

Tips for Avoiding Genetically Modified Foods

TIP #1: Buy Organic. Since GMOs require no labeling, USDA organic or the Non-GMO Project seal is one of the best ways to tell when foods are free of genetic modification. Most companies won't tell us what foods *do* have GMOs, so these seals help you seek out foods that *don't* have them.

TIP #2: Look for "Non-GMO" labels. If it is not labeled, look at the ingredients and if it contains any GMO ingredients, then it contains GMO's.

Tip #3 Choose wild-caught seafood. Some farm-raised fish eat GMO feed.

Tip #4 Plan ahead before eating out. Call or email the restaurant you plan to visit and ask the questions we just suggested you ask. Any restaurant that values its customers should be happy to provide this information to you.

Tip #5 Avoid aspartame. An ingredient in diet sodas and low-calorie "sweets," aspartame is indeed sometimes made from genetically modified microorganisms. (It can also be produced through a chemical process.)

TIP #6: Beware of the "Big Five" and their at-risk ingredients. Avoid products made with any of the crops that are genetically modified. Most genetically modified ingredients are products made from corn, soybeans, canola, cottonseed, and sugar beets which are used in processed foods. Some of the most common genetically modified ingredients in processed foods are:

CORN: Corn flour, meal, oil, starch, gluten, and syrup. Sweeteners such as fructose, dextrose, and glucose; modified food starch

BEET SUGAR: Sugar not specified as 100% cane sugar is likely from GE sugar beets.

SOY: Soy flour, lecithin, protein, isolate, and isoflavone, Vegetable oil* and vegetable protein

CANOLA: Canola oil (also called rapeseed oil)

COTTON: Cottonseed oil *Alfalfa has also been genetically engineered. This is primarily for the animal feed market. Seek out organic dairy products to avoid GE alfalfa.

Tip sheet provided courtesy of the411LIVE.org
Data provided by Institute for Responsible Technology.

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN DINING OUT GMO FREE

✓ **What oil do you cook with?** If they use soy, cottonseed, canola, or corn oils they are likely GM if they are not organic. If so, ask if they have anything that is cooked without oil, or if olive oil or some other oil can be used. If they say they cook in "vegetable oil" or margarine, it will almost always be soy, cottonseed, canola, or corn oils. If they have olive oil, be sure it's not a blend. Many restaurants blend canola and olive.

✓ **What foods do the chef prepares fresh?** Since most processed foods contain GM derivatives choose the fresh items but check if packaged sauces are used. Since most processed foods contain GM derivatives (corn and soy, for example), ask what foods the chef prepares fresh, and choose those items. Check if packaged sauces are used as these frequently contain GM derivatives. Also try to avoid processed foods with the oils mentioned above, or with soy and corn derivatives, including: soy flour, soy protein, soy lecithin, textured vegetable protein, corn meal, corn syrup, dextrose, maltodextrin, fructose, citric acid, and lactic acid.

✓ **Do your dairy products contain the hormone rbGH?** You should avoid dairy products from cows treated with rbGH. In some U.S. restaurants you will likely have to avoid menu items with dairy, unless the restaurant uses USDA Organic certified products or they buy from a dairy farm or company that does not use rbGH. You will need to ask. Also avoid the tabletop sweetener aspartame (NutraSweet® or Equal® which is now being rebranded as AminoSweet®), which is genetically modified.

Note It's worth noting that rbGH is banned in the European Union, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan but not yet in the U.S.

Other Sources of GMOs

Infant formula, salad dressing, bread, cereal, hamburgers and hotdogs, margarine, mayonnaise, cereals, crackers, cookies, chocolate, candy, fried food, chips, veggie burgers, meat substitutes, ice cream, frozen yogurt, tofu, tamari, soy sauce, soy cheese, tomato sauce, protein powder, baking powder, alcohol, vanilla, powdered sugar, peanut butter, enriched flour and pasta.

Note American Academy of Environmental Medicine has asked physicians to advise all patients to avoid all genetically modified foods.

FIND OUT MORE about GMOs at the411live.org