



Natural Health Research Institute

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Health Risks of Ultra-Processed Foods

Most of the foods we eat have been processed in some way by the time they reach our plates. However, the concern about processed food isn't over items like canned tomatoes, roasted nuts or bagged spinach, which are processed to lock in freshness and nutrients. The concern is over more heavily processed foods like crackers, soft drinks, and frozen pizza. Ultra-processed foods are foods that have been altered to include fats, starches, sugars, salts, and hydrogenated oils extracted from other foods. They generally have long lists of ingredients, many of which you won't recognize, like substances for bulking, de-foaming, emulsifying, and bleaching. All these additions add taste and flavor, which makes you want to keep coming back for more. According to a study published in *Frontiers in Nutrition*, more than 60 percent of caloric intake in the U.S. comes from ultra-processed food. Consuming ultra-processed foods on a regular basis has been shown to increase a person's risk of health complications including cardiovascular disease, certain cancers, obesity, and type 2 diabetes.



The key to an overall healthy diet is to try to cut back on or eliminate ultra-processed foods and focus on choosing whole and minimally processed foods. Follow these simple steps for improving your diet:

- Cook at home as often as you can.
- Bring a packed lunch to school or work.
- Replace refined grains with whole grains.
- Check food labels for saturated fat, sodium, and sugar quantity.
- Snack on whole foods, rather than pre-packaged snacks.
- Reduce how much fast food you eat.
- Shop the perimeter of the grocery store.
- Drink more water and fewer soft drinks.
- Swap bacon, sausage and hotdogs for chicken, turkey or salmon.
- Be wary of false or misleading statements on packaging.



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[Ultra-Processed Food Consumption Associated with Risk of Colorectal Cancer in Men](#)



[Ultra-Processed Food Consumption Increases Mortality Risk](#)

June is National Cancer Survivor Month



June is nationally recognized as Cancer Survivor Month, a way to celebrate those who have fought the disease and those who are currently in treatment. The American Cancer Society states there were more than 16.9 million Americans with a history of cancer in 2019, a number that is projected to reach more than 22.1 million by 2030. The number of cancer survivors continues to increase in the United States due to the growth and aging of the population as well as improvements in early detection. Health experts say advances in technology—involving surgery, radiation, imaging, medications, and most recently, the increased use of immunotherapies, are also contributing to the declining cancer death rates in the U.S.

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