



MSG

Monosodium Glutamate

Other Names for MSG



- MSG
- Monosodium glutamate
- Hydrolyzed "anything"
- Autolyzed "anything"
- Natural flavor/ flavorings
- Caseinate (sodium or calcium)
- Carrageenan
- Yeast extract or nutrient
- Seasonings, Spice
- Gelatin
- Bouillon/ Broth/ Stock
- Commercial soup or sauce base
- Soy, wheat, whey protein
- Soy, fish, or bean sauces
- Malted barley flour
- Malt extract
- Corn byproducts: corn syrup, dextrose, cornstarch, citric acid

What is MSG?

Monosodium Glutamate, MSG, is called a "flavor enhancer". It is not a preservative and it has no nutritional value. It does nothing to food, but it does affect the person using it.

It's called an "excitotoxin" or neurotoxin by leading neuroscientists because of its degenerative and deadly effects on the brain and nervous system. Neurons are over stimulated to the point of exhaustion and cell death. MSG first goes to the brain through membranes in the mouth and throat, and also enters the blood stream as MSG laden foods are digested. It tricks the brain into thinking it's getting something tasty.

MSG is not a naturally occurring substance. It's man-made from glutamic acid, which is an amino acid found in all complete proteins. These

Current research links MSG to neuro-degenerative diseases like Alzheimer's, Huntington's, Parkinson's, and Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS).

amino acids occur naturally in many plant and animal tissues. Artificially created MSG involves processes that break down and change natural-bound glutamate (usually from corn, grain starches, molasses) into various free forms of glutamate. One form, d-glutamic acid is never found in nature. Free glutamates can enter the blood stream 8-10 times faster than bound or natural glutamate which is found in tomatoes, milk, and mushrooms. Commercial processes used today to manufacture MSG weren't in use until the 1960s. There's nothing "natural" about the MSG in wide use today. Aspartame (NutraSweet®) is another widely used excitotoxin.

Brain Damage, Excitotoxins, and More!

Neuroscientists explain that MSG attacks the blood-brain barrier of brain cells, which normally protects and regulates the delicate chemical exchange within a cell. This chemical exchange is carefully balanced and when everything is functioning properly, the brain and the body's immune system are handling all kinds of pollutants, stress, and disease. Even tiny amounts of toxic substances can cause the brain cell to overreact to the point of exhaustion and death. Thus the term, "excitotoxins".

MSG is a major "excitotoxin" and is known to damage the part of the brain that governs many other systems in the body. This damage may appear as disorders of the autonomic nervous system and endocrine system. Thus it can be manifested in disrupted sleep patterns, food cravings, and persistent hunger, which often leads to obesity.

Its effects have been linked to many degenerative diseases like Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease and Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS). MSG also induces migraine headaches, asthma attacks, behavioral disorders, depression, heart irregularities, arthritis, sinus problems, and many digestive problems.

FDA records show that MSG was never actually tested, but it was given an automatic GRAS (generally regarded as safe) status as were salt and pepper in the 1950s.

Children, Unborn, Elderly, are most vulnerable

The subject of behavioral disorders in children is now common discussion among professionals and lay people. Studies have linked violent behavior, emotional instability and attention deficits to chemical imbalances in the brain. Young brains are still developing the fragile blood-brain barrier and until maturity, it is extremely vulnerable to early damage caused by excitotoxins.

A *Time* magazine article in April 1994 confirms a rising problem of behavioral disorders. It stated that attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD or ADD without hyperactivity) was virtually unheard of fifteen years ago, but is now said to be affecting 3.3 million American children. The article quotes prominent research which ten years ago said that symptoms of ADHD and ADD faded with maturity. However, ADD is now “the fastest growing diagnostic category for adults”. The combination of excitotoxins MSG and aspartame (NutraSweet®) came into wide use in the early 1980s.

! The sale of drugs like Ritalin, which are prescribed for these disorders, have gone up almost 400% in just four years.

! MSG is a known mutagen (mutates fetal cells). Damage occurs in the womb as chemicals pass from the mother’s blood into the developing fetus.

! The elderly also show high vulnerability to progressive neuro-degenerative diseases like Alzheimer’s.

Brain cells never regenerate, unlike other cells which can regenerate in hours, weeks, and months..

Why different reactions to MSG?

MSG is a neurotoxin and it takes very little to create widely diverse and dramatic effects on the human body. One person may take a few milligrams of a prescription drug and have only mild and favorable effects. Another person may take the same amount and get depressed, have stomach cramps, a swollen tongue and aching joints.

Children and elderly are most vulnerable to the degenerative effects of MSG.

Separate parts of the brain govern different body functions. The body function that is affected will depend on the part of the brain that is attacked by the excitotoxin. If a person has had a head injury, has a genetic weakness in a specific part of the brain, has had high fevers that damage parts of the brain; or has had a stroke, the damaged area will be the part that is easily affected and vulnerable to toxins.

Health Foods vs. Healthy Foods, The “Natural Flavor” Dilemma

Health conscious people are supporting a health food industry worth about a trillion dollars a year, according to the 1993 Statistical Abstract of the United States.

Some health foods are sold as “heart smart” and weight loss promotions. When fat and sugar are removed from foods, MSG and aspartame are frequently added. These excitotoxic food additives are known to produce obesity and irregular heartbeats in many people.

The FDA allows MSG to be labeled by other names including “natural flavors”, hydrolyzed protein, and autolyzed yeast when it is a component part of an additive and not purely MSG.

A Dangerous Amount?

Americans are now consuming an estimated 160 million pounds of MSG annually. Dr. George Schwartz, toxicologist and author says two tablespoons of MSG on a piece of bread will kill a medium-sized dog in minutes.

In 1995, the FDA claimed that no one will react to less than three grams of MSG per meal. But it has since warned that MSG should be avoided by children, the elderly, pregnant or lactating women, and asthmatics. A sensitized person can react to much less than one gram.

Research indicates that in the late 1950s, the estimated use of MSG in America was 12 grams/person/year. Today that estimate is in excess of 400-500 grams/person/year, an amount even the FDA should evaluate.

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Coincidence?

MSG came into wide use in the mid-1970s and gained in popularity with food producers through the 1980s. MSG and aspartame are two powerful excitotoxic food additives that flooded the food industry by the mid-1980s. MSG is linked to numerous diseases, symptoms, and complaints. It affects the neurological systems of the body. These same ailments are being researched and reported to be on the rise, often unexpectedly and without explanation.

Here is a brief list of common effects of MSG and some curious statistics published by national organizations.

Heart maladies- More than 70 million Americans have one or more forms of cardiovascular disease and 43% of all deaths in the U.S. are related to these problems. The number of cardiovascular operations went up 287% from 1980-1990.

Alzheimer's disease, not an identifiable healthcare cost in 1980, now ranks third after cancer and heart disease among the most costly health problems in America. Four million people afflicted at a cost of \$47,000/person/year, is \$188 billion/year in healthcare costs.

Headaches & Migraines- \$2.2 billion/year are spent on drugs to treat headaches, with a 74% increase in these chronic conditions between 1980-1990.

Asthma, which was on the decline until the mid-eighties, now shows a 100% increase in the death rate among children and seniors. Incidence has increased 600% in the last 10 years. The FDA recognizes that "uncontrollable asthma" can be caused by MSG, but stops there, unfortunately.

Tumors— There has been an 88% increase

in tumors since 1982.

Birth Defects and Reproduction

Disorders - MSG is a known "mutagen" (mutates fetuses) and causes significant damage to intellectual development, growth patterns, reproduction and gonadal functions.

Neurological/Emotional Disorders - Lab studies show devastating effects on brain development including dyslexia, autism, attention deficit disorder, hyperactivity, schizophrenia, violent episodes (rage), panic attacks, seizures, paranoia, depression, and cerebral palsy. Humans are 5 times more sensitive to MSG than rats which were used in tests.

Obesity is one of the most consistent effects of excitotoxin exposure and is a growing problem, nationwide, that knows no age or sex boundaries. In fact, scientists feed glutamate to young laboratory animals as a reliable way of inducing obesity. MSG triggers an insulin/adrenalin/fat storage/food craving response. This depletes serotonin levels which trigger headaches, depression, fatigue, and leads to more food cravings.

Fibromyalgia is a growing epidemic. Fibromyalgia patients who eliminated MSG and aspartame during a study conducted by the University of Florida reported complete relief of symptoms (2001).

Parkinson's, ALS, MS, and Huntington's diseases, like Alzheimer's, are all progressive neurogenic diseases showing brain/nerve cell damage.

Other symptoms of MSG sensitivity include: swollen throat and tongue, racing heart, joint pain, vertigo, skin disorders, sleeping disorders, burning, tightness or redness on face, and gastrointestinal complaints.

Tests and Misinformation

Dr. Adrienne Samuels (Ph.D. in Research) in a 1999 industry journal ("Accountability in Research") stated that human tests of MSG, "... were often poorly designed, included inaccurate data and came to misleading conclusions." She wrote, "flawed research, suppression of facts and dissemination of inaccurate information are all tools that are used by special interest groups to mislead the public and government agencies." Her research showed that all tests to date have been funded by or had ties to the food industry. These lobby groups are comprised of the largest food companies in America who profit from MSG use.

For more information:

Books:

[Battling the MSG Myth](#) by Debby Anglesey

[Excitotoxins: The Taste that Kills](#) by Dr. Russell Blaylock, Neurosurgeon
[In Bad Taste: The MSG Symptom Complex](#) by Dr. George Schwartz, Toxicologist

Fibromyalgia Study: www.theannals.com, (The Annals of Pharmacotherapy, 1 June 2001, Vol. 35, pp 702-706.

Web Sites:

www.msgmyth.com
www.msgtruth.org
www.truthinlabeling.org
www.nomsg.com

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