



Sulfite Allergy

What are Sulfites?

Sulfites are chemicals commonly used as preservatives for different types of food and beverages. They are added to fend off *microbial* contamination and natural decay. Some sulfites are also naturally produced through the fermentation process, such as in wine and beer.

Sulfites are generally safe to eat, however, for those who have an allergy consuming sulfites can cause an allergic reaction. Allergy symptoms can range from mild, such as rash, to severe, such as anaphylaxis, a reaction that threatens breathing and circulation. In cases of allergic reaction, seek medical help immediately.

Common Sulfite Additive Names

- Sulfur dioxide
- Sodium bisulfite
- Sodium metabisulfite
- Sodium sulfite
- Potassium bisulfite
- Potassium metabisulfate

Foods and Beverages That May Contain Sulfites:

- Alcoholic beverages (cocktail mixes, wine, beer, apple cider)
- Baked goods (cookies, products with dried fruit)
- Condiments (horseradish, pickle relish, gravies)
- Dried or processed vegetables and fruits
- Instant tea and liquid tea concentrates
- Jams, jellies and preserves

Tips for Avoiding Sulfites:

- Read labels on all food and beverage products that you consume, checking for the sulfite additives listed above.
- When you eat out, ask the server whether the food you're ordering contains sulfites.
- If you have an allergy to sulfites, be sure to inform your doctor and check that the medications you use also do not contain sulfites.

Did You Know?

Sulfites have antioxidant properties which slow browning of fruits and vegetables.

Restaurants are not required to indicate the presence sulfites in their ingredients. Exercise caution while dining out.



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