

FDA to reassess the safety of food preservative BHA

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Regulatory Food

The review will assess whether BHA is safe under its current conditions of use in foods such as meats, crisps and other processed products



The FDA has said that it is launching a **comprehensive reassessment of butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA)**, a chemical preservative used in food.

BHA is commonly used in processed foods such as potato crisps, cereals, frozen meats and meat products.

The agency's review will consider "whether BHA is safe under its current conditions of use in food and as a food contact substance, based on the latest scientific information."

The agency has issued a **new request for information** regarding the use and safety of BHA.

The FDA has said that the move is part of broader efforts to proactively review chemical additives in the food supply.

In May last year, the FDA launched a strengthened programme to review chemicals currently in the food supply, identifying BHA as a top candidate for review.

"BHA has remained in the food supply for decades despite being identified by the National Toxicology Program as 'reasonably anticipated to be a human carcinogen' based on animal studies," said Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.

"This reassessment marks the end of the 'trust us' era in food safety."

“If BHA cannot meet today's gold-standard science for its current uses, we will remove it from the food supply and continue cleaning up food chemicals — starting where children face the greatest exposure.”

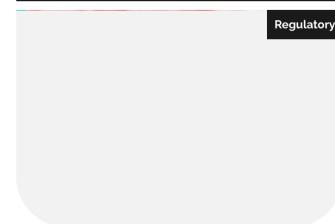
BHA was listed as Generally Recognized as Safe (GRAS) back in 1958 by the FDA, as well as being approved as a food additive in 1961. However, in 1991, it was classified as **"reasonably anticipated to be a human carcinogen"** by the National Toxicology Program.

It is used to prevent spoilage of fats and oils and can be found in various food products, including frozen meals, breakfast cereals, cookies, candy, ice cream and meat products.

While packaged food label data indicate BHA use has declined in recent years, it still remains



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present in many food products, including those marketed to children.

"We are taking decisive action to ensure that chemicals in our food supply are not causing harm," said FDA Commissioner Dr Marty Makary.

"The scientific community has raised significant concerns about some chemicals currently in the food supply."

“Once we complete our assessment of BHA, we expect to conduct similar assessments for butylated hydroxytoluene, a synthetic preservative known as BHT and azodicarbonamide — a chemical used in yoga mats and also used as a dough conditioner.”

"The FDA is committed to ensuring the safety of chemicals in our food supply through rigorous, science-based evaluation," said Kyle Diamantas, Deputy Commissioner for Human Foods.

"This comprehensive post-market assessment of BHA reflects our proactive approach to food safety and our dedication to protecting public health by continuously reviewing the latest scientific evidence."

The Make America Healthy Again Commission's Strategy Report identified as a key priority the post-market review of chemical additives in food, including food additives, food contact substances, GRAS substances and colour additives.

The FDA has advanced **draft rulemaking to reform its GRAS framework** in an effort to drive greater transparency into the food supply by addressing independent GRAS conclusions and bringing greater oversight into the review of chemicals added to food.

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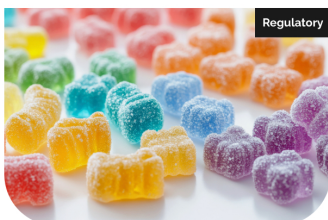
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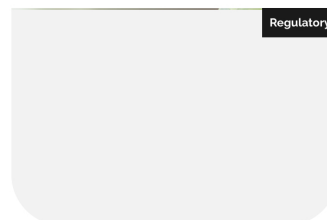
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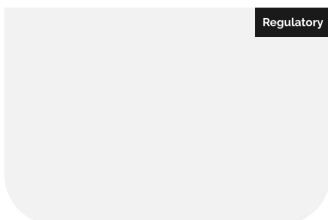
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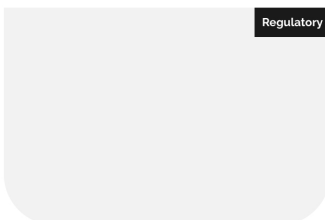
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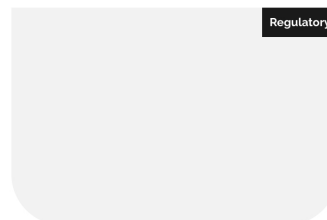


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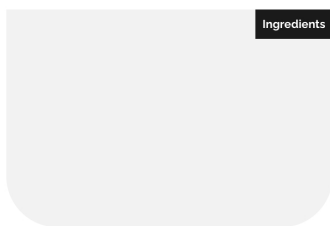


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