfast**

Food giants are trying to appear as though they're looking out for your health by removing questionable ingredients, but they really only did so after the market demanded it. A survey by General Mills found that nearly half of US households are trying to avoid artificial flavors and colors... and the company wants their cereals to remain a steady presence in those homes. General Mills senior manager Lauren Pradhan told the *Washington Post*: "*We want to make sure cereal is relevant for our families today... so we'll be on breakfast tables for the next hundred years... If these ingredients are stopping them from enjoying cereal in the morning, we want to remove them.*"

Really, however, these ingredients had no business being in your breakfast in the first place. As of July 2010, most foods in the EU that contained artificial food dyes were labeled with warning labels stating the food "may have an adverse effect on activity and attention in children. This prompted many food manufacturers to voluntarily remove the dyes from their products. This is why if you eat a Nutri-Grain strawberry cereal bar in the US, it will contain artificial color, including Red 40, which has been found to accelerate the appearance of immune system tumors in mice, while also triggering hyperactivity in children. That same Nutri-Grain bar in the UK contains only natural colorings. In fact, the UK branches of Wal-Mart, Kraft, Coca-Cola, and Mars removed artificial colors, sodium benzoate, and aspartame from their product lines as a result of consumer pressure and government recommendations – back in 2011. In the US, however, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) continues to allow these toxic ingredients in countless popular foods, including those marketed directly to children. At the end of March 2011, the FDA held a session to discuss the science on food dyes and hyperactivity.

They decided that warning labels are not necessary on US foods that contain artificial color because a causal relationship had not been established in the general population. Yet, in 2007, a carefully designed, randomized, double-blind, and placebo-controlled study published in the journal *The Lancet* concluded that a variety of common food dyes and the preservative sodium benzoate cause some children to become measurably more hyperactive and distractible.[3](#)

In 1994, researchers also found that 73 percent of children with ADHD responded favorably to an elimination diet that included removing artificial colors.

### **Food Additives Lack Safety Testing**

More than 10,000 additives are allowed in food when you factor in those that are added directly to your food as well as those in the packaging (which can migrate to your food). Unfortunately, many of these additives have been linked to health concerns, while others have been granted “Generally Recognized as Safe” (GRAS) status without pre-market review or approval. As the Environmental Working Group (EWG) reported: *“This system makes sense for benign additives such as pepper and basil, but there are enormous loopholes that allow additives of questionable safety to be listed as GRAS. Manufacturers can decide whether these compounds are safe without any oversight by the Food and Drug Administration [FDA] – and in some cases obtain GRAS status without telling the FDA at all.”*

When you see the term “artificial flavors” on a label, for instance, there’s no way to know what it actually means. It could mean that one unnatural additive is included — or a blend of hundreds. For example, strawberry artificial flavor may contain around 50 chemical compounds.<sup>6</sup> Some artificial flavorings have quite serious health concerns. Phosphates are added to more than 20,000 products, including fast food, baked goods, and processed meats. They’re used to reduce acid, improve moisture retention, boost flavor, and facilitate leavening. Phosphates have been linked to some concerning health conditions, including heart disease.

### **Breakfast Cereals Still Not Healthy, Even Without Artificial Colors and Flavors**

In a report from the Environmental Working Group (EWG), it was even revealed that many popular children's cereals contain more sugar than snack cakes and cookies. For instance, one cup of Kellogg Honey Smacks, which is nearly 56 percent sugar by weight, has more sugar than a Twinkie, while a one-cup serving of 44 other children's cereals analyzed contain more sugar than three Chips Ahoy! cookies. If you need a recap of why sugar is a health disaster, you can find one here. In addition to acting as a root cause of obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and numerous other chronic diseases, excessive intake of refined sugar, like grains, can upset the balance of bacteria in your digestive tract, encouraging damage to your intestinal lining that can lead to leaky gut. Sugary children's cereals are a double-edged sword, assaulting your fragile gastrointestinal tract with both damaging sugar and grains. Please do your kids a great favor and offer them a healthier breakfast instead.

### ***The Dorito Effect: How Artificial Flavors Make You Lose Your Taste for Healthy Foods***

In his book *The Dorito Effect*, author Mark Schatzker explains how artificial flavors in foods have not only made people crave them, but at the same time have programmed us to believe that’s how all foods should taste. The end result is that our taste don’t appreciate the natural flavors in fresh foods the way they once did, and our brains are fooled into thinking our bodies are getting the same nutrition from, say, orange “flavor” as they do from an actual orange. The good news is it’s possible to “rewire your palate” simply by ditching processed foods and focusing your diet on the freshest, most flavorful ingredients you can find. When you eat this way, you’ll realize that real food tastes delicious while processed foods are nothing more than chemical imitations.