

Americans are Urged to Cut Nitrates on National Nitrate Awareness Day and During Monthlong No Nitrates Campaign in November

No Nitrate November challenges Americans to go nitrate-free for 30 days and take a closer look at the hidden additives in everyday processed foods

SAN FRANCISCO – On the inaugural National Nitrate Awareness Day, a coalition of healthcare professionals, food advocates, and brands committed to clean-label eating, today recognized the launch of [No Nitrate November](#), a first-of-its-kind national movement urging Americans to cut out nitrates and nitrites from their diets for 30 days. Found in everything from bacon and hot dogs to cured deli meats, these additives are linked to serious health risks yet remain hidden in many everyday foods. **No Nitrate November** invites people to make small, conscious changes that can support long-term wellness while calling on the food industry for greater transparency in food labeling and improved consumer education.

“Research shows that even low levels of nitrate consumption can contribute to increased risk of cancer, particularly colorectal cancer,” said Dr. Todd L. Sack, MD, FACP, a board-certified gastroenterologist and advisor to the campaign. “With the holidays approaching, this is a great time to look more closely at what we’re eating and make informed choices to protect our health.”

The Hidden Health Risks

According to the World Health Organization, processed meats containing nitrates are classified as Group 1 carcinogens – the same category as tobacco and asbestos. More than 3 million Americans consume nitrate-laden processed foods daily, often without knowing it.

Scientific studies show that regular consumption of nitrates can raise the risk of colorectal cancer by up to 18%. These additives are also linked to a 42% increase in coronary heart disease risk and a 51% higher chance of developing Type 2 diabetes.

Nitrates may interfere with the blood’s ability to carry oxygen, especially dangerous for pregnant women and infants. Emerging research also points to possible links with cognitive decline and neurological conditions. Children are particularly vulnerable, facing elevated risks of respiratory infections and developmental issues.

“Given the well-documented associations with elevated cancer risk and other adverse health outcomes, food manufacturers should eliminate nitrates from processed meats. Removing these additives is a vital step in reducing preventable harm and protecting public health,” said

Michael J. Martin, MD, MPH, MBA, Founder & President of Physicians Against Red Meat (PhARM).

How It Works

Participants can visit NoNitratesNovember.com to take the pledge to “Commit to a Healthier November” and join thousands of others in saying no to nitrates. The campaign encourages people to make small, meaningful changes, learn about nitrate-free alternatives, and share their journey throughout the month. The website offers science-backed research articles and quick tips to help participants stay informed and inspired.

Policy and Public Health Goals

No Nitrate November is a policy-driven movement, calling for systemic reform to ensure consumers can make truly informed choices.

One of the top concerns: misleading food labels. While many processed meats appear to use “natural” ingredients, such as celery powder or natural curing agents, these are often synthetic nitrates in disguise. The campaign urges the USDA to close these loopholes and end deceptive labeling practices.

“Americans consume over 300 million sandwiches every day, loading their bodies with nitrates and other additives, even if they are consuming deli meats that are labeled as all-natural or organic,” said Prime Roots Co-Founder Kimberlie Le. “Consumers deserve to understand what they are eating and the health risks certain food ingredients can pose to them and their families. We need better labeling and better food options in stores so people can make healthier choices.”

It also advocated for mandatory cancer risk warnings on nitrate and nitrite cured meats – similar to those already required on tobacco and alcohol. Organizers are calling for the removal of processed nitrates from federal school lunch programs, protecting the most vulnerable from unnecessary risk.

In addition, the campaign supports adding nitrate-free dietary guidance to CDC and NIH public health frameworks, aligning it with how trans fats and added sugars are now regulated. Finally, it calls for increased federal funding for independent research into safe, viable alternatives to nitrates used in food preservation.

Partnership with PHARM.org

No Nitrate November is proud to partner with Physicians Against Red Meat (PhARM), a leading organization dedicated to reducing red meat consumption for healthier people and a healthier planet. Together, they're working to make nitrate-free foods more accessible, educate communities about healthier eating habits, and advocate for transparent food labeling nationwide.

Take the Pledge

To learn more about **No Nitrate November** and to take the pledge, visit:

NoNitratesNovember.com.

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