

Reader reports from the Food Intolerance Network

www.fedup.com.au

("heart", "arrhythmia", "palpitations", "tachycardia", "fast heart beat", "atrial fibrillation", "fibrillation", "chest pain", "heart attack" keyword only)

[1272] One-liners (August 2014)

Rruuggghh after being so careful of my foods I had takeaway tonight and my skin has gone into melt down, bright red itchiness rash I have heart palpitations and a headache within 30 min! MSG is my killer ... Just had to take two antihistamines, two steroids and pain killers. So cross with myself! - Brianna from FB group

[1269] Lost 62 kg by eating 'real food, not what man has created' (August 2014)

I had to give up all food additives and chemicals at the age of 55 because of the physical and mental problems they were causing me. Now I just eat veggies and fruit. Nothing else. I lost 137 pounds (62 kg) in 18 months. I am 5 feet 6 inches tall and at 137 pounds. So I'm at a 50/50 weight loss ... 137 lost and I weigh 137. I think I may have finally found my body's equilibrium where it wants to hang out at :-) I keep going up and down a pound or 2 or 3 every few days.

The youtube video that started me on the diet September 2011 is the **Last Heart Attack** by Dr Sanjay Gupta. Among the reasons I forced myself to do this diet was to get the weight off of my spine as I have a lower back spine injury and can't take pain meds for the past few years as they make me suicidal and cause me more pain. Also the main artery in my heart - the left descending artery - is 40 % blocked but not enough for a stent. So my family doctor told me not to worry about it until I need a stent. Like what!!! Needless to say I didn't listen to him. I now have a cardiologist who is going to see me once a year in September and see how my blockage is doing and if it gets better or worse with this diet.

No wonder the USA population is so sickly and diseased. If people would eat real food and not what man has created, they would see things change. As Jack LaLanne always said... "if man made it...don't eat it." - Tim, Pennsylvania

COMMENT FROM SUE

I found Tim's story inspiring, but as an Aussie, hadn't heard of Jack LaLanne. This amazing man was born in the US in 1914, describing himself as a hyperactive kid with a tendency to lose his temper and an addiction to junk food. The turning point in his life came at age 15 at a lecture by a nutritionist who told young Jack he was a "walking garbage can" and advocated the benefits of whole grains, a vegetarian diet and exercise. LaLanne went on to become a fitness and nutrition guru credited with opening one of the first health clubs in the country, preaching the health benefits of regular exercise and a good diet while doctors reviled him as an exercise 'nut' whose programs would make their patients "muscle-bound" and cause "severe medical problems" like heart attacks. He lived healthily to the age of 96 and kept up his daily weightlifting workouts until the day before he died of pneumonia in 2011.

LaLanne's two simple rules of nutrition could have been written for failsafers: "if man made it, don't

eat it", and "if it tastes good, spit it out".

More information:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jack_LaLanne

The Last Heart Attack by Dr Sanjay Gupta <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Op9fow8JKW4>

[1243] Statins caused insomnia so I lowered my cholesterol levels through a healthy diet (October 2013)

I was diagnosed with a heart valve problem late last year and also with 2 out of 3 coronary arteries being blocked by 20%. The latter was not enough for the specialists to intervene but a wake up call for me! One cardiologist wanted me to lower my cholesterol levels through medication. When I said to him I would like to try it through diet the answer was: "That is not easy, I wish you good luck". I really had the idea that there should be a natural way through diet.

Seven months later my conclusion is that a vegetable based diet very low in fats with some grains and legumes is at least as good as being on statins for both the cholesterol level and protection against heart attacks. Taking the side effects into account, I think it is actually much better since the side effects of a healthy diet are much more far reaching than heart disease. Hence I'm no longer using statins and the cardiologist is quite happy with my cholesterol levels.

Apart from achieving good cholesterol levels, improved energy, much better skin and a clearer head, I discovered that the rates of heart disease, strokes, diabetes type 2, cancer and even autoimmune diseases like arthritis, lupus, MS, Crohn's and more are actually heavily influenced by what we eat. Strangely enough this does not seem common knowledge, not among our specialists either. Currently it is not reflected in our dietary guidelines.'

Update after 14 months on the low fat plant based diet, avoiding all processed foods: My total cholesterol has come down by 27%, the LDL by 38% without any medication (total/LDL was 5.3/3.4 on 1 Sept 2012 mmol/l = 205/131 mg/dl and on 6/11/2013 this was 3.9/2.1 mmol/l or 151/81 mg/dl); my dry and cracked sometimes bleeding skin is gone; my excess weight has come down about 7 kg. I feel good and energetic and never hungry. I know that salicylates affect me with IBS and severe amplification of feelings, so now I eat any veg but stay away from fruits and garlic and that seems to be OK for me.

- Peter, by email. See the full story at http://users.tpg.com.au/freestro/The_Ideal_Diet.pdf

[1197] 635: Severe racing heart from "NO ADDED MSG" chips (June 2013)



I have severe racing heart after consumption of MSG or free glutamic acid. Last year I put in a complaint to Qld Health who then went to Vic Health re Coles chicken flavoured chips, with no success. The chip packet boldly stated NO ADDED MSG.

I knew MSG was in the chips (due to my heart racing over 200 bpm) but no doubt it was contained within the other 6.. numbers (ingredients: hydrolysed vegetable protein (corn), flavour enhancers 627, 631). Qld health had the chips lab tested and as I already knew due to my racing heart, found MSG in the chips but it can't be proven the MSG in the chips was ADDED separately

I am now so sensitive to glutamic acid that two months ago I had to go to emergency on 2 occasions had to be injected with adenosine to get my heart back from 238 bpm to a more normal 70 bpm. I am also on verapamil 180 sr prescribed by my cardiologist to try stop this happening. However even on the medication it has still happened twice but the racing heart doesn't last as long ... only 35 mins of 200bpm. Pff! (As opposed to 1.5hrs over 200bpm, prior to being on the verapamil). I have since started going to Emergency when this happens - when the glutamic acid is hidden - do I really want to test my heart out that much before suffering - cardiac arrest!

Note this happens when MSG is HIDDEN within foods. It is such a minefield; as you never can tell where it's hidden and they don't make it be labelled. This was never a problem for me ingesting MSG till approx 6 years ago. As you said, maybe the 635 has made this worse. - by email, Qld

(Comment from Sue Dengate: in this case, the food manufacturers are being deliberately ingenuous. Of course they know they are adding MSG in the form of hydrolysed vegetable protein rather than flavour enhancer 621. The other 600-number flavour enhancers - 627, 631, 635 - are MSG-boosters designed to boost the effects of any MSG up to 10 or 15 times, so you are much more likely to be affected by those than 621. Anyone who wants to avoid MSG should avoid any flavour enhancers e.g. 620-635. This pretty much means sticking to plain healthy food and cooking for yourself, which of course is now recommended for weight loss, cancer prevention and a whole host of other health problems.)

[1178] 621: MSG and foggy brain, heart arrhythmia, arthritis (February 2103)

I've been concerned about brain fogging for some time, but never knew whether it was a real effect (or just 'me') or where it came from. After doing the Elimination Diet for about 6 weeks and then the RPAH Glutamates Challenge of 4 tablespoons of soy sauce over rice, I developed quite strong brain fogging within about an hour. As a former regular eater of strong cheeses, Marmite, and soy sauce with sushi, I then understood where my brain fog problem came from! I also think that my heart rhythm issues have decreased since I've started avoiding foodstuffs with high levels of glutamates. Your website and the RPAH book and challenges led me to my answer, thank you very much! I also recently learned that when my mother got bad arthritis in the 70s or 80s, she did some research and decided MSG was probably the culprit, cut it out and the arthritis subsided.- Neil, UK

[1118] MSG and others: my heart could literally be felt beating through my clothes (August 2012)

Back around 1997 I was diagnosed with AF (atrial fibrillation) & TC (tachycardia), my heart at times could literally be felt beating through my clothes It was scary and freaked other people out when I showed them. I had a cardiologist who was great but neither he nor any of the doctors or specialists I saw ever mentioned anything about diet, after 3 or 4 goes I was on medication which helped without too many bad side effects. I can't remember how I stumbled across it, but somewhere along the line I heard about how MSG could be bad for your health (experience of a friend/associate at the

time I think) so I thought I'd strike it out of my diet ... WOW there went half my problems, so I looked further into diet, soon I had struck red food colouring from the list, sports drinks (when not exercising), high caffeine drinks (coke especially), energy drinks went too (although not as common as they are now), highly fatty foods went out the window and through more experimentation (monitoring) I dropped anything with the preservatives starting with 22_. I have also found that some of this stuff seems to build up in my system as if I don't have any for a long time I can cope with quite a high dose of it in one hit, if it becomes regular in my diet I quickly feel the symptoms after even the smallest amount.

I went off my medication once for two years by maintaining a very strict diet, these days I am back on my medication as it is so hard to keep up with things that are out there (and it becomes hard to eat socially sometimes). Many years ago I emailed the Heart foundation in anger at them giving 2 minute noodles the heart tick! Loaded with MSG, of which by then I knew other people with heart conditions suffered the same reactions as me These days I have learnt to ignore any labelling on packaging (apart from the ingredients thank goodness) very recently seeing some cups of soup labelled as no artificial flavours yet they had MSG in the ingredients as a flavour enhancer, mongrels.

It's so good to see your site and the work you are doing. I hope some of this may help in some way. It's so good to see the message being spread, for what its worth, from me, WELL DONE!! - Dave, by email

[1091] One-liners (January 2012)

'Thanks for all the work you've done on food additives and the effects they have on people. Without it, I would never have tracked down the weird heart palpitations and early morning panic attacks I have after eating ribonucleotides - Lynne by email.

[1003] MSG: AF (Atrial fibrillation) after additives (March 2011)

Was just reading your article on [Atrial Fibrillation](#) from additives and I am certainly one who suffers from this, especially with MSG. The latest attack was as recent as Friday last week. I tried out a new Thai restaurant and that night was awake until 2am (after going to bed at 10pm) with a pounding heart. It is an issue for me and the worst is definitely MSG. I have been having these symptoms for 8 years that I know of (I am 39), ever since I was diagnosed with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. I think the symptoms were present before this but I didn't recognise them.

I realised it was due to MSG, firstly when it seemed to happen whenever I ate Chinese or some Asian foods. Then it was a process of isolating those foods with MSG and without to see if symptoms occurred. I get such a strong reaction that there is no doubt it is related to food. I also experience bloating symptoms along with the heart palpitations. I haven't tried this with other additives but I just generally stay away from all processed/packaged foods and feel a lot better for it. If I do eat the occasional packaged food I make sure there are next to no numbers in the ingredient list!

I have spoken to a doctor about these symptoms in the past but when I realised they were a reaction to additives I didn't pursue it any further. - Georgina, by email

[1001] MSG: 635: Heart palpitations from flavour enhancers (March 2011)

When I have MSG or other flavour enhancers I get heart palpitations. It feels like my heart is pounding really hard and fast in my chest and will last for about 15 seconds at a time. It's quite scary. I wasn't sure what caused it initially but over a couple of years it established a pattern. A few hours after I'd eaten MSG or other enhancers - Chinese foods, BBQ flavoured chips, red rock deli honey soy flavoured chips, maggi chicken flavour 2 minute noodles, cheese flavoured CCs, 635, 621 are the ones I have noticed on packaging.

I'm 38 and didn't realise until my son was in kindergarten (born 1998) what had been making me so sick and still I was silly enough to give into my craving for these foods some times. He had terrible problems with reflux, even though breastfed and there was no formed poo. He screamed all day every day but they told me I was a bad mother. By kindergarten, he had over 50 days off school with diarrhoea and then was referred to a dietician who hit the nail on the head and that was when I realised how foods were affecting me too. I no longer touch these foods and it hasn't happened since. – Sharyn, by email

[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

[941] 627: Chest pains from flavour enhancer (October 2010)

I am very food sensitive. Last week-end when I was entertaining I ate one 'plain' rice cracker. It was Fantastic brand and had Flavour Enhancer 627. After realising this I threw them out! But never thought about them again. That night I awoke at 2 am with mild chest pains which I had off and on through until 5 am - the pains were mild but enough to cause me grief and stop me from sleeping - I stayed up most of the night. I have no doubt the Flavour Enhancer in the biscuit caused my problem. - Di, Vic

[940] 621: Fast and very irregular heartbeats after Chinese meal (October 2010)

From time to time I notice an ectopic heart beat, Dr. tells me nothing unusual, most people get them. However last night after a couple of weeks eating really good and healthy natural foods we

went out to a Chinese Restaurant. I like going there, but have not been there for a year or so I'd say. About an hour after I went to bed it began, I think you'd call it Tachycardia, a fast (100) and very irregular heartbeat. Some big strong thumping ones and then some feeble and fast ones. I got up, sat up for another 2 hours. Blood pressure had risen incredibly, and over the 2 hours settled down but the feeling on panic stayed. It's still here this morning actually and I didn't feel I could drive, so had to ask for a lift. Needless to say I am not having any of the left overs for lunch. Back to the straight and narrow. – Joy, NSW

[939] 635: Tachycardia (October 2010)

If I have 635 I get Tachycardia, feel weak and dizzy, and come down with flu like symptoms that last for around 2 to 3 days. Peter, by email

[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

[937] 635: Labile blood pressure & chest pain from weight loss products (October 2010)

I have been suffering from extremely labile blood pressure since 1995. The worst problem associated with this was raised BP within an hour or two of going to sleep. I wake feeling unwell, head hurting, cold extremities, always need to urinate, and at times, shivering uncontrollably. I used to suffer from palpitations with it - but in recent times this is rare. I've been investigated for everything possible over the years. I am inclined to eat organic food and always watch the labels on any packaged food.

About 5 weeks ago I decided to join Jenny Craig as I felt I needed to lose up to 10 kilos and have been struggling to get this weight off. In the first week I was appalled to see how many 'numbers' were listed in the food. I could not eat things like their packaged snacks - with colours, flavours etc in them. At this point I consulted with them and asked for the food to be adjusted to suit not eating some of the colours that I know are not good, any sweeteners and Nitrates/Nitrites. This gave me a very limited list - and I could not avoid some Sulphites and Flavour Enhancers. I began to notice 635 coming up in many of the foods - and even most of the dinners.

By about 3 weeks into the food I woke feeling really bad with the old symptoms - including a feeling of pressure in my chest (which had been vaguely there the night before) and blood pressure that measured 217/114. As it did not reduce after a short while of sitting up (my usual method of allowing my bp to lower) I went to the local hospital. They did an ECG and gave me 1/2 Anginine and

O2 which eased the symptoms. When the doctor found that my mother had Angina he suggested a Thallium Stress Test. This has been completed and the results are normal.

I have often since '95 suffered from a slight 'pain' in the chest - once definitely after eating a very tasty bowl of Chinese soup. I lived in Singapore for almost 12 years - from 91, but it was not until 95 when I was home for a short while and working on a camp site - eating mass produced food that these symptoms started to occur regularly...hence the visits to many doctors and specialists - always with a negative result for whatever they tested for. Food additives simply did not occur to me.

A few days after my recent visit to hospital, I thought - how dumb can I be?! ...it's the food! I stopped the weight loss products and within 36 hours began to feel well again. When did they begin to put 635 in food? It keeps being called a 'newer' FE and I wonder if it appeared roughly in the mid nineties. I believe it may be a combination of 627 and 631. Some of the JC foods have these two listed together and some has 635 listed. Many of the foods also contain the hidden MSGs such as HVP.

I now have a letter from my doctor to say that there is evidence that I am highly sensitive to vaso-active food additives to request a refund. This has been an 'interesting' exercise that may finally give me the answer to my very labile BP and all the odd symptoms that seem to go with it.- Ros, by email (Yes, 635 appeared in the mid-nineties and is a combination of 627 and 631 - Sue)

[933] 635: AF (atrial fibrillation) due to flavour enhancers (July 2010)

I would like to relate my experience, which I consider was due to the ingestion of 635. I have in the past had episodes of AF (atrial fibrillation) which vary both in frequency - not thankfully very often - and severity. A couple of weeks ago I had such an attack and had that evening eaten a product called Borg's Chicken & Vegetable rolls. I did not associate these latter with the AF. However we had a few left in the freezer and late yesterday afternoon, I had another.

Last night having gone to bed I awoke about 9 p.m. realising I was having an attack. Various medication I have did not relieve it and the episode lasted for 3 hours. Next morning I examined the Borg's packet and found the 635 ingredient. I would be interested to know whether you have had similar complaints. - Brian, Qld

[905] 160b: Screaming, angry, yelling, defiant and hysterical (June 2010)

Our journey through the numbers maze has recently brought us face to face with 160b. We have discovered through accidental trial and error that our 5 year old daughter who can be the most bright, fun, playful and intelligent little girl can be reduced to a little monster by this "natural" additive. It is so horrible to watch. When I know that she has had something with 160b, we wait for the ticking time bomb. It is usually anywhere from a few hours later it starts and can last for a day or more ... she turns into a screaming, angry, yelling, defiant and hysterical little girl. It breaks my heart. She knows why she gets like that, but there is no reasoning with her when she is in that place. We just wait for her to fall asleep ... only to wake up in the morning like a bear with a sore head.

We first became aware of 160b about a year and a half ago. Custard was the culprit. My mum was staying with us at the time and she was amazed as well when we found out that the custard was the

link to her behaviour. She would have the custard at night as dessert and hey presto in the morning the grumpy bum would awake. Cranky, whingey, defiant and tantrums. It would take around about 24 hours for her to come back to us! Ice cream is another one. Every Sunday we would all go down and get icecreams ... same thing (of course this is all in hindsight). Monday morning our alter ego/grumpy daughter would wake up and it would take until about Wednesday to get back to some sort of normalcy only to repeat the cycle again the following Sunday. Now we buy the Peters vanilla icecream and natural icecream cones without colour and have our Sunday icecreams at home. – Sarah B, NSW

[873] 635: Flavour enhancers and labile blood pressure (November 2009)

I have been suffering from extremely labile blood pressure since 1995. The worst problem associated with this has been raised BP within an hour or two of going to sleep. I wake feeling unwell, head hurting, cold extremities, always need to urinate, and at times, shivering uncontrollably. I used to suffer from palpitations with it - but in recent times this is rare. I've been investigated for everything possible over the years. I am inclined to eat organic food and always watch the labels on any packaged food.

About 5 weeks ago I decided to join Jenny Craig as I felt I needed to lose up to 10 kilos and have been struggling to get this weight off. In the first week I was appalled to see how many 'numbers' were listed in the food. I could not eat things like their packaged snacks - with colours, flavours etc in them. At this point I consulted with them and asked for the food to be adjusted to suit not eating some of the colours that I know are not good, any sweeteners and Nitrates/Nitrites. This gave me a very limited list - and I could not avoid some Sulphites and Flavour Enhancers. I began to notice 635 coming up in many of the foods - and even most of the dinners.

By about 3 weeks into the food I woke feeling really bad with the old symptoms - including a feeling of pressure in my chest (which had been vaguely there the night before) and blood pressure that measured 217/114. As it did not reduce after a short while of sitting up (my usual method of allowing my bp to lower) I went to the local hospital. They did an ECG and gave me 1/2 Anginine and O2 which eased the symptoms. When the doctor found that my mother had Angina he suggested a Thallium Stress Test. This has been completed and the results are normal.

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A few days after my recent visit to hospital, I thought - how dumb can I be?! ... it's the food! I stopped the JC food and within 36 hours began to feel well again. When did they begin to put 635 in food? It keeps being called a 'newer' flavour enhancer and I wonder if it appeared roughly in the mid nineties. I believe it may be a combination of 627 and 631. Some of the JC food has these two listed together and some has 635 listed. Many of the foods also contain the hidden MSGs such as HVP.

I now have a letter from my doctor to say that there is evidence that I am highly sensitive to vaso-active food additives ... and will be given a refund by JC. This has been an 'interesting' exercise that may finally give me the answer to my very labile BP and all the odd symptoms that seem to go with it.– Roslyn by email. (Yes, 635 was approved in the mid-nineties and is a combination of 627 and 631- S)

[872] 635: Increasing episodes of tachycardia, arrhythmia and ectopic heart beats (November 2009)

I had been suffering increasing episodes of tachycardia, arrhythmia and ectopic heart beats - two to three episodes a day. Despite escalating testing with various cardiac specialists over the past 6 months, nothing was determined apart from the fact I had high blood pressure and was placed on a low dose of appropriate medication for that. No known cause for my cardiac anomalies.

Last Tuesday (tis Wednesday of following week now) I ate a delicious bowl of my home made potato and leek soup for lunch. I experienced my usual (but scary and increasingly strong) palpitations and (frustrated, a little frightened and upset), I broadly Googled "heart palpitations" on Australian sites. Up came your website that mentioned 'soup' in the first Google lines that came up. Thinking "that's funny, I just ate soup, I'll have a look at that one before I find what I'm really after", I looked at it. Well, that's what saved me. What I found there were countless, comforting, case studies of people just like me, suffering consequences to MSG (635 in particular), just like me, who didn't know what was causing it. Just. Like. Me.

For me, it was a revelation, an epiphany. I was euphoric. My God, what have I been poisoning my family with, for so many years? Weekly, particularly in winter, I lovingly make risotto, casserole, beef in red wine, soup, etc, etc. Thinking I'm making healthy foods for my husband and my children, I've made all these dishes with more than a liberal dash of commercial stock (cube and/or liquid), all of which (no exceptions, I find) are loaded with MSG.

I stepped, willingly, into the world of chemical additives, flavour enhancers, neurotoxins, excitotoxins and ribonucleotides.

To cut a long story short, I have strenuously avoided any flavour enhancers (particularly 635) and all MSG in its myriad disguises since that bowl of soup on Tuesday. I did not expect things to settle immediately, but I've gone from having 2-3 cardiac episodes a day and thinking I was going to die like my father, at 46, to NOT ONE EPISODE IN MORE THAN A WEEK.

Gotta be something to this and I'm sincerely and eternally grateful for the information you have on your website and the comfort and advice it gave me. I think you saved my sanity and my life. – Shannon, WA

[827] 635: Tachycardia, arrhythmia and ectopic heart beats (July 2009)

I had been suffering increasing episodes of tachycardia, arrhythmia and ectopic heart beats - two to three episodes a day. Despite escalating testing with various cardiac specialists over the past 6 months, nothing was determined apart from the fact I had high blood pressure and was placed on a low dose of appropriate medication for that. No known cause for my cardiac anomalies.

Eight days ago I ate a delicious bowl of my home made potato and leek soup for lunch. I experienced my usual (but scary and increasingly strong) palpitations and (frustrated, a little frightened and upset), I broadly Googled "heart palpitations" on Australian sites. Up came your website that mentioned 'soup' in the first Google lines that came up. Thinking "that's funny, I just ate soup, I'll have a look at that one before I find what I'm really after" I looked at it. Well, that's what saved me. What I found there were countless, comforting, case studies of people just like me, suffering consequences to MSG (635 in particular), just like me, who didn't know what was causing it. Just. Like. Me.

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[812] Asthma researchers ignore the evidence - breathlessness, sleep apnea, tachycardia, pins and needles, anxiety from preservatives (June 2009)

What is amazing to me is that the researchers don't seem to be aware that some preservatives and flavour enhancers can also give you asthma or make symptoms worse. I've experienced this first hand. I regularly consumed a so called healthy cereal every day that contained dried fruit which was laced with preservatives. My symptoms of breathlessness, sleep apnea, tachycardia, pins and needles, anxiety etc. kept getting worse. I ended up in casualty at the local hospital several times, but they could not discover the cause. I had heart checks, x-rays, stress tests and still no answers. Finally at a party one of the guests refused certain food and proceeded to tell me about her allergic reactions to food additives. As she was describing her reactions, I realised her symptoms were identical to mine. She told me about your website. I went home that night and threw out everything in my pantry with food additives and I slowly recovered. I'm very careful now, but eating out is a challenge and that is where I get caught out, even when I choose healthy options such as a salad or sandwich. At the airport I had a turkey and salad sandwich and within 20 minutes I was really struggling to breath - Miryana by email.

[784] Morning sickness and salicylates (June 2009)

I am 15 weeks pregnant with my fourth child and once again I've had a big problem with toothpaste and morning sickness. It was the worst with the first pregnancy, basically, I would feel a bit queasy before brushing and as soon as I cleaned my teeth I would throw up. As in the other pregnancies I've also gone off a lot of my favourite high salicylate foods and am completely unable to handle caffeine and chocolate (makes me very anxious and heart palpitations). – Julia

[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*

[710] 635: Chest pain from flavour enhancers 627 and 631 in Weight Watchers meals (December 2008)

Some months ago I started eating Weight Watchers meals at lunchtime on week days as a change from sandwiches and thinking they were healthier than bread. My favourites were the lasagna and spaghetti and meatballs. During that time I saw my doctor and had an ECG done because I was getting chronic heart/chest pains.

After a couple of months the pains went away and I've not had them again until yesterday when I ate a WW Lasagne meal for the first time in months. The last time was when I was having chest pains. Yesterday the chest pains came back very badly. Today I'm better but still a bit sore. When I looked up the ingredients, I found 627 and 631 amongst other things can cause chest pains. It's very scary that this is what it was – they must put a bucketload of the stuff in there because I had not had the chest pains before I had the WW Meals. I honestly did think I was having a heart attack, the pain was incredible. – *Caroline, by email*

[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.]

[690] Chocolate not so healthy for this heart (tachycardia) (November 2008)

For years I have been trying to figure out what causes my rapid heartbeats after eating sometimes. Three weeks ago I ended up being taken to hospital by ambulance with a heart rate of 150 bpm. I had eaten a cheese and tomato sandwich for lunch. I know for a fact the bread has no preservatives in it. I spent a few hours in ER but they were unable to tell me why this happened, heart rate went down and I went home. It has happened with various types of food, never the same thing. This has happened a lot over the years and answers I get from doctors is something like this - "If you eat a spicy meal it can increase your heart rate". That makes me feel like screaming 'Listen stupid I did not eat a spicy meal'. The other symptom I get is increased ectopic beats. From now on I am going to keep a diary of food eaten and symptoms ...

Three months later ... I had two more trips to hospital with major irregular heartbeats, even the ambos were concerned. No joy from any of the docs as to what caused it all. I went to see my GP who I think has hit the nail on the head. He mentioned that coffee and chocolate could be responsible for causing both rapid and irregular beats. Chocolate seems to be my cause. He explained that it's not just the caffeine in chocolate but the chemical that kills dogs if they eat chocolate. I told him that I had recently changed to dark chocolate because it was promoted as being heart healthy. He replied "that's the worse of all". I did not think of chocolate because I would have no problems until 3 or 4 hours after eating it and I'm not talking about eating huge amounts, just 2 or 3 squares. I have since stayed away from anything chocolate and seem to be fine. My GP also told me that caffeine could raise blood pressure which in turn causes rapid heartbeats. If I do feel like a coffee I drink decaf. Not one person that I have told knew that chocolate could cause major irregular heartbeats. – *Sally, by email*

[Caffeine in coffee and theobromine in chocolate are natural food chemicals called methylxanthines. Dark chocolate contains about ten times more theobromine than milk chocolate. It is well known that chocolate can kill dogs but less well known that humans are also susceptible to chocolate poisoning if enough is consumed. The toxic dose for methylxanthines for dogs is about 150 mg per kilogram of body weight but as with other food chemicals, there is a wide variation in individual sensitivity. Symptoms of xanthine toxicity can include hyperactivity, irritability, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, and increased urination. These can progress to cardiac arrhythmias, epileptic seizures, internal bleeding, heart attacks, and eventually death. According to Wikipedia, the lethal dose for humans is approximately 10 kg. Food scientists warn that these food chemicals should be approached with caution by pregnant women: Eteng MU and others, Recent advances in caffeine and theobromine toxicities: a review. *Plant Foods Hum Nutr.* 1997;51(3):231-43.
<http://www.springerlink.com/content/r2j423713174l315/>]

[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*

[658] Tachycardias, falling blood pressure, red nose (September 2008)

For many years I have had tachycardias, a feeling of being 'unplugged' (as if my heart had stopped, blood pressure rapidly falling and I was going 'out') and inexplicable cold in my hands and feet like ice even in the summer. And the same thing on my nose. It turns bright red at times for no reason as if the capillaries dilated and it remains that way for a long time - it burns as if it has been held on the stove. Since changing my diet, my nose is normally coloured, I am nice and warm all over and no one has been 'pulling my plug'. It seems that food chemicals affect my vascular system and blood flow. – *by email*

[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)

[610] 210: Severe reaction to a chromium supplement with unlisted benzoate (February 2008)

I recently purchased a bottle of liquid Chromium Picolinate supplement which I was told contained water and the mineral. I took 1ml of the liquid with my lunch - 5ml is the correct dose but I always need to be cautious. Within 10 mins I started to feel spaced out and then over the next 2 hours had blurred vision, heart palpitations, was disorientated and needed to lie down. My tongue and throat had the feeling of swelling and breathing was slightly laboured. After a few hours my joints became swollen, inflamed and painful.

My husband phoned the telephone number on the bottle to see if there was anything added to the liquid other than those things stated on the bottle. He was told that it has a preservative in it called Methyl Paraben or Methyl 4-Hydroxybenzoate [preservative 218]. There is nothing on the bottle to suggest this.

I am intolerant of many preservatives, additives, salicylates and amines etc. but never before have I had such and quick and violent reaction. Today 24 hours later I'm feeling much better but certainly nothing like normal.

My reason for writing is that the firm did not take any responsibility for not having the bottle labelled, were unconcerned about my condition and refuse to credit us the price of the product which cost \$16.50. To whom can I write and complain about this appalling breach of labelling and also warn others of its danger? [answer: Consumer Adverse Medication Events Line: Ph 1300 134 237, <http://www.tga.gov.au>] – by email

[609] 621: MSG and inability to remember (February 2008)

A few years ago I was suffering from dizziness, especially going down stairs and an inability to remember numbers and facts. I also felt like I was on the verge of getting the flu because my glands in my right arm were always sore.

Given I am a scientist, the loss of balance and remembering ability was freaking me out big time. I was only 30 at the time (I am 34 now) and was too scared to tell anyone. I was writing notes that I would read and re-read to compensate for the inability to remember large strings of data. Bear in mind remembering a 20 digit number had been no problem for me and all of a sudden remembering 2 digits was difficult.

I had been on a diet to lose weight and kept my calorie intake below 1600 calories a day. I was also working long hours therefore was eating a lot of quick foods like noodles (with those flavour sachets). I would get woozy but it would never occur to me that there was something majorly wrong.

I was in a Chinese restaurant with friends and ordered the Chicken and Corn soup. Within ten minutes of eating the soup I started getting pains in my arms, chest and face. I thought I might be having a heart attack (what did I know?). I felt like my face was swelling and then I crashed. I was soooooo tired. I only ate white rice after the soup. It was almost as if my body was demanding it. It was a friend at the table who had an intolerance to MSG that told me what was happening. I asked the waitress, she laughed and told me it was the MSG.

The first thing I did when I left that restaurant was buy four bars of candy and a bag of jelly belly candy. I can eat a lot of sweets but never as much as I ate that day. I was lying down on shop stools because I was so tired. It took four days for me to be able to stay awake for more than a few hours.

I would cry whenever I saw soup stock cubes or anything else that contained MSG in my kitchen and would quickly throw it away. The wooziness and dizziness slowly disappeared as did the persistent swollen gland feeling in my arm.

Why am I telling you this? It is the remembering ability. It was not mentioned on any website that I have looked at. About ten months after I stopped eating MSG I was working on an instrument in France and looking for a phone number and I actually remembered it. It was ten digits. I sat there and stared in wonder.

I might not have been able to remember facts a year before but all of a sudden I could remember 10 digits again after having looked at the number only a couple of times. I still cannot remember 20 digit numbers but my mind improves everyday.

If MSG was affecting my ability to remember in my 'old age' of 30, and I was not exposed to it on a regular basis as a kid, what is it doing to kids in our schools? What is happening to their little brains? If I had my way I would ban all additives in foodstuffs. There are other ways to preserve foods that do not include additives. Furthermore, fresh is best and is it really that hard to prepare a meal? No. I just wanted you to know exactly how bad MSG can be affecting young minds. – by email, Germany

[586] 631: Racing heart beat after flavour enhancer 631 (November 2007)

My 37-year-old husband recently had suffered from racing heart beat twice in two weeks. When I was checking out your website for stuff to do with our daughter I happened to find the info on heart palpitations etc and straight away remembered seeing empty [yellow extruded flavoured snack with flavour enhancer 631] packets in his workbag! The racing heart beats came in bursts of maybe 5 to 10 seconds, 2-3 times an hour, a few hours after eating 631. It even happened when sitting down under no exertion. An ECG ten years ago showed his heart was fine. Since seeing your information, my husband hasn't had any more of those snacks or heart irregularities. – by email, Qld

[564] 635: "An attack of 635": anxiety, racing heart, headaches, rash (May 2007) SHARED COURAGE AWARD STORY FOR MAY 2007 NEWSLETTER

I was suffering with what the doctor said was normal for my age 39, higher blood pressure, heart palpitations, not able to sleep on my left hand side, rash around my groin and armpits that I couldn't get rid of, weekly headaches and to top it off waking up at 2-3am every morning with an anxiety attack.

I was attending an anxiety meeting every week and seeing a psychologist but the problem was that I couldn't identify with any of the other people that came to the anxiety meeting. It seemed all of their complaints of the 100 or so different people that came to the meeting related to cyclic thought process that brought on the anxiety and kept them in that loop. I on the other hand felt a little on edge but was very relaxed about life. I delved into unresolved tensions with my psychologist but still no relief. Yoga and relaxation exercises seemed to help but what it truly did was let me watch my

body go through the symptoms while I watched it happen in the third person. Because my symptoms didn't fit the norm I refused to take any form of medication. I felt it was stupid to compound the problem until I knew what was causing it.

Finally I had yet again another anxiety attack. This time it was unbearable and my heart went over the 199 bpm that my machine could measure. I tried everything to relax but my system went into overdrive. My mother came around and my wife was there to help. I am amazingly good at relaxing my body but nothing seemed to help. I called nurse on call and they called an ambulance immediately upon hearing my symptoms. The ambulance arrived and went through the routine of checking me over and in the time they were there my body stabilised to around 100bpm. They gave me the option of going to hospital and waiting in the waiting room for 4-6 hours or stay at home and try and get over it. I took the wait at home option. The interesting thing from all of that is the male ambulance officer who leaned against the door frame for the whole time they were there said "gee you look like my wife does when she has a attack of 635" I thought he was full of it and ignored him at the time. I felt like I had run a marathon.

The following day I looked up 635 on the internet and noticed the rash and the headaches that I had were the same but nothing else rang a bell. Having nothing else to go on I looked into what had 635 in it as an ingredient. I was amazed to find my pies, pasties from the local bakery had beef booster and hence 635 + 621 that was Monday nights explained then a lot of chips + crackers that I had for lunch - even ones from the health food section of my local supermarket that state quite clearly on the packaging that 635 is not 621 and therefore is not bad for you. What a laugh! I must stress I had no belief that 635 was the cause of anything but my rash and headaches. I have not changed my lifestyle in any way except for removing 635 + 621 from my diet and only very recently removed 282. But a key interesting note is the 12 hour delay from eating the food to the full blown symptoms. I still eat selected junk food, I still exercise the same amount, I have even more pressure at work and I still get broken sleep from my now 2 year old.

When I would go to my doctor, her face would drop in that "not you again look" she would listen to me with bored expression and write in her notes, anxiety related. Please also note that my doctor since then acknowledged she has absolutely no knowledge of food intolerance re 635 – 621 and their symptoms. How are you expected to be helped if they are blind to these issues? The way I wish to truly express myself as to how I feel re their mainstream blindness is limited by my overriding desire to keep this letter polite. I have not read anywhere a person with my exact same experiences but I know it is simple. I have stopped eating 635 + 621 and I am back to how I remember the way I used to be.

From that week....

My multiple rashes of many years cleared up completely!

Not one single headache!

I have not had a single heart palpitation!

Not one single anxiety attack!

No hand or body tremors!

No racing heart!

No feeling of tension!

The only exception to this was when I went to a mothers' group party and ate some salt and vinegar chips laced with 621 + 635. I had a bad night sleep that night. I checked the chips at the supermarket the following day and found the suspect ingredients. I will not eat any food that I cannot check the ingredients. Hungry Jacks will not return my calls to tell me what foods have 635 in, and Nandos will not return my calls as well. It is of interesting note that the American version of Hungry Jacks (Burger King) + KFC list their ingredients but the similar Australian version of the web sites have the ingredients list missing. I FEEL LIKE A NEW MAN – Wayne, by email

[565] One-liners (May 2007)

- Salicylates make me wired, pee a lot and cause dark circles under my eyes; amines make me very angry and I wake up with palpitations and sweats – email, USA.

[542] Palpitations and MSG (January 2007)

Having suffered panic attacks and palpitations on-and-off for years I started seriously looking at the foods and additives I was stuffing into my system. I can now tell you that the prime trouble maker for me is flavour enhancers. As others have done before me I visited doctors and hospitals after bad attacks only to be sent home with a "nothing wrong with you" report. Then one day, I had taken a double dose (flavoured corn chips and kebabs) which well-and-truly landed me in hospital. The interesting point to this story is the specific effect the MSG had. While I was on the heart monitor (for about 12 hours) the doctors and I could see what my heart was doing and we were able to determine the safety of the situation.

The sinus node (the electrical trigger) was firing and was firing regularly. This was a good thing! The troublesome aspect was the MSG was somehow interfering with the distribution of the signal around the heart. This meant that although the heart was beating/pumping, it was doing so at a reduced flow rate. That is, the contractions weren't as strong as they should have been. Although it was pumping enough blood to keep me lucid/conscious, a beat could not be felt by me in my chest, nor could a pulse be felt at my wrist. NOTE: it felt as if my heart had stopped but in fact was just beating weakly. I tried to convince the doctors this was MSG-induced, but they just closed their ears, their eyes glazed over, and told me they couldn't understand why my heart was behaving the way it was.

Now I know what my heart is doing, I no longer have panic attacks triggered by a few 'missed beats'. The difference is knowing that the ectopic beats aren't going to kill me, and even though I can't feel the beats, I reason that if I'm still alive and not suffering chest pain etc. then I'm just having another 'episode'. - *by email*

[458] 635: Irregular heart beat - "thought I was dying" (September 2006)

I had suffered from a slight temporary problem now and again which seemed like an extra beat of my heart but couldn't pin it down to anything so put it down to probable after-effects of a cold or flu but one morning after enjoying a very large multi-course Chinese meal while on a works outing dinner the night before, I felt terrible and quite ill! I could sense an irregular heartbeat that seemed to be every second or third beat, I was going dizzy and feeling faint now and again, had a funny tingling feeling going up my neck into my head and scalp and felt very weak. I honestly thought I was dying. It was so bad I even wrote a quick note to the wife and kids. Obviously I sought medical treatment, had various tests and an ECG which all showed up normal...the irregular beats were intermittent now and I got to feeling a little better, the doctor said everyone suffers from irregular beats now and again, it's a benign condition and no problem!

Anyway I decided it may have been to do with the amount of alcohol I had drunk at this works dinner and gradually the beats got back to normal and I put this down to my now 'sensible drinking'.a few weeks later my wife and I arranged to meet up with a couple of friends and have a Chinese takeaway at their house...you guessed it ... in the night and next morning the same feelings came back and the irregular beats ... I now dismissed the alcohol connection and thought it could be something I had eaten, so being a bit computer literate I looked up on a search engine the phrase 'heart problems after eating chinese food'. I was amazed at the search results, that so many people suffered from this and that largely doctors were ignorant of this! One web site even referred to it as Chinese restaurant syndrome!.....so knowing the problem and after extensive research on the net I know if I can avoid MSG as much as possible I do not get these heart flutters!...even a packet of hula hoops (potato snacks) can give me slight heart irregularities.

Two years later: I still get irregular beats even after a packet of corn snack type crisps. I find that the irregularities with MSG kick in after about 12 hours and around 24 hours after eating 635, and that the 635 tends to hang on longer than MSG. With me the effects of MSG last usually a day sometimes two, and with 635 it's usually two days sometimes three. – from the UK

[457] 635: Heart palpitations from 635 (September 2006)

I have been getting heart palpitations for about 18 months. Saw a doctor who said it was anxiety attacks. Rubbish. So I started to take more notice of the foods I was eating. I noticed that it was instant after certain foods - corn chips, Sanitarium vegie sausages and some chinese foods (fried rice etc.).

I know its 635 because the palpitations come within half an hour of eating those foods, and are quite strong for about 2-3 hours. I'm still trying to figure out if it lasts to a lesser degree for a few more days, or if I've eaten something else in the meantime that I don't react well to. – by email.

[456] Heart palpitations and buzzing sensation (September 2006)

Some time ago I found some corn chips (Viva brand) that advertised having no MSG. I bought them a few times before connecting with them a very uncomfortable feeling of restlessness, agitation and panic, heart palpitations, hot flushes and a "buzzing" sensation; I thought I was having a panic attack. Since recognising the link I bought the chips once more to test the idea that this was the

cause; after about 5 chips I started to feel the 'buzzing' and threw the rest of the packet away. - Kathy from Adelaide.

[368] One liners (March 2005)

On two occasions I have been admitted to hospital with breathlessness and suspected symptoms of heart attack - on both occasions, after extensive tests, no abnormalities were found. I was quite surprised to read in your book the instance of the doctor who had a similar experience. – failsafer, by email

[339] 635: Meals on wheels disease (Sept 2004)

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Six months ago, I was rushed off to hospital after waking in the middle of the night feeling edgy and hot with swelling of my face, heart palpitations and welts of hives all over my body. Afterwards, I questioned was it something I ate - the wine, the peanuts?

These awful experiences went on for a period of about four months until my brother saw a segment on A Current Affair about reactions to flavour enhancer 635 (also 627 and 631, ribonucleotides). I had missed the show but immediately got onto the website and as soon as I started reading I knew that was exactly what I had. This information is provided by Sue Dengate at www.fedup.com.au on the factsheet called "[Ribo Rash](#)".

I read everything I purchase, I do not eat anything if I do not know exactly what is in it, and before I go to a function I speak with the chef or caterers. When dining I choose a meal and then request that the chef can assure me that there is no 635 added. I went through my pantry and discarded any foods with 635 in the ingredients and have not had a reaction of any kind for about two months which is a wonderful breakthrough for me, after experiencing reactions 3-4 times a week.

I request that you please take the time to read the attached information, as my parents are both experiencing similar reactions. My stepfather has a chronic rash and my mother gets hives at least one night a week. They receive "Meals on Wheels" and my stepfather says it is usually after rissoles, stew or soup. Therefore I request that you read the ingredients that you are adding for flavour to these meals. Purchased chickens from Woolworths have the additive in the stuffing, Coles marinated fresh chickens contain 635, Red Rooster have in on the outside, some chicken salt has it as well as some stocks, tinned and packet sauces and soups and it is even in some butter blends. Potato chips, CC's and other flavour enhanced foods are all to be avoided but there are plenty of substitutes, it just means being more vigilant as to what is served.

The elderly in aged care facilities and even patients in hospitals are experiencing these reactions due to flavour enhancer 635. There are plenty of natural herbs and spices that can be added to food for flavour instead of an additive which is causing a lot of suffering and possibly even death. - *letter from Queensland*

[197] 282: the bread preservative and heart rhythm (September 2002)

Q. Thanks for interesting article on the effects of bread preservative. I went to my heart specialist a couple of weeks ago and told him I that when I eat bread, it makes the rhythm of my heart go absolutely crazy. It misses one beat in four and makes me feel quite unwell. He told me that was absolute nonsense, but he would get me to wear a 24 hour heart monitor. So I did that and when they analysed the data, sure enough, 35 minutes after I ate four slices of bread, the graph went wild. But he still doesn't believe that it was caused by bread. So I'm going to look for another heart specialist who will listen to me. It was a real comfort to realise that there is a doctor (Dr David Brewster) who does believe beyond the textbook. Have you had any experience in 282 adversely affecting heart rhythm? I would be really interested to know whether you have had any other reports of 282 having other health side effects. - by email

A. See [Factsheet](#) for report of fast heart beat (tachycardia) linked to 282.

[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, Qld

[116] 282: Fast heart beat (tachycardia) (August 2001)

I have suffered for years from episodes of fast heart beat. It can be very strong and disturbing, and I have ended up in hospital but it goes away after a few hours and they could never find anything wrong. For a while I was getting it every afternoon. Eventually I worked out it happened on the days I ate bread. A friend suggested it might be the preservative in bread. When I eat Brumbys' bread I have no problems, but when I ate some preserved bread without thinking at my mother's place, I had another episode. - NT

See [Heart palpitations and chest pain factsheet](#)

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