Avoiding Sulphites

Quick Facts

- Sulphites are used as a food additive and can also occur naturally in some foods.
- Sulphites can cause allergic-like symptoms in some individuals.
- Health Canada includes sulphites as priority allergen.

Be Aware

- Read ingredient labels every time you buy or eat a product.
- If you have a severe reaction to sulphites follow the TRIPLE CHECK RULE: once at the store before buying, once when you get home and put it away and again before you serve or eat the product
- Be careful when purchasing items from outside of Canada, since labelling rules differ between countries.

Labelling

In Canada, sulphites are required to be labeled when added as an ingredient or component to food at any level, with a few exceptions. You can visit Health Canada's website at www.hc-sc.gc.ca for more information.

Other names for sulphites

- Potassium bisulphite
- Potassium metabisulphite
- Sodium bisulphate, sodium dithionite, sodium metabisulphite, disodium sulphite
- Sulfur dioxide
- Sulphiting agents
- Sulphurous acid
- E220, E221, E222, E223, E224, E225, E226, E227, E228 (European names)

Possible sources of sulphites

- Alcoholic/non-alcoholic beer, cider and wine
- Apple cider
- Baked goods
- Bottled lemon/lime juice/concentrate
- Canned/frozen fruits/vegetables
- Cereal, cornmeal, cornstarch, crackers, muesli
- Condiments
- Deli meats, hot dogs, sausages
- Dressings, gravy, pre-made guacamole, sauces, soups, soup mixes
- Dried fruits and vegetables
- Dried herbs, spices, teas
- Fish

Possible sources of sulphites (cont'd)

- Fresh grapes
- Fruit filling, fruit syrup, gelatins, jams, jellies, marmalade, molasses, pectin
- Fruit and vegetable juices
- Processed potatoes (such as frozen French fries)
- Snack foods
- Soy products
- Sugar syrups
- Tomato paste, pulp or purees
- Vinegars (all types)

Non-food sources of sulphites

- Bottle sanitizing solution for home brewing
- Certain medications

NOTES