

## Reader reports from the Food Intolerance Network

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### **("sulphite", "sulfite", "220" keyword only)**

#### **[1575] 220: "sulphites/sulfites put me into Atrial Fibrillation" (July 2020)**

Sulfites put me into Atrial Fibrillation within 45 minutes. Liquids, like wine, will do it within seconds, foods take a little longer. Every time I go into Afib I end up in the hospital being cardioverted (shocked) back into rhythm. I don't think all people's Afib is caused by sulfites. However, I doubt I am the only one. Most people have no idea what they are and what foods they are in, so they would never make the connection – Carey

#### **[1516] 220: sulphites, asthma and dried fruit (January 2019)**

Since about 18 months of age, our son has had asthma on and off and it took us a while to work out what was going on. One of the things that was happening was that every time he ate dried fruit, three or four days later he'd be sensitive to things. So if he had a chest infection, he'd have an asthma attack where normally he wouldn't. Or if we had a cold snap in the middle of the night - like around springtime - he'd had an asthma attack, starting out coughing, just as a cough and then it would develop into a full blown asthma attack. Eventually, we realised if we could keep the dried fruits and sulphites out of his diet, a lot of his problems would go away - Darryl (from DVD 2006)

#### **[1502] Do you crave the foods that affect you? – facebook thread (September 2018)**

Yes, me too. My favourite foods are my poison and yes, I give in to cravings and wake up with what I call my food hangover which can last a few hours to days. I don't however give in to sulphites and glutamates that give me week long migraines – Maxine

#### **[1488] 220: "Wondering if I would wake up dead" - heart palpitations (arrythmia) from sulfites in drinks (June 2018)**

I am 55 yr old male, usually very fit and active. I've been a competitive cyclist for the past 25 years. I have drunk red wine four out of every seven nights of the week for 30 years and on two nights a week I might drink a couple of beers or some white wine. I usually drink French reds or sometimes Italian (I do believe that some wines don't contain sulfites).

I've noticed on several occasions that after Pinot Grigio and some other whites and after certain beers that I would get heart palpitations similar to what you describe - very uncomfortable and even more frightening, even wondering if I would wake up dead the following morning.

Recently my palpitations have continued 24 hrs a day for the past four weeks. I went to a cardiologist and he told me I had arrythmia and went through the options.

I decided to experiment and cut out wine and beer altogether for a week. I started to feel better and tried small doses of French red wine which seemed to have no effect. Then I tried some white and the palpitations came back.

Two days ago I bought some cider (in the USA) and I've drunk two bottles a day for three days. I noticed at the time that it contains sulfites and subsequently my palpitations have reared up again.

Doctors and popular opinion just tell you to cut out alcohol, but I don't think it is the alcohol at all. I don't think it's related to the colour of the wine either, but purely to the amount of sulfites it contains.

I will now be looking to eliminate sulfites altogether from my diet - Carl (USA)

**UPDATE several days later:** That American cider was the worst. After three days of feeling awful I drank four small glasses of a nice Cotes du Rhone last night and woke up feeling fine. I try to stick to a lot of French produce - the list of ingredients on American foods reads like a chemistry lab inventory!

#### **[1464] Diet for sleep and anxiety issues- facebook thread (September 2017)**

For me, sleep issues are a1 dairy, colours and sulphites. For my son, it's chocolate and benzoates. Amine reduction improves DP's sleep. And actually, DP sleeps better when he has wheat, but gets major mood issues, so he's very careful to avoid it – Stephanie

#### **[1420] ADHD diagnosis and failsafe - facebook thread (December 2016)**

I have a child with ADD (inattention) we found diet change only did so much. She has had problems with salicylates and sulphites in particular. OT assessment and therapy gave us some great tools as well. We are currently testing out a low dose of medication and have noticed some changes with concentration and being more 'switched on'. Our goal has always been to increase her availability for learning (which we are finally having some gains with - hooray!) If your child is better off on some medications as well there is absolutely nothing wrong with that. The best part is that they can be stopped if they are not working. I think if you always remind yourself that you are their parent and know what is best for them you can't go wrong. Best of luck! – Shay

#### **[1406] 160b: Heart arrhythmia with fibrillation (August 2016)**

I am a 65 year old lady who has had two ablations after five years of atrial fibrillation. My condition was distressing and the arrhythmia with the fibrillation was always intense and frightening. For nearly 12 months I have been free of episodes until recently after eating cashews treated with sulphites and last night after eating icecream with 160b. Last night I had an episode of intense arrhythmia and checked all the foods I had consumed...nothing was different except that I had eaten Icecream and after checking the ingredients I found it contained 160b. When I had my worst years of fibrillation I checked foods all the time for their allergies and 160b came up in an article when I was researching sulphites because the article said 160b could give the same allergic reaction as sulphites. I do believe that many many illness are caused by additives in food...I cannot drink wine either and have trouble locating organic without sulphites...Thank you for your article which has

assisted me in confirming my own assessment of last night's episode. This type of information needs to be widely spread – Fleur

### **[1366] Seizures due to salicylates (November 2015)**

I started on this journey after attending one of your talks five years ago. My son was having seizures and was on anti-seizure medication. After learning about the diet, I decided to ditch the medications, which weren't working anyway, and attempt the elimination diet with challenges. It was the hardest thing I have done in my life. It took us 4 months to complete, because when my son had a reaction to a certain group, it was a major reaction. From this we found salicylates were the cause of his seizures. As soon as these were reintroduced, the seizures returned. Remove the salicylates and the seizures went. He also had an extreme reaction to sulphites, which I would never have known anything about unless I had attended your roadshow – mother who attended Wyong talk Fedup Roadshow 2015

### **[1365] Asthma related to preservatives (sulphites, benzoates, nitrates) and colours including natural colour annatto 160b (November 2015)**

Our son's breathing problems and wheezing started at four months, when a GP put him on antibiotics. He was on the nebuliser at least twice a day with corticosteroids, ipratropium and salbutamol and oral steroids thrown in when he got really bad. He had all the tests for causes - dust mites etc - which proved negative. Then he started solids at 5 months and got worse.

When he was two and a half we started on the elimination diet. His asthma disappeared in the second week.

Challenges showed that Joe reacted to sulphites, benzoates, nitrates and colours, both artificial and natural. One musk stick (artificial colours azorubine and erythrosine 127) started him coughing within three minutes. Annatto natural colour 160b took a little longer. Artificial yellow colour tartrazine 102 turned out to be the worst of all. Through experience, we learned that Joe gets asthma from colours in antibiotics and toothpaste. Additives can also be absorbed through the skin, so he also gets asthma from coloured shampoo and liquid soap. - from Fed Up with Asthma

### **[1363] An update to let you know FedUp has changed our lives! (November 2015)**

The Fedup book and approach has definitely changed my life! My daughter is almost four now and, when we manage her food, she is a wonderful angel! When we let it slide, well, we regret it but we get through it!

I remember reading about other parents who found the changes in their own health amazing—I am definitely one of those. I have struggled with IBS, have had fructose and lactose absorption tests and been advised to limit both substances. After years and years of struggling with food, through the elimination diet, I finally worked out that sulphites are the number one problem for me! When I avoid sulphites, I am perfectly fine (which can be tricky as they are sometimes unlabelled)!

I have also worked out how different additives affect my mind and my mental outlook. Antioxidants 319 and 320 definitely make me fatigued, and the day after I have ingested them, I could literally

stay on the couch all day (which is highly unusual for me). These are such tricky ones because they're often unlabelled also! Chocolate makes me feel terrible about myself for the next two days. So our lives are definitely much-improved thanks to your advice.

Through the elimination diet, I have found that my daughter is definitely highly sensitive! The things that make her crazy include vanilla, apples, bananas, sulphites, honey, MSG—the list goes on! I have been reading more about gut health lately and thinking about that too. My daughter was born four weeks early and then at three weeks old, was on IV antibiotics for 5 days, followed by another week of antibiotics every 6 hours. I think this may have something to do with her sensitivities—so we've been having lots of yoghurt to try and build up the good gut bacteria—haven't worked up to giving her actual probiotics yet!

Thank you for advising me to see a dietitian. I have met with one of your recommended dietitians over this whole year and she was absolutely fantastic. I cannot speak highly enough of her. I would (and have) definitely recommended her to other people (as well as your website of course!) – Erin

**[1288] 220: Sulphites send my 17 yo into a complete ODD asshole (November 2014)**

Sulphites send my 17 yo into a complete ODD asshole, more than typical teenager shit and attitude, he has had it all his life and only cottoned onto food intolerances when he was 15. Since cutting out the crap that sends him loopy, from depression, out of control anger, tears and stuttering and almost like Tourette type syndromes, he has gone from a failing student all his life to one getting A's and B's in most subjects and doing uni pathway for year 12 next year. Honestly we are all in amazement this is happening, its hard work, nothing in the supermarket is hardly ever suitable and he's fussy but so worth it because the whole family pays for it when he goes off track, as you can imagine a 17 yo with his friends eating and drinking anything they want, I have no control when he isn't home.

I love the facebook group, makes you feel not so isolated and alone with issues like this, people think you're being fussy or just making it up but if they had to live with consequences it would a different story. I have a six year old daughter who is thankfully benefiting early on from what we have learnt from my teenage son – Bec

**[1079] 220-228: Anaphylaxis due to sulfite preservatives (December 2011)**

The main problem that I have had to deal with for over 30 years is the use of sulfite preservatives. I have had at least 5 instances of anaphylaxis, with three events that landed me in the emergency room. I do not have asthma, nor am I particularly abnormally allergy-prone (other than seasonal hay fever, and the few foods and medications of which I am intolerant), but sulfites in wines give me excruciating 2-3 day migraines, and the amount used on non-fresh shrimp has given me several life-threatening encounters that required 6+ hours under the care of a number of very, VERY uneasy emergency room doctors. – Geoffrey by email, USA

**[1073] Some feedback from the Fedup Roadshow 2011 (September 2011)**

'Salicylates and preservatives including sulphites - in dried apricots - turned out to be the major problems for our son's severe eczema', said one mother.

**[1065] 220: Sulphites and eczema – “it pays to be persistent” (July 2011)**

Feb 2011: I live in the UK. Since childhood I have suffered from sporadic, mild eczema, but for the past 8 months I have had a severe rash, starting on my arms and legs and then spreading to my scalp and stomach. It has been unbearably itchy. In this time I have been prescribed Betnovate ointment and anti-histamines and been treated twice for scabies! The rash has eased several times and then come back again.

After reading about "ribo rash" I realised that I had been using instant gravy granules regularly during the past year and that these contain E635. I am also allergic to (British) chocolate and have to be careful not to eat too much, too often. I can, for some reason, tolerate Belgian chocolate though.

Thank you for the information on your site, it could be a turning point for me.

May 2011: I've cut additives out of my diet altogether, but wine seems to be the culprit. Since I stopped drinking it the rash is very slowly clearing. I'm also mainly dairy free at the moment. When I'm clear I'll start to introduce these things back slowly and see what happens. Now that I've narrowed it down, I need to pinpoint exactly what the cause is. It has made me realise though that a lot of the time we really don't know what we're eating!

June 2011: I'm able to let you know that sulphites would seem to be the problem. I'm managing to cut them out of my diet, although it's difficult as they masquerade under different names and are in most manufactured foods.

Unfortunately, they're in most wines too in fairly large amounts and so I've also had to give up my favourite tippie. My rash has virtually disappeared, with just a few stubborn patches remaining, and it has left red marks which I'm sure will fade in time. A year of hell, really.

I hope my story might encourage other sufferers to 'turn detective'. It certainly hasn't been easy because my symptoms don't show straight away but it pays to be persistent – Lynn, UK

(There's no need to give up your favourite drink, SO2GO removes sulphites from wine - Sue)

**[997] Asthma: hospital admissions - from one per week to one per year (March 2011)**

First, I have to thank you for the work you have done. It is just over 3 years since I first picked up a copy of Fed Up with Asthma after my then 16 month old son was diagnosed. The medication did not seem to be working as it should, and I knew there was something else going on. He has major difficulties with sulphites, MSG and flavour enhancers (and natural glutamates) and benzoates (although we still avoid all preservatives and artificial colours because we are used to it now!), and after seeing an allergist and finding a nut allergy as well, all the pieces fit together. He is now a happy and healthy little boy about to start pre-school, whose nut allergies have been decreasing over the last two years - in fact his peanut allergy is totally gone - and has gone from one hospital admission a week to one every 8-12 months. We truly thank you, because it was your book that put us on the right track. Clare, NSW

**[996] Sulphites & asthma: unlisted sulphites in prawns (March 2011)**

Just purchased my Xmas prawns and thinking to avoid any additives, I always buy 'Australian' uncooked prawns. As I purchased 2Kg they came in the original box and shock, horror, I see preservative ticked, and then 223 (sodium metabisulphite). This product was labelled 'Wild caught Australian frozen prawns' from Hervey Bay - all sounds so pristine!

I rang the fish man morning and he informs me that all prawns are treated with 223 to prevent discolouring. This is common practice across the industry, the only difference being that imported prawns may not declare the preservative on the packaging. I phoned the Health department who were completely unaware of this practice. I suggested that as processed foods have to have labelling of ingredients what of the 'fresh' product?

An asthmatic with sensitivities to the sulphur group of preservatives may well react to prawns and then assume this is a seafood allergy, as preservative would not be considered a factor. Imagine if all those wonderful sea food displays at this time of the year were labelled 'contains sulphur metabisulphite'! – Judy, Vic

**[942] 621: Supraventricular Tachycardia (October 2010)**

Over the past 15 years I have suffered from numerous things - CFS, IBS, Supraventricular Tachycardia, rosacea and itchiness. Post 2000, things were going along fairly okay CFS wise but I developed the SVT after the birth of my son in 2003. I had this corrected in 2007 (very long diagnosis!) but still continued to suffer the odd palpitation here and there. My IBS started in 1999 and I would swing from constipation to diarrhoea. My rosacea had been with me since 1997 and nothing would take it away. The itchiness started in 2008 and so did the headaches.

To cut a long story short, in January of last year I decided it was time to start looking into diet seeing no-one could work out what was wrong with me. So I went totally preservative, colour and sulphite free and purchased your book. Basically followed everything on the list of things to avoid. I did the same for my children. My rosacea disappeared! I also stopped itching and started to have less headaches and heart palpitations. I identified that sulphites affect my breathing, MSG affects my heart, something gives me headaches and 160b makes me itch. However, my diarrhoea and fatigue still remained. Eventually I looked more into salicylates (despite what the dietician thought!) and that was the final piece of the puzzle. - Rachel, NSW

**[938] 220: Lying awake my heart pounding for hours (October 2010)**

I was just reading your article about the link between sulphites and ventricular arrhythmia in the latest newsletter. I could relate to many of the symptoms experienced by Michiko. On several occasions (usually after a dinner party or night out at a restaurant), I've had a similar experience, lying awake that night unable to sleep and my heart pounding for hours. Just like Michiko I felt like I was 'buzzing' as though I'd had some hype-inducing drug. Sometimes I would also feel breathless and I noticed this often happened after drinking white wine or champagne. I'd never heard of

anyone else having this experience and wondered what could be causing it. Thanks to this article I now have a good explanation, and will avoid preservative 220. - Michelle, by email

**[925] 220: Asthmatic son affected by illegal sulphites in mince (June 2010) [COURAGE AWARD]**

I tested the mince at my local butcher yesterday. I bought the meat at 16.35pm, got home, tested it and the reading was between 180-400mg! It changed colour so quickly to the deepest shade on the side of the test strip container I didn't need to wait 30 seconds to see it change. On a positive note, I went in to Aldi and tested their meat today and it had no discernible change, so I guess I'll buy my meat there. My son takes daily asthma medication and has been sick since I deviated from my expensive organic butcher to the garbage they sell at the local butcher. My son has been on numerous cortisone courses this year as well as daily antihistamines and antibiotics - I couldn't figure out what was causing it until I came across the sulphur dioxide article on your website. I have reported these people to Primesafe (Victorian Government food regulatory body) and I am thinking of pursuing legal action due to the impact it has had on my son, I can't believe I stood at that butcher earlier this year and they lied to me and told me they did not use preservatives in their mince - they were so helpful telling me what did and didn't contain it and how I could get preso free sausages etc. I should have known it was too good to be true. - Tonya, VIC.

**[883] Ulcerative colitis and diet (November 2009)**

I had ulcerative colitis with associated liver problems and spontaneous bruising, I was a mess. The doctors were talking about a possible liver transplant in ten years. My job meant I travelled and ate out frequently. I kept telling the doctors I thought it was something to do with food but I couldn't pinpoint what it was. Then I quit my job, stopped eating out, ate very simple food and got better. My last liver function test was quite good. I asked my doctors, "Don't you want to hear about this because it could help someone else?" They weren't interested.

When I did the Liver Cleansing Diet, I spent three weeks in bed, feeling dreadful. Then I did the RPAH Elimination diet and found I was sensitive to salicylates and amines (that are especially high in the Liver Cleansing Diet). I found that dairy foods, gluten and food additives could cause problems too. Sulphite preservatives in dried fruit were the worst. - by email, Melbourne (from page 52, Fed Up)

**[845] Eczema and additives (August 2009)**

Nearly two years ago you referred me to a dietitian. My daughter Zoe was under her for approx a year for eczema problems. During that year she did the elimination diet and then the many food challenges. Zoe will soon be 3 and today she is a different child. Before doing the diet the pediatrician had talked to us about doing wet dressings. The diet showed that sulphites, nitrates and food colours both artificial and some natural affected her eczema badly. Sunscreen is also a big challenge for us. Anyway, I wanted to let you know how great the diet has been for Zoe and we can only hope that the manufacturers out there are able to find other alternatives for preservatives and colours. I find the biggest challenge is the byproduct sulphites like glucose syrup and vinegar. People always say to me how hard this must be for her. We are so incredibly lucky that she is not anaphylactic and that she has responded to the diet so well. She may only be 2yrs old but she always comes to us and asks if she can eat what is put on tables at parties and gatherings etc. Thank you

once again for helping us out with Zoe and for getting the message out there. My girlfriend showed me the book and if it was not for that then I would still be following conventional medicine to combat the eczema. – Kirsten, NSW

**[711] Heart symptoms from benzoates, bread preservative and sulphites (December 2008)**

My 14-year-old son has Aspergers syndrome. He experiences arrhythmia and severe heart palpitations every time he consumes any additives 211, 282, 220 etc. If he has been free from these additives for over two weeks then he will get away with the first exposure and then it accumulates and gets worse. We saw a heart specialist and he found no problems, just blaming it on anxiety. He also gets more aggressive and violent once it accumulates... like Jekyll and Hyde. Sadly it is so hard to convince and be believed by doctors and his psychiatrist that these additives affect him. – Therese, by email

**[708] Chronic asthma and colours, 621, 635, sulphites, amines; inattentive ADHD and salicylates (November 2008)**

I just wanted to say huge thank you for your work (a significant understatement). I saw you at a Canberra talk and our family has been failsafe for 12 months now. We now have two family members - my husband and my seven-year-old - asthma free thanks to failsafe. My husband was previously a chronic asthmatic and now he has improved so much that he doesn't even need to use a preventer nor does my seven-year-old year old! My eldest son aged eight is now excelling in school due to failsafe - he previously had all the symptoms of inattentive ADHD - head in the clouds, extremely forgetful, vague and much more. The school teachers have all remarked on his improvement and his school reports reflect the same. The biggest asthma culprits for my husband and seven-year-old year old are 621, 635, sulphites, amines and yellow and red colours. The culprit for my 8 year old is salicylates. When we did the RPAH diet and salicylate challenge he fell asleep in the classroom at school and had to be taken home. - Lindy, Canberra (very grateful Mum)

**[703] 210: Croup, asthma, behaviour related to benzoates or sulphites (November 2008)**

My daughter ended up with croup and asthma from doing the sulphite challenge and that she also ended up with croup, asthma and a chest infection from doing the lemonade (sodium benzoate 211) challenge. Her behaviour changed so much with the lemonade challenge that her pre-school teacher asked me to stop the challenge on the second day. This still resulted in high behaviour and many other conflicts with anyone she was around, very short fuse amongst other things – reader, Qld

**[694] 220: Ventricular arrhythmia and sulphites (2) (November 2008)**

In reply to reader story [640] ventricular arrhythmia from sulphites, those are the exact same symptoms I get when having any sulphites. If I have too many I also get tongue swelling. This reaction happened out of the blue a few years ago at the age of 42. Wine and beer affect me the most and I avoid sulphites in any foods I eat – although I can have sips of wine and small bites of sausages etc with no ill effects, once I have the equivalent of about 3/4 glass of wine with sulphites, I suffer. I always wake up about two hours into sleep, with a temperature and my heart going crazy – then I get stomach cramps, nausea and a strong urge to use my bowels. The next day I feel lousy and

my heart feels like it's got an extra beat for a couple of weeks. I'm happy to have preservative free wine, beer and sausages in my life but 220 and 223 are in way too many products – and for no use at all – my preservative-free sausages last for 4 days beautifully in the fridge. MSG doesn't affect me (I had a challenge of it in hospital) and I don't know if the other flavour enhancers bother me, I avoid them and haven't had them for three years. Although nothing is ever quoted in the medical literature, my immunologist is very familiar with these types of reactions. We have been conned by the manufacturers into believing food requires additives for our benefit but I agree with Michiko, ventricular arrhythmia is a terrible and frightening experience! – Corrine, by email

**[693] Ventricular arrhythmia from MSG and sulphites (November 2008)**

I suffer from mild arrhythmia (I had a hole in my heart since birth and had an operation when I was 21) which is well controlled by medication. I am not a drinker, but do occasionally have one or two drinks and have noticed that the arrhythmia is worse and now I know why. I know that MSG aggravates the condition and don't touch the stuff. – Julie, South Africa

**[692] Heart palpitations felt like a washing machine out of balance (November 2008)**

Although I knew I was allergic to medications containing sulphur, I never realised to avoid foods containing sulphites and other additives. During the 1990s I used to eat fruit mince pies and dried fruits (because I thought they were healthy) and many other things that are now out of bounds. I also started to experience sudden uncontrollable coughing fits at the most embarrassing times, so always carried a packet of Fisherman's Lozenges to pop in my mouth on these occasions. I noticed that I started having heart palpitations which would last a short time, but got scared at times when they became stronger or lasted longer (I likened the feeling to my heart being like a washing machine out of balance). The Doctor told me to go to hospital when it happened so I could be put on an ECG machine, but with no transport I knew it was impossible to get to hospital before the palpitations stopped. I got a taxi to the hospital one time, but of course it was over by the time they got the machine hooked up. Eventually I linked these palpitations to the Fisherman's Lozenges and I haven't had any more palpitations since ceasing to take them. Now I am a lot wiser about the foods I eat and I am certainly a lot better for it. – Gladys, by email

[Fisherman's Friend lozenges are made from all natural ingredients and do not contain preservatives. However, they do contain licorice, menthol, eucalyptus oil and capsicum tincture all of which are high in natural salicylates – it seems that Gladys' palpitations could have been associated with salicylates in the lozenges she took to overcome the coughing caused by sulphites.]

**[691] 220: Racing heart (tachycardia) and asthma from sulphites (November 2008)**

In response to your newsletter regarding 220 effects to the heart, I first had a reaction to wine a couple of years ago. I woke in the middle of the night with my heart absolutely racing - I paced the floor, drank plenty of water and tried to relax. Eventually I was able to go back to sleep. This has happened regularly since and loving wine I have found it difficult to control. Fortunately we have a cellar of aged wine and over the time I have found that I am able to tolerate aged red wine and better quality white wines without effect. A single glass of some white wines, however, will give me palpitations and wake me through the night with my heart racing.

Recently I have also been able to link my reaction to episodes of asthma. The first at the age of 30, and the second at 35. On the second occasion I had been drinking 2-3 glasses of white wine every day during a two week holiday. Whilst I was able to select wines that didn't affect my heart at that level, by the end of the second week I experienced my second ever bout of asthma. Recently I also ate some cheese and suffered palpitations. Checking the label showed that it had sulphites listed. – Amanda, by email

[cheese does not normally contain sulphites unless flavoured, e.g. – Mersey Valley sweet chili contains two sulphites: 223 listed as preservative and 221 listed as antioxidant.]

**[689] 220: Sulphites in wine cause eczema (November 2008)**

Ever since I became pregnant with my first child 13 yrs ago, I have reacted to 220 sulphites. Especially in red wine, well actually any wine and a range of alcoholic drinks. Within half an hour I start sneezing heavily as if I am developing a cold. My throat then feels sore and my face reddens and becomes puffy. I have also linked 220 to eczema, which I have struggled with all my life. After refraining from 220, my incurable eczema vanished almost completely within days. Beware though! I have switched to preservative free wines. Happs is fine but some of the others which claim to be preservative-free still affect me. Reading the labels more closely, some only claim to have NO PRESERVATIVES ADDED. These wines still make me react. - Jenny, NSW

**[688] 220: Cough from sulphites (November 2008)**

I've always enjoyed the occasional glass of - maybe 1 or 2 a week on average. About two years ago we joined a mail order wine club and now I have up to six glasses per week, not a huge amount but it's three to six times what I used to have. The wine club has been really enjoyable for us but for well over 12 months I've had a mild mucous forming cough every morning sometimes lasting all day. I've been to the doctor and it's 'nothing'.

In the last failsafe newsletter there was a bit about sulphites and asthma which I basically skipped over because I don't get asthma. But a little later into the evening a light came on in my head. 220 in wine is sulphites, so I went to the best website in the world called the food intolerance network- yay for it - and looked up the sulphite connection with asthma. I now think my cough may be a mild asthma type response and I've noticed a slight wheeziness occasionally. I went off any food containing sulphites for one week and guess what? No cough for that time. I still love my wine with dinner and cutting down has seemed to lessen the problem. – Leanne

**[687] 220: Reaction to sulphites aggravated by hidden dental abscesses (November 2008)**

Two years ago I became ill in the same manner as the ladies in story [641] 220: Two reports of sore throat and cold-like symptoms due to fruit cake May 2008. I had major headaches, sore throat, swollen glands, and then the side of my face began to swell. At first, I thought it was an insect bite and that I had a slight cold at the same time. But each day, my face was more swollen and my eye was barely opened. The doctor gave me antibiotics as he thought it was infected sinuses. It slowly got better, but at the time I was having dried fruit and white wine. My problems started again at Xmas time with a slice of plum pudding - home made from packaged dried fruit - and a glass of wine

with lunch. I worked out myself that it was the sulphites and avoided them as best I could. Months later I had a problem with my teeth and X-rays showed I had two abscesses. The sulphites had been making such a reaction with the abscesses that my face had completely blown up. I have had the teeth fixed but still have problems with my throat if I touch these chemicals. – Carol by email

**[686] 220: Sulphite reactions from commercial corn products (November 2008)**

I'm writing from the U.S. and have ventricular arrhythmia with sulfites. The point of this letter is to pass on another major source of sulfur poisoning. In the U.S. at least, the first major step in processing corn is to soak it in warm water for 48 hours to reconstitute it. To retard or eliminate bacteria growth in this process sulfur dioxide is added to the water. When the corn is processed into its hundreds of forms, this sulfur becomes concentrated and is a problem for sulfur intolerant folks like me. For twenty years I avoided commercial corn products totally, yet every year I would try my father-in-law's organic sweet corn fresh from the farm and never had a reaction. Upon learning about the chemical contamination of processed corn, I began to experiment and it turned out that I can tolerate organically grown and processed corn but the commercial stuff is poison for me. – by email

**[685] 220: Twenty years to recognise asthma due to sulphites (November 2008)**

I first noticed something was not right when I was 18 years old. Mum had brought a Chinese meal home for the family to share. Within 30 mins of finishing the meal my breathing began to get laboured and I started to sweat. My nose blocked up and I felt like I was suffocating. I thought I had a reaction to MSG and decided to leave it at that. I didn't tell mum as I decided I would just not eat from that shop again.

I would often get the same reaction if I went to a restaurant so for the next 16 years I always thought I got food poisoning easily and avoided restaurants and Chinese food.

About four years ago we ate a fish and anchovy meal at the home of some friends. Around 2am in the morning I started going incredibly hot, sweaty, fast heartbeat and felt like I was suffocating. I couldn't breath but did not link it to asthma. I had diarrhoea but no vomiting. No nausea. I had no idea what was wrong with me. I thought it was bad food poisoning due to the fish. I thought I was going to die. It was that severe. I struggled until 4am when I thought I should call an ambulance. I got out of bed and almost collapsed. I was dizzy, seeing flying shapes and hallucinating. I took some antihistamine because my husband said it was more like an allergic reaction and 45 mins later I started to improve slightly so I did not call the ambulance.

I was 34 years old then. I didn't eat out for the next four years and told all my friends "I get food poisoning easily". Earlier this year I decided to see an allergist as I was convinced I was allergic to fish – as similar reactions have happened when I have eaten anchovies - and wanted to be able to eat out again. Skin testing showed hayfever but no fish or food allergies. The allergist mentioned sulphite intolerance to me and when he presented a list of the foods that commonly have sulphites in them, it all came together. Suddenly, everything that I thought gave me irritable bowel had sulphites in them.

I knew that certain mueslis, all sausages and dried fruits made me very sick. I could never drink wine because it always left me with a heavy chest, flushing and I would feel every breath was an effort. Always diarrhoea and asthma and stomach cramps. I never linked the asthma to the sulphites. I always thought it was coincidental. Sometimes I'd get a rash. I know now the worst foods for me are sausages (instant stomach cramps, diarrhoea), wine, cold meats, certain mueslis with dried fruit. I have eliminated all sulphites from my diet since March 2008. I am now off my asthma preventer and feel great. I know now I can tolerate a small amount of sulphite, like in Vegemite but if I cross a threshold (particularly restaurant meals) I suffer terribly. I am too scared to eat out again. I have since taken my 10-year-old son off all sulphites and it's no surprise his asthma has improved considerably.- Yvette, NSW

#### **[642] Asthma update two years on (May 2008)**

Richie's original story ([402] March 2006) described how limiting his intake of preservatives and sulphite containing foods such as mince meat, prawns, pizza, processed meats etc had helped him with breathing problems he'd suffered for over 20 years.

His update in April 2008 reads: You probably get many emails of thanks and I have sent one or two previously but what the hell, I'm going to send you another one just to let you know how much my life has improved since taking your advice. I thank you with every positive emotion I have for who you are, what you stand for and for changing my life. I have no more breathing difficulties, no more sleep problems, no more anxiety and all this leads to no more stress. No money can buy this. I have been educating the people in my life on how damaging additives, preservatives, sulphites etc. are and sent links to your site to everyone in my address book - Richie, Vic.

#### **[641] 220: Two reports of sore throat and cold-like symptoms due to fruit cake (May 2008)**

I know I am sensitive to preservative 220 (sulphur dioxide), but a few months ago I ate a slice of fruit cake (which I love). As soon as I ate it, my throat felt as if it went down the "wrong" hole and my throat seemed to close a bit. I ended up with a sore throat, cold like symptoms; runny eyes, blocked nose and sinuses, persistent cough, mucus and my ears kept blocking. Oh my face broke out too. This lasted for a week. Recently, I ate a fruit mince pie. The first one tasted great so the next day I had to have another one. Now I am suffering. I have the same symptoms as above and it's been nearly a week. I said to my hubby it was a reaction from 220 but (being the expert he is) won't believe me. I've scanned the internet to see if it's common - to prove a point - but with no luck. Does anyone else have a reaction like this to 220?'

And a reply: I'm responding to an email in the newsletter ("Can you help?" - March 2008) regarding preservative 220. I've had the exact same reaction to eating fruit cake, and also reacted to sulphur-containing eye drops. The first time I reacted my throat felt swollen and closed a bit; the second time I ate quite a bit of fruit cake and my throat closed a lot - felt as if I couldn't breathe. This was followed by sore throat/"cold" symptoms lasting a few days. I haven't pin-pointed it to 220 as I haven't re-tested.

#### **[640] 220: Ventricular arrhythmia link to sulphites (May 2008)**

I just thought I'd tell you that although my cardiologist never questioned my diet, after two hospitalizations in emergency for ventricular arrhythmia, and nearly two years of fearing for my life, feeling my heart jumping all over the place, and being miserable, I finally linked a very bad episode to a wedding and consumption of red wine, and then to the foods in my cupboard. Since eliminating sulphites, I have had NO problems. None of the medication I was given worked, (medication rarely does for arrhythmia). I wonder why didn't anyone mention this, not when I went to the doctor, not when I was in hospital fearing I was going to die. I've tested this three times, having been 'arrhythmia free' for months, and then drunk champagne or wine, eaten foods (everything you would normally eat and drink at a function) and each time, 4 to six hours after, my heart goes crazy and I can't sleep for the whole night. It's like I'm 'buzzing' and restless, with my heart banging around. This is the honest truth, I have no symptoms, and I'm medication free, and even felt so good I've got back into exercise without fear of dropping dead! It's been six months (since the wedding that triggered the biggest attack ever, and the linking to red wine), that I've been 220 free, and free of symptoms (apart from the three 'tests' which were one night tests). The link was obviously cumulative, the more 220 over the day the worse the problem that night and the next days. Alcohol with 220 is a big trigger - so much for drinking red wine every night for your health! My normal diet was toxic, I was eating Vegemite, sun-dried tomatoes, dips, fruit juice cordial, I ate cereal with dried fruit (and 220) every morning, and sauces (it's in everything) and consumed dried fruit as snacks, thinking it was 'good for me'. Only asthma is mentioned on the official government additive information site, but this is a message I wish could get out, so others could at least try it, as it won't cause harm to avoid this preservative - Michiko, WA (has anyone else experienced a problem like this with sulphites? - [suedengate@ozemail.com.au](mailto:suedengate@ozemail.com.au))

#### **[629] 'Severe and unpredictable asthma' due to sulphites (February 2008)**

Our food journey started with me picking up your Fed Up with Asthma book from the bookstore after our three year-old had just experienced a bout of wheezing. I read it all in one sitting and was left both horrified and hopeful. We decided that since we had nothing to lose that we would try the diet as a family in an attempt to pinpoint the trigger of our daughter's asthma. I was optimistic about finding a trigger but not really expecting to find it. Grace did the sulphite challenge with an apricot fruit bar as recommended by our dietitian - she had no reaction to the salicylate or amine challenges. I gave her the bar at the start of a short car journey. Within 5 minutes of finishing the bar, her breathing had become so laboured and wheezing so loud that I had to stop the car to give her Ventolin.

Over the next few months I repeated the challenge with a different brand of fruit bar, berry flavour and again with 4 dried apricots. Same results each time. Prior to the diet she would eat dried fruit, sausages and non-organic grapes quite often and was on a substantial twice daily preventer medication regimen as well as Ventolin about 1-2 times per week. Funnily enough it had never occurred to us that 'healthy' food could possibly trigger asthma.

We had been told by the paediatrician that Grace had severe and unpredictable asthma and required aggressive preventative treatment to avoid the life-threatening attacks that she had experienced. Obviously we now strictly avoid any sulphites and Grace no longer requires Ventolin or preventers. We have found that her asthma is indeed predictable and is treatable without any medication. I would even go as far as to say that she no longer has asthma, she merely exhibits asthma-like symptoms in response to sulphites.

Grace's growth had been stunted by her asthma medication. From her growth chart you can see the month she swapped to the stronger medication and also when we took her off it (post-diet). She grew 1cm a week for two months after she came off the meds. Her rate of growth is now normal .- reader, Qld

### **[603] Arthritis started after a car accident (February 2008)**

My arthritis started after a car accident at the age of 19, also ringing in the ears. The arthritis was to the point where I would soak my hands in hot water each morning to get them ok to work. Both my arthritis and ringing in the ears disappeared totally on failsafe, it was incredible. Four years on, it remains largely stable, is clearly affected by mainly salicylates and sulphites and to a lesser extent amines and MSG. Medication was generally ineffective. - by email, Qld

### **[558] Muscle spasms (May 2007)**

I am a 55-year-old woman who recently worked out for myself that I have a muscle spasms as a strong reaction to 220 (sulphites) and minor reactions to others which I haven't identified yet. The muscle spasms are usually in the limbs and are worst when I sleep. I am a very fit and active person, so when I finally sit in front of the TV after tea and relax, this is when I feel the spasms. When mild it is usually any one muscle at a time in my legs and usually every 30 seconds. The affected muscle tightens or twitches and can occasionally jolt my leg or finger etc. When I have a worst reaction during the night, again it is like a tightening of, possibly, a muscle in my chest, or hip, or shoulder, head etc. When it is in the chest, some times it actually knocks the breath out of me as I awake with a jolt. Have you ever had the electrical impulses on your body when you are at the physiotherapist and a muscle tightens - that is how I feel. Sometimes of a night I feel as if I have a "motor" running in my chest or sometimes my head (sounds crazy doesn't it!) I can also quite often get a tingling (or motor sensation) feeling down my legs.

I went to four doctors last year and not one knew what was wrong, with one referring me to a neurologist. I become hyperactive in the evening – full of energy when everyone else is wanting to go to sleep - and have constant insomnia. When I am at my worst my muscle spasms (during sleep) wake me every few minutes and I experience hallucinations or bad dreams. Strong sleeping tablets don't eliminate these muscle spasms. It wasn't until I realised the 220 preservatives were in the "healthy" foods: dried apricots, sultanas, most yoghurts - that I was able to get my health back into order. It took me nearly a year to work out what was wrong with me. Since watching my diet I am sleeping so well it is unbelievable; I haven't slept like this for possibly 7 years and only have mild muscle spasms resulting in bad sleeps occasionally when I'm not aware of the preservative in the food. I guess I am still finding it hard to check everything before eating!!

The last 12 months have been very scary for me when I didn't know what was wrong - I feel so strongly for our children who also must be suffering and unable to communicate how their body feels. - by email, Victoria.

**[543] Covered in eczema at age of three (January 2007)**

By the time she was three, my daughter was covered in eczema and watching videos all day as she couldn't keep up with other children. We now have a healthy five-year-old after one year on the diet. Her energy improved within three weeks of starting the diet. Reading your book was a comfort as I thought I knew lots about allergy and eczema. She had been on the healthiest foods: wheat free, sugar free, chiropractors, Chinese medicine, acupuncture, biocom, skin specialists ...

I was exhausted and pretty fed up when I started learning about failsafe foods. One year on we have a clear picture of what we can have and it is expanding every month. Sulphites, benzoates and salicylates are our main problems, but we stay off any preservatives and colours. Thank you for helping us. Reading your book helped me feel not so alone and laugh at some of the crazy mistakes I made. – by email, South Australia

**[527] Maya's story (January 2007)**

One mother reported that her two year old daughter Maya was a "huge dried fruit eater", consuming two or three packets of dried apricots or similar and two or three fruit bars per week. At three packets of dried fruit per week that's roughly 250 mg per day, or 20 times the Acceptable Daily Intake for an average two year old (0.7mg per kg bodyweight or half a dried apricot for a 2 year old) set by the World Health Organisation. Sulphites are associated with both asthma and cough.

Maya had been diagnosed with suspected bronchiolitis at nine months. "Ever since then, she has had bouts of coughing on a regular and frequent basis, often only two or three weeks apart, usually with a cold but occasionally following a slight fever," wrote Maya's mother. "The coughing can last all night at its worst - but usually is about 40 minute bouts every few hours. There is no apparent wheeze, although sometimes doctors have found a slight wheeze with a stethoscope. Very occasionally, it will resolve gradually after a week or two but usually becomes worse and requires antibiotics". When Maya's cough was diagnosed first as asthma, then as hypersensitive cough receptors, "the paediatrician advised that there was no link to diet and that she would probably grow out of it". Although her mother had never noticed any connection, since avoiding sulphites Maya has been free of cough – reported by phone.

**[526] Diet has been a lifesaver (January 2007)**

We have had excellent results with diet for our five-year-old daughter who had severe asthma attacks with daily singulair, ventholin, atrovent and also 3 lots of prednisilone within the space of about 3 or 4 months at the beginning of 2006. Since going failsafe in August, not even a cough. I attribute a big part of this success to eliminating both sulphites and artificial colours in particular.

I always felt that there was something more we could do, but just didn't know where to start. My children had what I thought to be such a healthy diet, no cordials, lollies and lots of fruit and dried fruit for snacks. Now I know better.

If telling our story assists in being a catalyst for positive change for other families in situations like ours, that will be wonderful - Monica, NSW

**[452] One liners 2 (August 2006)**

I let my 7 year old eat as many dried apricots as he wanted for the sulphites challenge because he's definitely not salicylate sensitive - he ate 10 (little) whole apricots yesterday and said it was a bit hard to breathe even though he has no known asthma problem.

**[433] Preservatives including sulphites (July 2006)**

"I have a 3 year old son who was diagnosed with eczema around the 12 month mark. He started having rashes when he was put on solids but nothing too serious. Last year we took him to a skin specialist who told us his condition was very mild and prescribed cortisone (Elocon). When we asked for allergy testing, she told me it was not caused by foods. Fourteen months and a few tubes of Elocon later, his condition was very bad. He would scratch himself in his sleep to the point of bloodstains on the sheets and had problems staying asleep. His skin was permanently scarred and bloody because of scratching the same spots so they never had a chance to heal. I was in despair and did not know what to do especially as I took him to my GP and he again refused to do anything other than prescribe Elocon."

Eventually this mother decided to try diet for herself and contacted the Food Intolerance Network through our website. Through cutting down on additives she found that preservatives were the main culprit and wrote:

"Since we took him off additives and preserved foods (eg lollies, juice, sausages), his skin has improved very well. He stopped scratching and started to sleep through the night. Then on Saturday he had half a sausage and bam, itching and redness started within 30 minutes. Luckily it only lasted a few hours and again yesterday we went to a party and against my better judgment I let him have orange juice and soft drink and same thing happened.

"Because I now know exactly what he eats, it is easy to pinpoint the cause. I am disappointed with our medical practitioners, the so called specialists, especially the one who saw my son last year and put him on steroids. I have become an avid label reader and when I explained to my 3 year old why he cannot have all the stuff he normally loves, he surprised me with how well he is coping."

**[432] Eczema and sulphites again (July 2006)**

My daughter developed eczema when she was being introduced to solid foods at about 6 months but I didn't take her to the doctor for another year and then we managed it with eczema cream until we went travelling when she was two. The eczema got much worse while we were travelling and eventually we tried the elimination diet. We went gluten free right from the start and at first she got much worse. It took us months to work out that she was sensitive to many food chemicals but especially sulphites, which were in gluten free flours and also in the bore water on our property. I was also using a herbal cream that was making her eczema worse. She is very sensitive and reacts to Sorbolene, and smells like Estapol.

### **[413] Relentless dry cough - I was unaware of the food-asthma connection (May 2006)**

Ever since my son - now aged 10 - was a baby he would get a persistent dry cough that would continue relentlessly throughout the day and all through the night of only the winter months every year - at least 6 months every year without fail. The doctors would all say that they couldn't hear wheezing, so stopped short of diagnosing asthma no matter how sick he was. Finally a new local doctor a few years ago suggested asthma and asked me to try a blue puffer with ventolin. It fixed him immediately after 5 months of relentless coughing! He is an extremely active, sporty child, who plays and trains hard every season, but never got the asthma in the summer months.

Ventolin continued to control it, although he was worse after soccer training and games - in recent years accompanied by acute chest pains during games - and often had to come off. Last year, he participated in a school cross country held in May and got into the next level (extremely hilly) in June. After the race he could not stop coughing, had difficulty breathing and was very ill, missing school for some time after, which was when we started to make the exercise connection. We then started to observe and realised the trigger was exercise. Once winter was over he was well again, right up until March this year.

The beginning of March coincided with my reading your books - for other problems, I had forgotten about the asthma as it was controlled with ventolin and seasonal - and the gradual reduction in non failsafe foods in our house in the lead up to going failsafe. During this time he participated in the soccer training and school cross country practices and came first twice - no coughing, no problems. About 90 per cent failsafe, he went to a two day school camp this year - we don't know what he ate. The next day (Saturday) at soccer he had severe chest pains throughout the game.

After the game his father bought him a sausage sandwich. He started coughing sometime that afternoon and continued for several days. On the Monday and Tuesday at school he came last in the cross country practices on both days, and came home extremely ill on the Tuesday, still coughing continuously. He stayed at home on the Wednesday with ventolin and the vaporizer and gradually recovered.

He was still coughing a little but much better the following Sunday, when we were unavoidably delayed whilst out. The kids were starving at lunchtime and begging for hot chips. At this point I was not aware of the food-asthma connection nor of the sulphites in hot chips. Later that afternoon he quickly began to get much worse again and needed the puffer and vaporiser again on the Sunday and Monday night. By the Tuesday night he didn't need the puffer or vaporiser anymore and went to soccer training on the Wednesday night without coughing or chest pains. He has eaten 100 per cent failsafe since then (4 weeks later) with absolutely no sign of the asthma cough despite plenty of exercise and sport. He actually won his school cross country - no reactions at all afterwards or during, whilst plenty of kids were, in his words, "dropping like flies with asthma attacks all around him" - some quite seriously so! Of course, as usual, the school had a sausage sizzle going all that day to raise money - bizarre isn't it?

I wrote a record of this for myself to help me work out cause and effect, as I gradually started to realise the connection after I had gone over everything else they had eaten during that time - which was all failsafe. The camp food, sausage and hot chips were the only things not failsafe, and his

coughing reactions began within a couple of hours of consumption. I am extremely grateful to you and your books for having made him almost failsafe at the time, to enable me to so clearly observe cause and effect with the food and the exercise – reader, NSW.

**[404] 210: Cough and asthma from benzoates in cough medication (March 2006)**

Since the age of two I have seen a pattern develop in my daughter Jaslyn whereby she gets a cough every time she gets a cold. If I treat her with cough medicine the cough persists and becomes chronic, sometimes lasting weeks and causing great distress. In the worst episode two years ago she developed a serous asthma type wheeze with obvious distress and difficulty breathing after drinking soft drink – which she rarely has – and taking cough medicine.

Since then we have discovered that her symptoms and cough are greatly lessened if we do nothing when she has a cold and let it take its course. What we have found for the past two winters is that now if she gets a cold she will get a cough but it will last only for one or two nights if we do not give her any cough medicine. We have a strong family history of allergies and asthma and although I was aware of avoiding sulfites and preservatives in her food I was not aware of the use of benzoates in medicines. I realise now that the benzoate preservatives in cold medicines exacerbate my daughter's symptoms and turn her persistent cough into difficulty in breathing and asthma like symptoms. – Julie Eady

**[398] Irritable bowel and weight problems at age 23 (March 2006)**

In 1997 at age 19, I developed an itchy, burning rash under my nose. For the next six years, I went to doctors, naturopaths, homoeopaths, meditation and relaxation. Nothing worked and no-one could tell me why it was there and what it was. In 2001 I gave up smoking and went through a lot in my life while living overseas and in 6 months went from 55kg to 72 kg. I started getting bowel problems (flatulence, constipation, cramps and diarrhoea) and no matter what I tried I

could not lose the weight.

By the end of 2003 I had moved back to Australia and was on a wheat-free diet. My rash went away but I was still having bowel problems and irritability. Sometimes I would buckle over in so much pain I couldn't walk, have terrible wind and then diarrhoea. I always needed to be near a toilet. That is when I went on the elimination diet and found that I was incredibly sensitive to sulphites and that the cramps and diarrhoea were from sulphites. The bad wind was caused by amines, and artificial antioxidants were a mixture of the two. My rash is staying away too. I am also back down to 55kg after coming back to Australia, going off wheat but also enjoying the active Australian lifestyle. I can now eat wheat as long as it has no preservatives - maybe it was never wheat that was the problem!

I am now only just on the other side of finishing the diet and am trying to come to terms with what I can and cannot eat. I have been trying no added preservative wine, which is a lot better, but I still sometimes have a bit of a reaction. I am very sad about Amines, I love chocolate and I can't eat much at all, same with cheese. I just know that it is not worth having sulphites because the reaction is too bad. My family have now begun to take out additives in their diets too after hearing from me

just how bad they are. It gets confusing talking about natural food chemicals and chemicals to other people, but eventually they understand. – by email

**[395] Mashed potato challenge and stutter (March 2006)**

Sulphites (220-228) are used in a wide range of foods including dried fruit, fruit drinks, sausages (not in meat in the USA) and potato products such as hot chips and dried potato. We did the sulphite challenge with Deb mashed potato. My son was stuttering slightly before the challenge but by day 3 of eating ½ cup of Deb mashed potato per day, his stuttering was so bad that he would not talk at all. His stuttering continued for 4 months after the challenge stopped. Two years later he has had no sulphites and no speech difficulties.

**[360] 282: Biting related to bread preservative (March 2005)**

I put my nearly two year old daughter on the failsafe diet about 18 months ago for her severe eczema. Since her symptoms were so bad we went gluten free as well but she actually got worse. It wasn't until she improved on the wheat challenge that I realized the sulphites in the gluten free flours had been affecting her. She still didn't come completely right and eventually we realized she was affected by sulphites in our bore water (we live on a farm). Then about three weeks ago I gave her a Pascall's white marshmallow and after a two hour sleep she woke with a very itchy rash covering a large part of her body. I believe it was caused by the sulphites in the gelatine in that one marshmallow. Since then we have stopped her sago and soy icecream (due to the sulphites in sago and gelatine) and I believe she is now completely sulphite free. Her skin is now perfect. – reader, QLD

**[338] ONE LINERS (July 2004)**

I never knew mince could contain sulphites until I read your asthma book and then I realized why my asthma got bad the week we lived on our butcher's cut-price mince.

**[309] Adult with asthma (December 2003)**

I am an adult with asthma. I went off milk and sulphite preservatives about 6 months ago, I have not had asthma since (unless I am 'naughty' and have some sulphite). - Elizabeth, ACT

**[306] Instant answer to my boys' asthma and eczema (December 2003)**

I just want to thank you for doing what you do. When a friend of mine heard you speak in Launceston and brought me back info, I felt that, at last, someone was speaking my language.

Where none of the health professionals had been of much help, I instantly found answers to my boys' asthma and eczema. I got the cookbook and your asthma book a few weeks ago and am so pleased to have found solid, real, useful guidelines to help our family. We haven't done the full elimination diet yet but with the knowledge I gained from your books I was able to retrace which foods did what. The cause of my 3 year old's asthma became obvious (sulphites) when he would eat something out of the ordinary such as 2 apricot fruit bars (which he had not eaten in ages), come home, run around outside and have an asthma attack, which he has not had in ages. My 9-month-

old son obviously reacts to salicylates. He's had eczema from birth and when I introduced solids, pumpkin, carrots and prunes gave him asthma soon after he ate them.

I only wish every hospital, health care clinic and GP had your books! - Elisa Dickinson, Tasmania

**[261] Unlabelled sulphites in paracetamol (June 2003)**

Further to Karen finding out recently that white Panadol tablets contain a preservative, I have done some investigating and was horrified to find that the brand at the hospital that I work at, Febridol paracetamol, has sulphite preservative in it. This could be a problem for asthmatics admitted to the hospital! Many other brands I looked at also contained sorbates and benzoates as preservatives. Herron tablets are colour free, gluten free and preservative free (see Failsafe Shopping List and Medications factsheet) - from the failsafe group

**[251] Unlisted sulphites (April 2003)**

I am the mother of an eleven year old asthmatic whose asthma is very well-controlled by avoiding certain food products. I have been caught unawares twice this month with flours containing sulphur dioxide. Both times the sulphur dioxide was not listed on the packet as it was under the necessary dosage to be listed, but within 12 hours of ingesting the product, my very well controlled asthmatic daughter started to wheeze and needed medication. Both times I rang the company who assured me the product did not contain sulphites, but when I pushed the company for more information it was revealed that in the processing, sulphites are added at the flour processing stage. Both times the products were labelled as 100% pure products.

This ingredient SHOULD BE LISTED, no matter how much is contained in the product. My daughter is obviously very sensitive. Traces of peanuts, eggs and dairy are now listed on food packages due to anaphylactic reactions of some children, why not for sulphur dioxide when it can also cause life threatening reactions? - Susan, NSW

**[229] Sulphites in gluten free flour (January 2003)**

I recently purchased some Gluten Free Plain flour from my supermarket and used it to make some bread. The ingredients are listed as soy flour, maize flour, tapioca starch. My daughter started wheezing ten hours later and when I checked the packet under the nutrient list is a very small note saying that sulphites have been added in the maize and tapioca starch processing. Thought you may like to warn other parents as it comes across as a natural product with no artificial ingredients! - by email, Sydney

**[117] 635: Irregular pulse and atrial fibrillation (August 2001)**

I react to MSG, flavour enhancer 635, metabisulphite preservatives, and yellow colour in cordial. I also have food intolerance to salicylates. From MSG, 635 flavour enhancer and metabisulphite preservatives I get very irregular pulse and atrial fibrillation. The atrial fibrillation settles down after 12-20 hrs depending on how much offending additive I have eaten (in a restaurant it is difficult to tell) - and my pulse settles down faster if I drink lots of water every hour to flush the toxins out of

my system. I've learned to read the labels and carry a reminder in my purse of the numbers to which I react when shopping. I have learned which brands or types of foods are a problem and steer clear of those. - Mary, retired nurse,  
Brisbane

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