

Fact Check- Food Dyes & Your Health

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The debate on synthetic food dyes has been in the news a lot lately. Are they linked to health concerns? Are they safe? And if so, in what amounts? Let's break down the facts on this topic!

The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulates food colors, and requires evidence of safety before a color additive can be approved for use in food. Over the years this safety determination has been challenged by many.

Since first questioned in 1975, multiple studies have concluded that some dyes may cause hyperactivity in children, especially in those who are already hyperactive or have diagnosed ADHD.

Multiple animal studies have shown a potential link between certain food dyes and cancer risk.

Due to this, in April 2025, the FDA has announced that it will pull the safety certification for a list of specific food dyes.

Will Colorful Food Still be Available?

- Food dyes which are part of the FDA ban include Red No. 3,, Citrus Red No. 2 and Orange B. Other dyes set to be phased out are Green No. 3, Red No. 40, Yellow No. 5 and 6, Blue No. 1 and 2.
- It's important to know that "food dyes" and "natural food colors" are not the same thing. Food dyes are artificially made in a lab, often from petroleum sources.
- Natural food colors often come from plants or spices. Examples include:
 - Beets for red coloring
 - Turmeric for yellow coloring
 - Algae for blue-green coloring
- Natural food colors have not been linked to health risks and are not included in the new FDA ruling. Companies will still be able to make foods lots of different colors using these natural sources!

Reach out to your dietitian for more information on the topic!