

**Gatorade®**  
**By Paulette Canney**  
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Gatorade® was first developed by a team of researchers in 1965 at University of Florida to replenish the combination of water, carbohydrates and electrolytes that student athletes lost in sweat. Now currently manufactured by PepsiCo and distributed in over 80 countries and according to Wikipedia, accounts for approximately 75 percent of the market share in the sports drink category for the US, i.e. Gatorade® is big money! My kids love and beg for Gatorade, but this Mom does not believe that a plastic bottle of sugar and dye can be good and I have refused to buy it. This simple research project is going to explore the ingredients and hopefully provide education for those like my husband and children who think Gatorade must be good for you and needed for health if our top athletes are drinking it.

A 12 oz bottle of Low-Calorie Orange flavored G2 Gatorade® according to the nutritional label contains 75 Calories, 400 mg of Sodium, 112.5 mg of Potassium, Total Carbohydrate 17.5 g, Sugars 17.5 as well as water, citric acid, natural flavor, salt, sodium citrate, monopotassium phosphate, sucralose, acesulfame, potassium, Yellow 5, Red 40.

According to About.com Citric acid is a natural, [organic acid](#) that is found in many fruits and vegetables, especially citrus. Citric acid is prized for its sour flavor, preservative quality, and ability to act as a pH buffer. For these reasons, citric acid is found on the ingredient list of many food products today. Mom Rating: Thumbs Up!

Natural Flavors – Humm, we are going to assume it's the citric acid sourness. Mom Rating: OK!

Sodium Citrate – has a short definition on Wikipedia as “any of the sodium salts of citric acid . . . and is sometimes used as an acidity regulator in drinks.” Mom Rating: Seems OK!

Monopotassium Phosphate is a soluble salt of potassium and the ion, which is used as a fertilizer, a food additive and a fungicide! Mom Rating: Fertilizer and Food in the same use = NO WAY!

Sucralose is an artificial sweetener that is not broken down by the body so it non-caloric. Common name is Splenda® and has been approved by the FDA since 1998 but controversy and studies surround this sweetener and it has been linked to migraines, possible reduction of white blood cells, shown to increase PH in the intestines. (Wikipedia and Livestrong.com) Mom Rating: NO WAY!

Do I dare even ask about Acesulfame? According to NutritionExpress.com Acesulfame is a calorie free sweetener that is 200 times sweeter than sugar and been used in foods in the US since 1988. Their review is that this is safe and widely tested and used ingredient. But when I Googled it seems there is more info on the side effects and according to

buzzle.com Acesulfame contains acetoacetic acid which is responsible for the extreme sweetness without calories or fat but can be harmful because the human body can not metabolize this ingredient it comes out unchanged but may change the body as it moves thru. Despite the FDA approval there was a study that female rats developed breast tumors, as well as the scary fact that during the manufacturing of Acesulfame, methylene chloride is used as a solvent. We find methylene chloride in such items as paint stripper and degreaser and it's use in the food industry is highly questionable! Prolong exposure has been linked to headaches, liver complications, mental confusion, cancer, visual impairment and renal diseases as well as depression. Mom Rating: NO WAY!

Potassium –is a mineral found in food, especially green leafy vegetables. Along with sodium, chloride, calcium and magnesium, potassium is an electrolyte that helps to conduct electrical charges in the body and is absolutely critical to life because if potassium gets to high or low the heart and nervous system completely shut down. Mom Rating: Thumbs Up!

Yellow 5 – Tartrazine is a synthetic yellow dye used as a food coloring also known as Yellow 5. According to Wikipedia Tartrazine's potential health effects on humans tends to cause the most allergic and intolerant reactions to those with asthma and aspirin intolerance. 1994 study at the U of Melbourne suggested that children with ADHD have increased negative side effects. In mammals Tartrazine was found to inflame the stomach lining, alter biochemical markers in vital organs like liver and kidneys of lab rats after prolonged exposure. Mom Rating: NO WAY!

Red 40 –Despite having it's own fan club at red40.com, this dye is artificial and perhaps the most shocking fact of all derived from petroleum! Approved by the FDA and thought to be fully excreted from the body, it has raised questions about the effects on children with ADHD and has the potential for serious side effects cited by the Center for Science in the Public Interest according to Livstrong.com. Mom Rating: NO WAY!!

Conclusion Gatorade® is toxic and dangerous for the body and we haven't even touched on the plastic bottle that it is packaged in. Why would anyone spend a penny to ingest such a potentially harmful "good for you" beverage, especially athletes that want their body finely tuned to have peak performance? I conclude that Gatorade® and healthy drink are an oxymoron. Go natural and replenish lost fluids with pure H2O and organic fruits and vegetables. If you need an easy "go to" for your athletes try grabbing potassium filled banana and a cup of organic radishes with a sprinkle of unrefined rock or sea salt. It is what the athletes in my family will be using for the radishes' naturally cooling ability to decrease excess heat in the body, clear the sinus' of excess mucus (no breathing strip needed), aids in digestion and the breakdown of toxins, contains phytonutrients, fiber, vitamins and minerals that are replenishing and cancer fighting not causing, low in calorie with less than 20 calories in one cup with tons of flavor and most importantly with a high water content and lots of vitamin C as well as phosphorus and zinc, radishes are the perfect to keep the body hydrated and healthy all summer long!