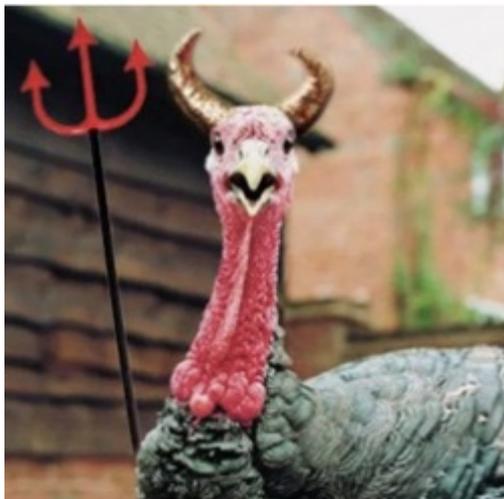


Thanksgiving Dinner Chemical Terrors In Every Course - 'Organic' Or Not



By Josh Bloom — November 17, 2017



Aunt Wilma's turkey. Far worse than chemicals

The traffic on Thanksgiving is killer. If you happen to be driving to Aunt Wilma's in Connecticut you will find this out for yourself. But what about when you arrive? Which is riskier? The trip or the meal **(1)**?

Of course, there is no right answer here, but one thing is for certain: Unless your Thanksgiving meal consists of distilled water, you are going to be eating some toxic chemicals, and it doesn't matter whether the turkey is "organic" or not. Or anything else in the meal. So I thought it might be sort of fun to take each course and arbitrarily select one of many chemicals that is in that course. Then let's take a look at what the professional chemical scaremongers have to say about each. Bon appétit!

First course: Wine (sulfites)

Wine contains hundreds of chemicals with ethanol (a known carcinogen) being the most obvious. But it also contains sulfites, especially red wine. Sulfites are a form of sulfur dioxide and are commonly used as preservatives for dried fruit. Since all preservatives are evil, it should come as no surprise that the Natural Resources Defense Council, a.k.a. "The Empire of Ignorance," doesn't regard sulfites so highly. A 2013 article entitled "[USFDA Allows Chemicals in Food Despite Lack of Toxicity Testing](#) ^[1]" by Jennifer Sass, who fancies herself as a toxicologist, **(2)** has all kinds of icky things to say about sulfites:

- *Sulfites were banned by FDA in 1986 for use on fruits and vegetables that are eaten raw*
- *They are also approved by EPA as pesticides.*
- *They induce allergy-like reactions in many people.*
- *When FDA approved their use as a food additive in the 1970s, sulfites were deemed to be Generally Recognized As Safe (GRAS) and exempted from FDA premarket approval requirements.*
- *Sulfites are called ‘**food additives**’. In other contexts, the same chemicals may be considered **industrial chemicals** or **pesticides***

Jennifer Sass, NRDC, 2013

Uh oh. Better ditch the wine. What can you drink? Maybe this?



Second course: Fruit plate (monosodium glutamate, a.k.a., MSG)

Regardless if you went for either the wine or the Mountain Dew, now it's time to cleanse the palate before the meal! And what better way to do so than with a delicious platter of fresh fruit? Except fruit has all kinds of chemicals in it. Hundreds of them. And good luck finding a fruit that does not contain glutamic acid, which is just another form of monosodium glutamate (MSG), depending on pH. Let's see what the professional ignoramuses in the Environmental Working Group, an organization that is wrong more often than a weather forecast, have to say about MSG.

EWG's 2016 "Wellness Chat" features an article entitled "The Importance Of Nutrition In Cancer Prevention" by Jocelyn Weiss, Ph.D. Weiss, who really ought to know better given that she is the Assistant Director of Clinical Research at Mount Sinai Adolescent Health Center in New York.

Yet, that didn't stop her from these doozies (emphasis mine):

*"Monosodium glutamate, MSG, present in packaged foods under many names, can trigger headaches and other allergic symptoms... **If you do not recognize or cannot pronounce ingredients on a label, there's a good chance you should not eat that product***

."

Jocelyn Weiss, Ph.D. writing for the Environmental Working Group

Uh oh. Weiss has apparently watched too many episodes (that would be one) of the Food Babe because she parrots Vani Hari's incredibly ignorant statement that the ability to spell or pronounce a chemical somehow is somehow correlated with the safety of the chemical. (See: [The Food Babe Hath Spoken, And Subway Bread Will Still Suck](#) [2]).

"When you look at the ingredients [in food], if you can't spell it or pronounce it, you probably shouldn't eat it."

Vani Hari (the Food Babe) Source: [Subway: Stop Using Dangerous Chemicals In Your Bread](#) [3]

What little credibility Weiss and EWG may or may not have had, it just went out the window. Don't eat something you can't pronounce? Let's pronounce this: DUH.

Third course: Home-baked bread (acrylamide)

Acrylamide is formed whenever starch and amino acids are heated together (See: [Cooking Up Some 'Toxic' Chemicals; The Maillard Reaction](#) [4]). Since many foods contain starch and amino acids, it is not surprising that we have been eating a steady diet of acrylamide since 300 B.C., when Egyptians first baked bread. So, it's absolutely astounding that there is anyone still alive on earth, assuming that "Crazy Joe" Mercola is right, something which happens about as often the simultaneous occurrence of a solar eclipse, the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, and a single flight to LaGuardia Airport landing on time.

Acrylamide, a cancer-causing and potentially neurotoxic chemical, is created when carbohydrate-rich foods are cooked at high temperatures, whether baked, fried, roasted, grilled or toasted.

"Crazy Joe" Mercola, "[When You Heat Natural Plant-Based Foods You Can Get Cancer-Causing Acrylamide](#)" [5]

Fine, skip the bread. At least you can have some turkey, especially if it's an organic turkey, which we all know is devoid of all chemicals. Or is it?

Fourth course: Turkey

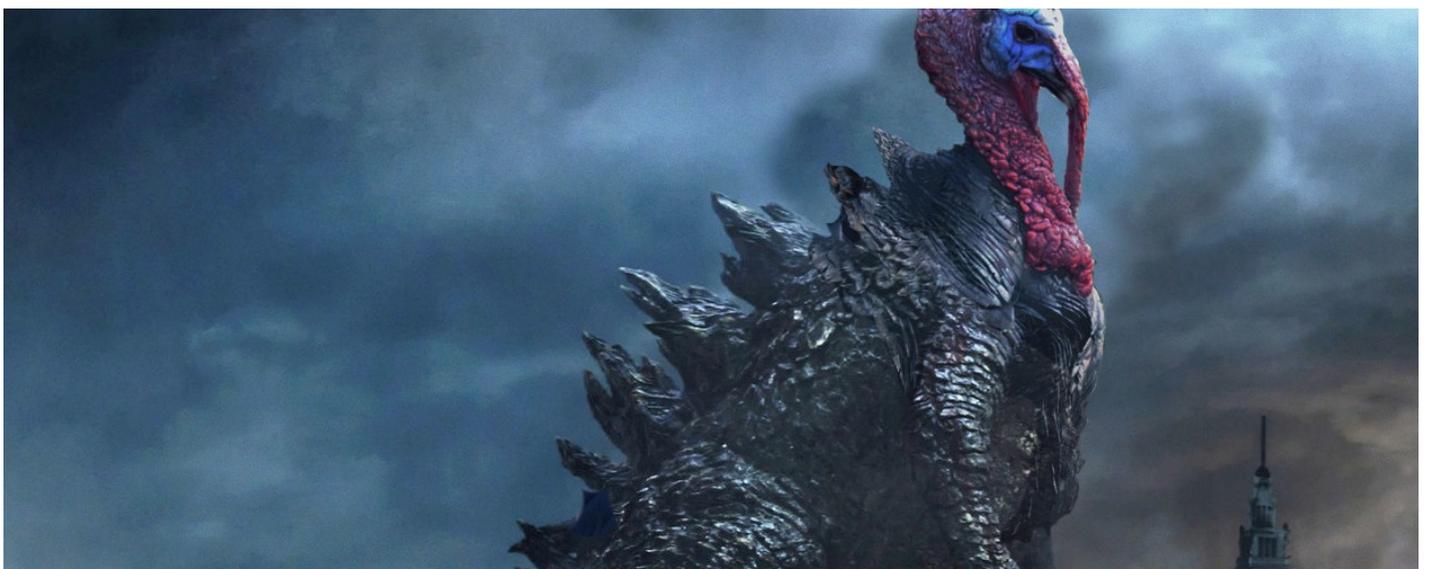
Let's assume that your turkey was raised and prepared under ideal conditions. No antibiotics, hormones, plastic wrappers, or inhumane conditions.



Said turkey will still be jam-packed with tryptophan, the amino acid that gets converted into serotonin and makes you sleepy. (Except, [it doesn't](#) ^[6]. It's your Aunt Gertrude talking about her bunions). OK, it doesn't make you sleepy, but it's a naturally occurring amino acid, so what could possibly be wrong with it (aside from it being a chemical)? When is a reputable source needed to address complex scientific and medical issues, who amongst us wouldn't turn to a supplement company for the truth? It's a good thing that [supplements-and-health.com](#) ^[7] exists. [The Case Against Taking L-Tryptophan Supplements](#) ^[8] is nothing if not even-handed and accurate. Surprising too! Even the most astute scientists and doctors are woefully unaware that tryptophan has a few teensy problems:

- Drowsiness
- Nausea
- Headaches
- Impaired Liver Function
- Higher Risk For Eye Damage
- Disturbed Protein Metabolism And Impaired Brain Function
- Eosinophilia-Myalgia Syndrome
- Severe Inflammation
- Promotion Of Cardiovascular Events
- Cancer Initiation & Promotion

OK. There goes the turkey.



Turkzilla: Image - [imgur](#) [9]

I figure that at this point between impending starvation and Aunt Gertrude's bunions you are in one lousy mood. But fear not, there is always dessert, or in this case, just dessert.

Fifth course: Apple pie (formaldehyde)

Formaldehyde occurs naturally in a [variety of fruits](#) [10], including apples. So, there's gonna be some of the stuff in apple pie. How bad is it? When it comes to chemistry, pharmacology, and toxicology, it would be hard to find a more authoritative source for than the aforementioned Food Babe:

Formaldehyde is one of the most highly toxic substances on earth. It is linked to allergies, brain damage, cancer, and auto-immune disorders.

Vani Hari (the Food Babe)

Source: [You Won't Believe Where Silly Putty Is Hiding In Your Food](#) [11]

She's pretty much dead on if you ignore the 10,000 (or so) chemicals on earth that are more toxic. And the fact that a small amount of formaldehyde is actually required for the biosynthesis of amino acids. Or that it is metabolized within minutes in the blood and then cleared from the body.

Well, I'm sorry to report that you just drove 3 hours to eat nothing, but not for naught. Fasting is [good for you](#) [12]! And has more cred than the "Dean of Derangement," Andrew Weil?

(If you want to know why I turned Weil into a Pez dispenser you'll have to read "[It's World Homeopathy Week! All 8 Days Of It.](#)" [13])



*"At one time, I experimented with fasting one day a week as a useful physical and psychological discipline. Many people experience a **clearer mental state** and **increased energy** after a short-term fast." **[Psst. It obviously didn't work]***

Dr. Andrew (Pezhead) Weil

If I don't stop now it will be Christmas before this damn thing gets done. And we at Council

sincerely hope you live until Christmas. But beware. Phony scares don't end in November.

NOTES:

(1) If you dare, you can read about Aunt Wilma's turkey. See: "[Exploding Turkeys Or My Aunt Wilma's? Pick Your Poison](#) ^[14]"

(2) I fancy myself as Barry White, but I'm pretty sure this is false.

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Links

[1] <https://www.nrdc.org/experts/jennifer-sass/usfda-allows-chemicals-food-despite-lack-toxicity-testing>

[2] http://www.science20.com/pfired_still_kicking/food_babe_hath_spoken_and_subway_bread_will_still_suck-131716

[3] <https://foodbabe.com/subway/>

[4] <https://www.acsh.org/news/2017/09/05/cooking-some-toxic-chemicals-maillard-reaction-11777>

[5] <https://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2012/06/09/when-you-heat-natural-plantbased-foods-you-can-get-acrylamide-and-cancer.aspx>

[6] <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/fact-or-fiction-does-turkey-make-you-sleepy/>

[7] <https://www.supplements-and-health.com/>

[8] <https://www.supplements-and-health.com/tryptophan-side-effects.html>

[9] <http://i.imgur.com/WJbfgA2.jpg>

[10] http://www.cfs.gov.hk/english/whatsnew/whatsnew_fa/files/formaldehyde.pdf

[11] <https://foodbabe.com/2013/10/22/sillyputty/comment-page-3/>

[12] <https://www.drweil.com/diet-nutrition/diets-weight-loss/whats-the-point-of-fasting/>

[13] <https://www.acsh.org/news/2017/04/10/its-world-homeopathy-week-all-8-days-it-11111>

[14] <https://www.acsh.org/news/2016/11/23/exploding-turkeys-or-my-aunt-wilmas-pick-your-poison-10482>