



From UPF Research to Public Health Action

*Changing the way America
eats through science-based
food transparency.*

CERTIFICATION ● EDUCATION ● COLLABORATION



Why This Matters

- Ultra-processed foods (UPFs) contribute approximately 58% of calories consumed by U.S. adults and 62% of calories consumed by U.S. children.
- UPFs are not limited to soda, candy, chips, and packaged desserts. They increasingly include products marketed as nutritious, high-protein, plant-based, or supportive of wellness.
- Many products marketed as "wellness foods" carry a health halo that can obscure their reliance on modified starches, protein isolates, gums, emulsifiers, flavor systems, and other ultra-processed components.



The packaging may look healthier, but the processing may not be.



What the Science Shows

Associations between UPF intake and chronic disease frequently remain significant after researchers adjust for sugar, sodium, saturated fat, fiber, calories, and overall dietary quality. This suggests that the potential health effects of UPFs cannot always be explained by traditional nutrient composition alone.



Consumers Are Asking Better Questions

What is in my food? How was it made? Can I trust this product? Can I find a similar product without the additives or the same degree of processing? Nutrition professionals and researchers have an essential role in helping answer these questions accurately and without oversimplifying the science.



**Science. Transparency.
Better Food Choices.
Healthier People. Stronger Communities.**



The evidence increasingly points to a broader set of factors:

- Industrial formulation and degree of processing
- Additives and additive combinations
- Disruption of the original food structure and matrix
- Packaging exposures and processing contaminants
- Rapid eating and altered satiety
- Displacement of whole and minimally processed foods



Emerging Evidence on Food Additives

The NutriNet-Santé Research Program, one of the world's largest nutrition cohorts, has followed more than 100,000 adults and produced multiple peer-reviewed studies examining specific food additives and disease risk.

Reported associations have included:

- ✓ Certain emulsifiers and preservatives with higher type 2 diabetes risk
- ✓ Artificial sweeteners with metabolic and cancer outcomes
- ✓ Nitrites with cancer and diabetes outcomes.
- ✓ Carrageenan, potassium sorbate, food colorings, and mono- and diglycerides with selected disease outcomes

These findings are observational and do not establish that every additive causes disease. However, they raise important questions about long-term exposure, additive mixtures, vulnerable populations, and whether safety evaluations adequately reflect how these substances are consumed in real-world diets.

References: <https://tinyurl.com/NonUPF>



The Non-UPF Program

We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit working to reduce ultra-processed food intake through three connected areas.

Look for the **Non-UPF Certification**, recommend your favorite non-UPF products, and join our mission to help people eat more real food!

Certification

Our certification is grounded in the Nova classification system and evaluates more than the Nutrition Facts panel. Products are reviewed for the degree and purpose of processing, ingredient function, overall formulation, food additives and the markers of ultra-processing, with supplier and manufacturing documentation.

Certification provides a credible signal for consumers and healthcare professionals while encouraging responsible food companies to improve transparency and reformulate products.

Education

Our expert team translates complex UPF and food-additive science into practical resources for:

- Registered Dietitian Nutritionists
- Healthcare professionals
- Consumers and families
- Food companies
- Public health and policy audiences

Our educational work addresses the Nova classification, food additives and GRAS, common UPF myths, ingredient-list interpretation, and practical strategies for increasing whole and minimally processed foods.

Collaboration

We work with researchers, universities, healthcare professionals, public-interest organizations, and science communicators to move emerging evidence into public health action.

- We advance work related to food additives and cumulative exposure, GRAS and regulatory oversight, clinical and public-health education, food labeling and consumer behavior, science communication, and policy translation.
- We collaborate on scientific commentaries, position papers, educational initiatives, webinars, research proposals, and public-facing materials designed to ensure that emerging UPF science is communicated accurately, clearly, and without oversimplification.

Get Involved

We welcome Registered Dietitian Nutritionists, nutrition researchers, food scientists, educators, graduate students, public health professionals, and organizations interested in:

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| • Collaborative research and publications | • Food-additive and UPF policy initiatives |
| • Scientific review and advisory roles | • Evaluation of labeling, certification, and behavior-change outcomes |
| • Educational resource development | • Internships, practicum experiences, and student research projects |
| • Conference presentations and webinars | |
| • Consumer and healthcare professional education | |



www.nonupfprogram.org



team@nonupfprogram.org

