

# GOING NATURAL?

If you're like most people, you're impressed when a food product proclaims that it's "natural." Guess what? **There's no legal definition of the word "natural" on a food label.** So it doesn't really mean much at all, and it certainly doesn't mean a product is organic or more healthful. Nonetheless, a recent study found that **a majority of Americans look for food labelled "natural"** and think they are gaining a



health benefit by choosing such products. Everything from **high fructose corn syrup** to "natural flavors" created by chemical processing to **various substances used to create texture and improve shelf-life** can be considered natural -- and these ingredients are on almost every processed food label. Want to truly go "natural"? **Eat lots of whole foods (like fruits, veggies, nuts, beans, lean protein)** that don't have any other ingredients at all -- naturally.

the big number

59

A recent study by Consumer Reports found that 59% of shoppers look for the word "natural" on food packaging.

**EAT BETTER. PLAY HARDER.  
LIVE HEALTHIER. LEARN EASIER.**

**WELLNESS IS A WAY OF LIFE!™**

*USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

# WELLNESS IS A WAY OF LIFE!™

HELPING YOUR WHOLE FAMILY FEEL WELL AND DO WELL!

"GOING NATURAL"

## EAT BETTER

Try lots of different fruits, veggies, and whole grains for a healthy diet. You're bound to find a few you really like!

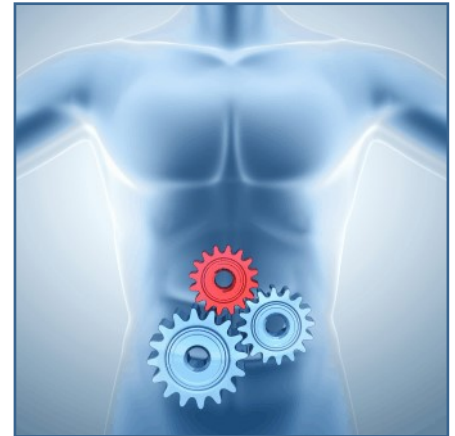
### FRUITS & VEGGIES

No labels here (except for that annoying little sticker on your apple!), so feel free to eat all you wish!



## LIVE HEALTHIER

As more and more ingredients have been added to our food through processing, some common additives have been implicated in health problems -- and others, we're not really sure about, but we keep eating them anyway! Recently, for example, the emulsifiers and gums that are routinely added to processed foods have come under scrutiny for possibly contributing to intestinal disorders, metabolic syndrome, and obesity by disturbing the bacteria that live in our gut.



## LEARN EASIER



It's almost impossible to consume too much sugar eating a diet rich in whole, unprocessed foods. But sugar (in its many guises, including various syrups and all ingredient words ending in "-ose") is perhaps the most extensively added "natural" substance of all. Too much added sugar can negatively affect kids' learning and behavior and should be avoided.

## PLAY HARDER

Physical activity, working out, or just playing hard can stress the body and cause inflammation, even if there's no obvious acute injury.

One common food additive, a seaweed-derivative called "carrageenan" has been shown to actually cause inflammation, so it's the last thing an active person needs to eat more of. But, then again, it's "natural"!



First things First



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For first-class learning!



Featuring Healthy Fruits & Grains!

**School Meals**  
We serve education every day

Over the last three school years, we've been putting in place a number of changes to make our meals even more nutritious for our customers. For example, all of the meals we serve for breakfast and lunch must include fruit or vegetable servings.



**DON'T GET IT!**  
Take at least **ONE FRUIT or VEGGIE** and at least **THREE** items total so your meal counts as a complete lunch!



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