

Aspartame

Aspartame is [approved](#) for use in food as a [nutritive](#) sweetener. Aspartame brand names include Nutrasweet®, Equal®, and Sugar Twin®. It does contain calories, but because it is about 200 times sweeter than table sugar, consumers are likely to use much less of it.

FDA approved aspartame in [1981](#) (46 FR 38283) for uses, under certain conditions, as a tabletop sweetener, in chewing gum, cold breakfast cereals, and dry bases for certain foods (i.e., beverages, instant coffee and tea, gelatins, puddings, and fillings, and dairy products and toppings). In [1983](#) (48 FR 31376), FDA approved the use of aspartame in carbonated beverages and carbonated beverage syrup bases, and in [1996](#), FDA approved it for use as a "general purpose sweetener." It is not heat stable and loses its sweetness when heated, so it typically isn't used in baked goods.

Aspartame is one of the most exhaustively studied substances in the human food supply, with more than 100 studies supporting its safety.

FDA scientists have reviewed scientific data regarding the safety of aspartame in food and concluded that it is safe for the general population under certain conditions. However, people with a rare hereditary disease known as phenylketonuria (PKU) have a difficult time metabolizing phenylalanine, a component of aspartame, and should control their intake of phenylalanine from all sources, including aspartame. Labels of aspartame-containing foods and beverages must include a statement that informs individuals with PKU that the product contains phenylalanine.