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Monosodium Glutamate (MSG) was discovered to be toxic in 1969. Tests showed that it caused brain tumors in rats. At that time it was in all commercial baby foods. The food processors rushed to pull it out of baby foods and other foods. But, as time went on, its use in the food supply has doubled in EVERY DECADE since.

Why? Because MSG is an incredible flavoring agent. Think about what it means to a food processor to have an additive like MSG that 1) suppresses undesirable flavors (you can't even tell if the food is rancid it works so well); 2) gives zest to food; 3) increases flavor and odor appeal; 4) suppresses bitterness and sourness; 5) removes the tinny taste from canned foods (VS/ow!); 6) improves meaty, chicken-like flavors; 7) increases flavor appeal in meats, seafood's, stews, and chowders (In case these foods aren't fresh, you will think they taste fresh); 8) creates a lingering flavor reaction; 9) increases saltiness; and 10) accentuates sweetness.

As a result, in the three decades since the rat study, the use of MSG and MSG-containing substances has risen almost 10 TIMES!

How does MSG work? When layered on the tongues of experimental animals, MSG caused a nervous reaction that went from the tongue directly to the cortex of the brain, resulting in a spreading cerebral excitation through nerve synapse connections. MSG creates a neurological taste effect.

Taste is our bodies' innate way of telling us if something is good or bad to eat. It is a protective mechanism built in by our Creator. Taste relies primarily on the perception of stimuli through the taste buds. When stimulated, these taste buds transmit electrical signals to the brain, which interprets the signals and forms and overall impression.

When MSG is added to food, it changes the brain chemistry (like Aspartame) by going past the blood-brain barrier and deteriorating the neurons of the brain. This makes MSG a NEUROTOXIN. In large doses, MSG causes brain neurons to become extremely excited and can cause these cells to die. Hence the term EXCITOTOXIN. Russel Blaylock, M.D., in his book Excitotoxins, the Taste That Kills, points out that the studies showing how excitotoxins work have greatly increased the knowledge of how the brain degenerates.

We must keep in mind that the excitotoxins added to foods are the EXACT SAME ONES that produce experimental brain damage in animals. MSG can aggravate or even cause Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease, yet it is actually fed to the elderly in the liquid protein drinks Ensure and Boost!

Most people feel that they are exposed to MSG only in Chinese restaurants, but the truth of the matter is that these restaurants only account for less than 5% of all MSG in use!

MSG is found in most canned soups, soy sauces, salad dressings, diet foods, cheese dips, bouillon cubes, soup stocks, frozen dinners, and protein bars. Labeling is not always clear on many foods, thanks to the “clean label industry”, whose purpose is to design ingredient and food product labels that will appeal to consumers while hiding the presence of MSG. Some of these hidden, definite sources of MSG are:

1. Hydrolyzed vegetable or plant protein
2. Sodium Caseinate or Calcium Caseinate
3. Autolyzed Yeast or Yeast extract
4. Gelatin

Possible sources of MSG are (depending on what they are manufactured from):

- Textured protein
- Carrageenan or Vegetable gum
- Seasonings or Spices
- Flavorings or Natural flavorings
- Chicken, beef, or pork smoke flavorings
- Barley malt, Malt extract, Malt flavoring
- Whey protein, whey protein isolate or concentrate
- Soy protein, soy protein isolate or concentrate
- Soy sauce or extract

Most people can tell when they have eaten MSG by the burning, facial pressure, chest pain, and headache they feel within 15 minutes. But there are many more symptoms that can occur within 1-2 hours and last for up to 5 days, like migraine headaches, joint stiffness, muscle aches, heartburn, and emotional reactions ranging from depression to rage and insomnia. (No wonder we have so much road rage!)

MSG-induced asthma attacks can occur up to 12 hours after MSG has been ingested! More than 10 million Americans suffer from asthma and it is on the increase. Some of this is related to MSG.

The book, In Bad Taste — The MSG Symptom Complex, written by Dr. George Schwartz, M.D., lays out many case studies documenting the health problems caused by MSG. From his research, Dr. Schwartz found that some of the increasing depression in our society is in fact caused by increased consumption of MSG. I myself was eating 4-5 Atkins’ bars a week and found myself feeling a lack of satisfaction or pleasure in my life. I couldn’t figure out what was wrong. After reading In Bad Taste, I noticed that the Atkins’ bars contained soy protein isolate, which could contain MSG. I stopped eating the bars, got rid of anything in my cabinets that could contain it, and within 10 days that feeling went away, never to return! Now Atkins’ bars also list calcium caseinate which definitely contains MSG. Learn to avoid MSG in foods... and protect your health!