

# FAILSAFE #54

## Newsletter of the Food Intolerance Network

October - December 2007

*The Food Intolerance Network supports people worldwide using a low-chemical elimination diet free of additives, low in salicylates, amines and flavour enhancers (FAILSAFE) for health, behaviour and learning problems.*

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### THIS MONTH

#### Food and the Australian federal election

#### International Registry of Food Additive Reactions (IRFAR)

**Research:** UK study confirms harmful effects of additives: Network astonished by lack of response from Australian/New Zealand regulators.

School trial a huge success.

The devil in the milk

**In brief:** Additives in medication

New additive in Australia: calcium disodium EDTA (preservative or antioxidant 385)

Depression and food

In-store fragrances

Correction on Nurofen

Artificial butter flavour

**Now targeting...** artificial colours (102,110, 129 and 133) in Arnott's Tim Tams and preservative 282 (calcium propionate) in Tip Top muffins and crumpets.

**Readers' stories:** [575] - [599]

**Product updates:** detailed help and information.

**Questions:** detailed help and information.

**Cooks Corner:** BBQ chicken escalopes, Carob custard cups, Gooney Caramel Slice

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Hello everyone

'We're winning the war!' wrote one failsafer after the publication of a multimillion dollar UK study confirming that food additives really do affect children's behaviour. Soon afterwards our own highly successful Nana Glen additive-free school trial appeared on Today Tonight. See more about these and other research below, along with some powerful reader stories. This issue's Courage Award goes to a remarkable 10 year-old girl for a presentation to her entire school. Also below, some important information about additives in medications, and some yummy failsafe recipes for Christmas. Many thanks to everyone who has helped to spread the word this year by writing, attending talks, contacting manufacturers or buying additive free food. Howard and I wish you all a very happy and failsafe holiday season

– Sue Dengate

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## Food and the Australian federal election

The Greens want junk food advertising banned during children's television hours, Labor seems to have retreated from a previous call to ban junk food advertising, and the Coalition position according to the Prime Minister is that parents are responsible for their children's diets and governments should not interfere.

<http://www.abc.net.au/am/content/2004/s1133814.htm>;

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2007/10/31/2077742.htm?site=elections/federal/2007>

No party has a written position on food additives at this stage. The Federal Conference of the National Party passed a motion in August 2007 working towards a ban on food additives not permitted overseas, tightening the 5% loophole and seeking mandatory warnings about additives not permitted for young children. Senator Kerry Nettle, Green's spokesperson on health and up for re-election to the Senate, said in November 2007 that food additives shown to be harmful to children's health, behaviour and learning should be removed from the food supply.

## International Registry of Food Additive Reactions (IRFAR)

We are reorganising our database to form a food additive reactions register similar to the US-based National Weight Control Registry, see [www.nwcr.ws](http://www.nwcr.ws). To join, please write to [suedengate@ozemail.com.au](mailto:suedengate@ozemail.com.au) who will email you a form. If you have written before, let us know so we can update your details. At this time we are particularly interested in reactions to annatto 160b, synthetic antioxidants such as BHA 320, and sorbates.

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# Research

## UK study confirms harmful effects of additives: Network astonished by lack of response from Australian/New Zealand regulators

In September this year, new research confirmed what parents have been saying for 30 years – that some children are affected by food additives. Led by Professor Jim Stevenson from the University of Southampton, the study showed that artificial colours and preservative sodium benzoate in the diet could cause increased hyperactivity and loss of concentration in children whether they had extreme hyperactivity (ADHD) or not. Following the release of the multi-million dollar government-funded study, lawyers warned that regardless of whether food additives are acceptable according to food regulators, there may be product liability if there is any long-term harm from the use of a harmful food additive. According to lead author Professor Jim Stevenson from Southampton University, additives pose a psychological threat because children who have early behaviour problems and difficulty learning to read can be disadvantaged throughout life. Several UK children's campaign groups including the National Union of Teachers called on the Food Standards Agency to advise elimination of artificial colours for all children.

As a result of the study, all of the leading UK supermarket chain own brands as well as giant confectionary companies Cadbury Trebor Bassett and Mars UK have announced they are phasing out the use of artificial colours. "We are committed to replacing all artificial colours in our sweets," Cadbury Trebor Bassett said in a statement. "We note the Southampton University findings, but we had begun this process already because we are continually listening to our consumers." Cadbury's The Natural Confectionery Company and Nestlé's Milky Bar range are part of the move to natural alternatives.

Full study - [http://www.precaution.org/lib/food\\_additives\\_and\\_hyperactivity.070906.pdf](http://www.precaution.org/lib/food_additives_and_hyperactivity.070906.pdf)  
Lawyers - [http://www.foodlegal.com.au/db/sep07\\_1/fsanz\\_responses\\_to\\_food\\_additives](http://www.foodlegal.com.au/db/sep07_1/fsanz_responses_to_food_additives)  
Psychological threat - <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/7004862.stm>  
Confectionery giants - <http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?id=79751>  
Food Intolerance Network media releases – [www.fedupwithfoodadditives.info/Breaking news.htm](http://www.fedupwithfoodadditives.info/Breaking_news.htm)

## School trial a huge success

Our third additive-free school trial took place at Nana Glen Primary School, NSW, in September. When Howard and I arrived at the school on Thursday of the second week (day 11), students were noticeably calmer, more focussed and happier. We were surprised by the enthusiasm of the students, who stood in line to tell us how much better they or their friends felt, and about the changes they had seen in the classrooms and the playground. In one poignant encounter, a young student described how her mother had stopped crying – ‘she used to cry all the time because she didn’t know what to do with me and my brother and now she’s a lot happier’. Another young boy sidled up to me in the playground, said ‘thank you for doing this’ and ran off. See the story under breaking news on our website home page, [www.fedup.com.au](http://www.fedup.com.au).

## The devil in the milk

Professor Keith Woodford at Lincoln College in New Zealand has caused a storm with his new book on A2 milk and how the huge dairy industry has reacted too slowly to risks in the milk we drink <http://www.a2milk.co.nz/news/bigbusiness.pdf>. “Devil in the Milk: illness, health and politics” is a Christmas gift suggestion for failsafe adults as it reads like a thriller: <http://www.craigpotton.co.nz/products/published/books/bookgeneralnonfiction/devilinthemilk>.

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## Diet not working as well as you'd hoped?

One tiny mistake can make a huge difference. For fine-tuning, see the [Checklist of common mistakes](#). Readers tell us this list is very useful.

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## In brief

**Additives in medication:** manufacturers of prescription medications are not required to list all the ingredients in their products. For a complete list of what's in your medications, see the Australian Prescription Products (APP) Guide online. This guide contains 2000 free Consumer Medicine Information listings (CMIs) updated monthly, <http://www.appgonline.com.au/browse.asp?t=cmi>. For custom made additive-free medications, ask a Compounding Pharmacist (search the online Yellow Pages for Compounding).

**New additive in Australia: calcium disodium EDTA (preservative or antioxidant 385)** has recently been approved for use in Australia. There's one report of contact dermatitis in the medical literature and numerous reports of severe adverse effects including death when EDTA is used in high doses as a medical chelating agent. We have received two reports of possible adverse effects (reflux, anaphylactoid reaction). <http://www.umm.edu/altmed/articles/ethylenediaminetetracetic-acid-000302.htm>

**Depression and food:** <http://youtube.com/watch?v=SJLLZcZXWB0>

**In-store fragrances:** From luxury jewellers to fashion chains to coffee shops, retailers are pumping fragrances into their stores to lure customers inside. <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/the-nose-knows-and-increasingly-it-buys/2007/08/12/1186857348311.html?ssdmh=dm16.273579>; [www.ecomist.com.au](http://www.ecomist.com.au). One failsafer commented: 'I am horrified and outraged - already I can't safely let my boys use the public toilets when we go anywhere, due to scent sprayers'. Is anyone prepared to appear on TV talking about the effect of such fragrances on them or their children? – contact [suedengate@ozemail.com.au](mailto:suedengate@ozemail.com.au).

**Correction on Nurofen:** in story [561], we suggested that Nurofen (ibuprofen) was a salicylate-containing medication. Technically Nurofen doesn't contain salicylates, however, most salicylate sensitive patients have cross sensitivity to it and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as naproxen and diclofenac. Jenkins C and others, Systematic review of prevalence of aspirin induced asthma and its implications for clinical practice, BMJ. 2004;328(7437):434. I would like to hear from anyone else who has seen a behavioural reaction to Nurofen. ([suedengate@ozemail.com.au](mailto:suedengate@ozemail.com.au)).

**Some manufacturers are rushing to remove artificial butter flavour from microwaveable popcorn** since the finding that popcorn workers lung, an incurable and sometimes fatal lung condition, can also affect consumers, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/05/us/05popcorn.html>.

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**Now targeting...** artificial colours (102,110, 129 and 133) in Arnott's Tim Tams and preservative 282 (calcium propionate) in Tip Top muffins and crumpets

Many thanks to all those in failsafe groups who signed the recent petition against additives in school canteens. In this issue we are again joining forces with Julie Eady and the WA-based additive action group Additive Alert.

**(1) artificial colours (102,110, 129 and 133) in Arnott's Tim Tams.** You can contact Arnott's through Contact Us on their website [www.arnotts.com.au](http://www.arnotts.com.au) with the message something like: "I am concerned about the use of artificial colours because of their effects on children's behaviour and learning ability. I would like artificial colours 102,110, 129 and 133 to be removed from Tim Tams. Thank you." Julie suggests that you can use the following answers to get the form to work: packet size (200gm), use by date(12/03/2008), store purchased (Woolworths and your city name).

**(2) preservative 282 (calcium propionate) in Tip Top muffins and crumpets:** "Thank you for removing preservative 282 (calcium propionate) from your sliced bread range. I am concerned about the use of this preservative in other bakery products because of its effects on children's behaviour and learning ability. I would like to see this additive removed from Tip Top muffins and crumpets. Thank you." [www.tiptop.com.au](http://www.tiptop.com.au).

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## Readers' stories

[599] Anita's speech: a 10-year-old tells her school about food intolerance (November 2007) **WINNER OF THE COURAGE AWARD**

Near the end of 2006 I was getting sick and tired of all the kids at my old school ripping me off and teasing me for being on a 'diet'. In October I had a school project to do, something that

we were passionate about. I asked my teacher if I could talk about the diet. So I spoke in front of 380 children, parents and teachers at Maitland Public School. See my speech below.

"Parents, Teachers and Classmates, in June 2005 mum put myself and my brother on a diet as I was very hated and always getting into trouble and even being called 'Hekyl and Jekyll' by our school counsellor. No matter how hard I tried, I could not seem to behave better. At first we hated the 'diet' because we couldn't have our 'normal' food and we did not like being teased...(see <http://www.fedupwithfoodadditives.info/stories/story8.htm>)

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**[596] From 'severe inattentive ADD' to 'normal' due to diet** (November 2007)

In 2006 my quiet 7 year old daughter was diagnosed by her paediatrician as having severe inattentive ADD. He offered Ritalin to help the symptoms. I was not comfortable giving her this ...(see <http://www.fedupwithfoodadditives.info/stories/story8.htm>)

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**[595] Filling our house with laughter** (November 2007)

My husband and I watched a news program on the children at Nana Glen Primary School. We were so impressed we thought we'd try it with our two boys, aged 10 and 6...(see <http://www.fedupwithfoodadditives.info/stories/story8.htm>)

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**[594] Amazing changes in difficult two-year-old** (November 2007)

I was recently on a forum, having a whinge about my 2.5 year old son, and how terribly difficult he is. I was asking advice on ADD and ADHD. A lady on the forum offered to lend me your books 'Fed up' 'Fed up with ADHD' and the cookbook. I took her up on this offer so as not to appear rude, but have to admit to thinking 'It's not going to help me'. I started reading 'Fed up with ADHD' first. Well, you could have substituted your daughter's name for my son, your name for mine and so on. I nearly cried...(see <http://www.fedupwithfoodadditives.info/stories/story8.htm>).

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**[593] Additive-free improvements in Generalised Anxiety Disorder with panic attacks** (November 2007)

My daughter who is 16 has Generalised Anxiety Disorder, with panic attacks. So I have tried to keep her on a mostly additive free diet. It has been a bit tricky, but so long as I have something ready for her after school, she doesn't care what she eats. I haven't tried to restrict her when she's out with friends, but she takes her lunch to school and only eats the bad stuff probably on the weekend. After getting serious about cutting out additives I suddenly noticed one night that our house had become a lot calmer. I guess it wasn't overnight (didn't really expect it to be) but I all of a sudden realised that things were travelling very smoothly. So I definitely believe that cutting out additives have made a big difference to her whole personality, and produced a calmer household all round. [Update one month later, this family is now reducing salicylates]. – be email

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**[592] Grandparents notice temperament change after 28 years of marriage** (November 2007)

My husband and I are doing the diet to support our grandsons. As a spin off, my headaches which I blamed on shift work and lack of sleep have disappeared except two times when we didn't have the boys and ate Chinese or Thai, both times I woke through the night with a raging headache. My husband who has been short tempered through our 28 years of marriage, has had a change in temperament/ behaviour, for the better. - by email, NSW

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**[591] Help from compounding pharmacists** (November 2007)

**Additive-free antibiotics from compounding pharmacist** : Our 3 month old breastfed baby has to take oral antibiotics so I explained to our local pharmacist that I wanted no added colours, preservatives or flavours. He had no idea what was in antibiotics other than the active ingredient, conceded that I knew more about it than he did, and gave me a contact for a compounding pharmacist. They made me up a liquid that is just the antibiotic suspended in water, with nothing else added and made it concentrated so that I could give her less at one time. It tastes bitter but she takes it squirted into her mouth with a syringe with no problems. – by email

**Additive-free supplements from compounding pharmacist** : When my son needed an iron supplement with Vitamin C, I spoke to our compounding chemist - a very useful person, I think everyone with dietary issues should have one! He went through everything and came up with three alternatives - two were the supplements listed on your web site, the third was to put his skills to work and make up a special mixture in the necessary dose for my child. I think I need to get a tattoo on my eyelids that says 'if child requires medicine - speak to Compounding Chemist'. [Search the Yellow Pages online under Compounding, there are 66 Australia-wide]. – by email

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**[590]: 635: Possible Ribo Rash in a 74-year-old** (November 2007)

Three months ago, my father aged 74 who has never reacted to anything - plant, animal or food - had a major reaction of a welt like rash on the trunk especially in the groin area and under arms. It was enough to go to the doctor who simply dismissed this as hives and prescribed steroid tables with no real explanation of what had happened. His wife thought there must be a connection as it was half an hour after eating a packet pizza containing 635 that they hadn't eaten before. A similar incident then happened about a week later, after eating [a 'healthy' prepared frozen dinner also containing 635] for the first time. Now they avoid such packaged food and he has not experienced it since, although he has often eaten in restaurants with no ill effects. – by email from NSW

See <http://www.fedupwithfoodadditives.info/stories/story8.htm> for

**[589] 635: Possible Ribo Rash in a 19-year-old** (November 2007)

**[588] 635: Long distance hiker and ribo rash** (November 2007)

**[587] 635: Ribo Rash from 30-year-old traditional recipe using a packet soup base** (November 2007)

**[586] 631: Racing heart beat after flavour enhancer 631** (November 2007)

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**[584] 160b: 'Croup cough' from annatto** (see also Annatto factsheet) (November 2007)

My four-year-old son has peanut, egg and dairy allergies and is anaphylactic so as you can imagine I spend hours reading labels. We have been buying So-Good products for about two years and generally he is fine. Recently he has been having the creamy vanilla for dessert and having what I thought was a croup cough. I soon realised the nights he didn't have it there was no "croup cough". After several calls to Sanitarium and speaking with the dietician, I have worked out that it must be the annatto E160b causing a reaction. – by email

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**[583] 160b: Head banging and annatto** (see also Annatto factsheet) (November 2007)

Just thought I would let you know, after your recent talk in Maitland I went back to work and told a friend about annatto 160b as her two-year-old daughter had been splitting her head open head banging. My friend has kept her daughter off the annatto for a week now and her daughter has stopped head banging. She still gets in the position when she is throwing a tantrum but doesn't bang her head. Amazing! This is only additive she has removed! – by email, NSW

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**[582] 'Sensitive ears' in an 18-month-old** (November 2007)

My maternal health nurse suggested that I contact you about my 18-month-old son's sensitive ears. They were tested when he was young and were fine. He has started speaking a few words and seems to comprehend things you ask him to do, but when he is around noise he cries his eyes out and needs to be taken away, simple things like singing happy birthday in a group, a group clapping, and sporting venues will bring it on. He also puts his fingers in his ears and blocks them every now and again as if they are annoying him. He eats a lot of organic veg and fruit. [two months later ...] I bought your cookbook and started cutting down on tomatoes, dried fruits and fresh fruit, and I have noticed a huge change. We even took him to the soccer in Melbourne. We've done that before, but it ended in screaming and us leaving! This time he was fantastic, we stayed for the whole game and he loved it. The noise didn't bother him at all. If I feed him spaghetti or anything with lots of tomatoes, he holds his ears and tells me 'ouch, ouch'. – by email, Vic [See [hyperacusis symptom discussion](#)]

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**[581] Three responses on behavioural effects of Down Syndrome** (September 2007)

**"A great improvement in my son who has Down Syndrome", Diet, sneaky poos and Down Syndrome, "Low salicylate diet for DS"...**(see <http://www.fedupwithfoodadditives.info/stories/story8.htm>)

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**[580] Tics disappeared on day 10 (September 2007)**

Our son was diagnosed with Tourette's at the age of six. He had substantial tics, but no behavioural problems. I decided to apply the complete elimination diet (not an easy process.) By day 7, I was quite despondent with no obvious improvements and then miraculously, by day 10, his tics had disappeared. He had been experiencing severe eye, mouth and head jerking tics for over 2 years. I haven't yet narrowed the tics to any specific reaction. Thanks for your amazing website - it definitely saved our boy from a very troubling syndrome. - by email

See <http://www.fedupwithfoodadditives.info/stories/story8.htm> for

**[579] 319,320: Tic disorder related to antioxidants 319-320 (TBHQ and BHA) (September 2007)**

**[578] Tics related to salicylates in summer fruits (September 2007)**

**[577] Motor tics related to amines (chocolate) and additives (lollies) (September 2007)**

**[576] Vocal tics related to non-failsafe 'treats' (September 2007)**

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**[597] One liners** (November 2007)

We were pressured to put our child on medication at the age of five, and it had a negative effect on him. We then began to rethink our options and decided to go totally failsafe, within days we had what could be considered a normal child (from Failsafe newsletter #54 talking point).

Thank you for writing your fantastic recipe book. We have been using it for a while and have recently gotten "Friendly Foods" as well and as good as it is for a lot of stuff, I'm SO grateful for the simple, family friendly recipes in your book – by email.

I was happy to see our school tuckshops changing their menu but disappointed they only looked at fat content and not additives. Our tuckshop sells an icy drink which is loaded with preservatives and artificial colours. No wonder there are so many children going to the Behaviour Support Room. – by email, Qld.

We have just spent 3 weeks on the elimination diet. We are amazed at the positive change in all of us, (a hyperactive, asthmatic, eczema-stricken three year old boy; a 40 year old dad

who has suffered from chronic asthma all his life; and a 34 year old mum who thought she felt pretty healthy ... until the last three weeks, where I have felt better than ever). – Julie.

I am 32 and have been feeling ill for a while. Without realising it I had been filling myself with additives in soft drinks and packet snacks. Now after two weeks additive-free I am feeling great, lots of energy, no muscle aches, no headaches! – by email.

Through the elimination diet I have learned I am sensitive to salicylates, amines (very) and milk. I never expected milk. When I dropped mil, my nose opened up. When I challenged it, my nose got stopped up again. – by email, USA.

I recently went to eat some store bought coleslaw from the supermarket and had a look at the ingredients: colours 102, 110 and preservatives 211, 202, boy was I shocked! I want people to realise how easy it can be to read the back of a packet. Taking the no additive challenge does not cost a cent more, if anything it is cheaper in your weekly shopping. – Angie.

We have been trying our best to avoid all the nasties on your list and our son has finally begun to say words sometimes linking 3 or 4 together (he is 3 and a half!) and he is an angel to live with - I never thought he would talk, so it is a true miracle and we are sticking to our new diet! – by email, ACT.

We saw the school program on Today Tonight and my eight-year-old son looked at me every time one of his symptoms (asthma, bed wetting, sneaky poos, cradle cap, irritability, poor concentration) was listed. I thought I was a pretty healthy provider of food as I do a lot of home cooking but it is scary to see what is in some of your everyday foods. – by email, SA

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## Product updates

**A useful weekly shopping list blank with list of additives to avoid and cutaway section on the bottom for meals this week** - see [www.fedupwithfoodadditives.info/extras/FoodAdditivesshoppinglist1.pdf](http://www.fedupwithfoodadditives.info/extras/FoodAdditivesshoppinglist1.pdf) - thanks to Matthew.

**Designer Physique** have an excellent but somewhat expensive range of gluten-free cookie and muffin mixes based on de-bittered chickpea flour. They say that they make the only GF/DF/Egg free/ LOW GI products made with primarily chickpea flour vs white starches and 'empty' non nutritious flours. Chickpeas are high fibre and a great way to get kids to eat a legume in a 'cookie' or muffin. 07 5520 5547 [www.designerphysique.com.au](http://www.designerphysique.com.au)

**Food delivered for babies and young children by Brisbane-based Little Tummy Tucker**, which specialises in low-allergy, delicious and nutritious food with an emphasis on quality ingredients. Delivery includes Sydney at this stage. <http://www.littletummytucker.com.au/Default.aspx>

**Nasty additives cards** can be purchased (laminated, fluorescent green, or celloglazed) in business card shapes, handy to fit into the wallet or business card holder from The Discount Vitamin Centre, 02 8850 6066, Shop 407, Level 4, Castle Towers, Castle Hill NSW 2154, and In Harmony Health Foods, Phone Number 02 968 8679, Shop 59 Stockland Mall, Baulkham Hills NSW 2153.

**Eatingsafe** website with food labels you can read at home makes shopping easier: [www.eatingsafe.com](http://www.eatingsafe.com) - thanks to Warwick

**Antidotes: Sodibic capsules** each containing sodium bicarbonate 840mg are marketed as a convenient purse size urinary alkaliser/antacid. Failsafers say they are a portable way to take soda bicarb as a food intolerance antidote - thanks to Anne.

**Acid rock (sweets):** Yes, it is true that rapid boiling drives off the sulphur dioxide 220 in glucose syrup. <http://www.hullabaloofood.com/store/index.php?act=viewCat&catId=4> - thanks to Leah

**Gluten-free bakery in Plano (north of Dallas, Texas)** Delicious 'n Fit and Laura's Bistro - <http://www.delicious-n-fit.com/default.asp?id=205370&showsite=true>. They do two types of gluten free bread, one is amaranth based gf bread, and vanilla gfdf cakes - thanks to Hazel

**Nemar natural Hundreds & Thousands** available to Coles, Woolworth's & IGA, but you might have to request them - thanks to Tanya

**Failsafe Sausages in Melbourne** - Master Cut Butchers on Level 1 (next to the post office) at Greensborough Plaza will make 2 kg of failsafe snags and are happy to help any other failsafers. The butcher suggested that his sausage pre-mix (just rice meal and salt) might make them even better [we suspect that the rice meal and salt also contains spices and/or flavour enhancers.] - thanks to Della

**Are nanoparticles in sunblock a problem?** Invisible zinc sunblocks are useful for failsafers because they are additive-free and fragrance-free (e.g. Megan Gale available from pharmacists and Invisible Zinc products including Junior from [www.invisiblezinc.com](http://www.invisiblezinc.com)). There is some concern about nanoparticles, decide for yourself: [http://blogs.smh.com.au/science/archives/2006/11/whats\\_in\\_your\\_s.html](http://blogs.smh.com.au/science/archives/2006/11/whats_in_your_s.html) - thanks to Rebecca

**\*\*\*Warning\*\*\* Sara Lee Chocolate Bavarian** and many other products with biscuit bases now contain synthetic antioxidant TBHQ (319), now no longer OK for failsafers who can tolerate amines.

**\*\*\*Warning\*\*\* Crisco sunflower oil in large packs** such as 15L contains synthetic antioxidant (320, BHA) but is BHA-free in smaller containers. Check all labels. Catering packs of products such as oil and pastries used in restaurants are more likely to contain additives.

**\*\*\*Warning\*\*\* natural colours:** I tried the new Queen all Natural Rainbow Food colours in some Magic cordial for my daughter. She had a reaction within 24 hours (she gets sore genitals whenever she reacts to something) of trying the yellow colour (E100) [Colour(100) is curcumin from tumeric, so contains some salicylates.] - thanks to Sher

**\*\*\*Warning\*\*\* possible unlisted BHA in Gluten-Free Bread:** a failsafer has written that Country Life Rice Bread contains antioxidant (320), unlisted under the 5% labelling loophole. This is not yet confirmed.

**\*\*\*Warning\*\*\* weight loss plans may contain additives.** A weight loss dieter wrote: 'It didn't occur to me to scan the ingredients (which I do in ALL food products before buying) as I naively thought when it said "healthy and nutritious" that it was true. It was only when I kept becoming hugely bloated with griping abdominal pains that I decided to check the ingredients and found Flavour Enhancer 621 (MSG) and other additives.'

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## Your questions

**Q. I came across "1422 - thickener" in a packet of frozen meals. What is this please and is it a no no? We really enjoy your informative site.**

**A.** Thickeners are only a problem for coeliacs and others who are very sensitive to gluten. Also called modified starches, thickeners 1400-1450 may contain trace amounts of gluten if they have been derived from wheat. If gluten is in the product, it will be listed on the label.

**Q. I would like your opinion on whether fresh coriander is failsafe or not. Also interested in seeing if there is a difference between fresh coriander and ground seed?**

**A.** Technically, fresh coriander is moderate in salicylates. It contains 0.20 mg per 100 mg (compared to fresh parsley leaves with 0.08 and Red Delicious apple with 0.19, according to the Swain et al 1985 analyses). An occasional small amount is probably okay for most salicylate sensitive people, but I recommend caution if using it in a product you eat every day. It is so easy for salicylates to build up when you are not looking. Ground coriander seed was not tested but you would expect it to be much higher in salicylates.

**Q. My son's aggression has been increasing. He has been eating a lot of the new all natural jelly cups, strawberry flavour (ingredients: sugar, thickener (401), food acids (355,331), mineral salt (341), flavour, colour (120).) What do you think, is this jelly failsafe?**

**A.** Those jelly cups are fine for families who are simply going additive-free but they are not failsafe because of the strawberry flavour which contains natural chemicals called salicylates. Salicylates can cause the same problems as additives if consumed in large doses or by sensitive people. Note that colour (120, cochineal) doesn't cause behaviour problems but because it is made from insects it should be used with caution by children with a family history of food allergy (also not kosher).

**Q I feel very confused about which is the lesser of two evils - the trans fats in butter (which is listed as 'natural trans fats' - what does that mean???) or the preservative 202.**

**A.** There have always been natural trans fats in some foods. We ourselves eat pure butter (Mainland Buttersoft from NZ) and totally avoid 202. We also avoid synthetic trans fats. Nuttalex additive-free dairy-free margarine is low in trans fats. However, we minimise our intake of saturated fats including butter. For example, when baking I will often choose to make muffins or a cake recipe with vegetable oil rather than rather than butter or margarine. For vegetable oil, we use canola oil. It's a monounsaturate with one of the best omega ratios despite scientific-seeming internet criticism probably started by an opposing industry. Olive oil is similar but we can't eat it because of salicylates.

**Q. I recently asked our Swedish food safety authorities if they do tests on additives themselves, or do they rely only on the tests done by the producers of the additives? They answered that neither they, nor the EFSA (European Food Safety Authority), do any tests at all. The approval of an additive is based solely on tests performed by the producer of the additive. Isn't this a bit like asking Phillip Morris if smoking is safe? – Stefan from Sweden**

**A.** It's even worse than that – before additives are approved there are no tests at all regarding their effects on children's health, behaviour and learning – and there is no monitoring afterwards. When consumers report adverse effects, they are advised to carry out their own double blind placebo controlled studies.

**Q.** I found the following radio story a bit of a worry:

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2007/11/20/2095831.htm> [A leading CSIRO scientist says there is no reason to fear that future gene technology will threaten food safety. Deputy chief of plant industry research, Dr TJ Higgins, says consumers have been using oil from genetically modified cotton for the past 10 years. Most of the fish and chips that we eat are cooked in the oil from cotton seed, and there are 33 other foods have been approved for consumption. "So there are already many products that are in the food chain that we have been consuming safely."]

**A.** We are worried too. Dr Higgins says there are strict regulations to protect consumer food safety, but as we have already seen, regulations about food additives haven't done anything to protect our children. Here's what you can do. This Saturday, vote for your local Green candidate and vote Green in the Senate. The Greens have a strong policy about GM foods, including mandatory full labelling. Of course they won't win, but every vote sends a message and if there are some Greens in the Senate, there is a chance of controlling what happens with GM foods.

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## Around the groups: getting in touch

### Can you help?

A woman using diet for interstitial cystitis would like to talk to similar. Write to [suedengate@ozemail.com.au](mailto:suedengate@ozemail.com.au).

A TV Company is looking for families for a TV food/nutrition series who know their diet is unhealthy but would appreciate some free advice on how to improve it. They want families, preferably in Sydney, who don't usually read food labels and have not yet investigated any health problems that may be being caused by the food they are eating. To find out more, please call Dominique Pile, Becker Entertainment, Artarmon – 02 8425 1118, [dominiquep@beckers.com.au](mailto:dominiquep@beckers.com.au)

### Talking point

Previously we asked "Is there a short simple way of explaining why you are doing the diet that people will understand?" To see a range of interesting answers, [click here](#).

New talking point: a reader from Victoria wrote 'I work in our school canteen and just shake my head when I see what we are selling! Unfortunately the new healthy guidelines have really only meant labelling a few things low fat and cutting out lollies. Everything else is laden with artificial colours, flavours, preservatives and MSG. I cringe when I see kids with behaviour issues spending \$\$\$ every day'. We would like to hear from others – is your school canteen like this? email [suedengate@ozemail.com.au](mailto:suedengate@ozemail.com.au).

### Support

There are now over 90 [support contacts](#) in 47 locations in Australia, and in New Zealand and overseas. For email support groups we recommend failsafebasic for beginners. It is the smallest of the big general groups. You can join by sending an email to [failsafebasic-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:failsafebasic-subscribe@yahoogroups.com) with 'subscribe' in the subject line. Please note that the failsafeandbeyond group has no connection with our Network so please do not send complaints about that group to us.

**Kids page:** contributions welcome – regularly updated  
<http://www.fedupwithfoodadditives.info/extras/kidspage.htm>.

**New and updated factsheets and discussion sheets:**

Tics, tic disorder, Tourette symptoms -  
<http://www.fedupwithfoodadditives.info/factsheets/Facttics.htm>

Failsafe gardening – updated seasonally  
<http://www.fedupwithfoodadditives.info/factsheets/Factgarden.htm>

Behavioural symptoms of Down Syndrome and diet -  
<http://www.fedupwithfoodadditives.info/factsheets/Symptomdown.htm>

**Talks**

None planned until May 2008.

**Brochures**

**Food Intolerance brochure** now in **Dutch** (thanks Peter), **French** (thanks Ariane), **Italian** (thanks Helen), **Portuguese** (thanks Carla) **Spanish** (thanks Daniela), **Nepali** (thanks Sunita) and **USA** (thanks failsafeUSA members):  
<http://www.fedupwithfoodadditives.info/information/brochure.htm>

Printable trifold brochures on food intolerance and oppositional defiance are available. We'll post two free that you can copy, or you can buy bulk copies at cost \$A0.26 each plus postage. See instructions on the website for accessing pdf versions. Email [confodnet@ozemail.com.au](mailto:confodnet@ozemail.com.au) with enquiries. We loved this comment from one satisfied failsafer: *"Ah, the answer to my prayers. I had no idea the brochure even existed, but thanks so much for directing me to it. I am not very Internet savvy, however I found it easy enough. Regarding possible opposition to failsafeing within the child care setting ... now all I have to do is hand over a copy of this and let them ask questions! Thanks again. I highly recommend everyone print this out if you don't already have a copy, it sure cuts out the "but WHY can't your kid have (insert food here)?" questions. Great for grandparents too."*

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## Cook's corner

**Hints**

- \* for quick chicken nuggets with a batter-like texture: slice chicken breast fillets, coat with flour, dip in beaten egg and shallow fry, thanks to Cameron
- \* Brussels sprout puree (made with butter and/or cream, Failsafe Cookbook p. 100) traditionally served on roasts in England can be a huge success even with sprout haters.
- \* Bombe Alaska (Failsafe Cookbook p. 203) makes an entertaining pudding for a hot Australian Christmas.

### BBQ chicken escalopes

An escalope is a thin slice of meat such as veal or chicken mostly fried or grilled.

4 large chicken breast fillets  
3 tbsp canola oil or similar  
1 garlic clove, crushed  
chopped chives for garnish  
fresh crusty bread rolls  
failsafe salad  
failsafe salad dressing

Pound the chicken breasts gently with a meat mallet or rolling pin until they are about 5mm thick (quarter inch) and have almost doubled in size. Mix oil with the crushed garlic, brush some of the mixture over both sides of the chicken, season with salt and allow to stand. Prepare salad with failsafe ingredients or moderate salicylate options such as butter lettuce and snow peas when tolerated. Cut rolls in half lengthways and place cut side down on the barbecue for a few minutes until lightly toasted. Barbecue the chicken over medium-hot coals for about three minutes on each side until golden on the outside but still juicy in the centre. Garnish with chopped chives. Serve with rolls and salad.

### Carob custard cups

A delicious failsafe alternative to chocolate YOGO

3 tbsp carob powder  
4 tbsp cornflour  
½ cup white sugar  
800ml milk, A2 milk, soymilk or ricemilk

Sift the dry ingredients together then mix with 300ml of the milk. Heat the remaining milk in a saucepan until it boils rapidly. Tip the carob mix into the hot milk and stir with a whisk, continue stirring until the mixture thickens (you must use a whisk otherwise lumps will form). Remove from heat and pour into a bowl. Cover and chill overnight. Thanks to Sherri

### Goey Caramel Slice

An easy and delicious slice – not healthy, but hey, it's Christmas. You can make it gluten-free by using the base on page 00 of the Failsafe Cookbook.

1 packet McVities Hobnobs biscuits  
1 can (400g) sweetened condensed milk  
1¼ cups Nestle white melts

Break the hobnobs into small crumbs. Add sweetened condensed milk and white melts (whole is ok). Mix well. Pour into a buttered slice tray approx 18cm x 28cm. Bake for 30 mins at 350°C - thanks to Sherri.

**The FAILSAFE Newsletter:** You can have this Newsletter emailed to you for free about every three months, and also see it in colour with graphics on [www.fedup.com.au](http://www.fedup.com.au). Subscribe: [failsafe\\_newsletter-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:failsafe_newsletter-subscribe@yahoo.com) Frontpage: [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/failsafe\\_newsletter](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/failsafe_newsletter)

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