



Fatal Conveniences™: Snack Wrappers

[00:00:00] Fatal Convenience - Snack Wrappers

Darin: You see them on candy bars, protein bars, granola bars, fruit strips, all kinds of snacks. Snacks are a part of our culture. I'm talking about those shiny, colorful wrappers mostly small, convenient foods are packed in. The shiny appearance and bright unnatural colors alone should be a red flag. What kind of chemicals are lurking in these things? If these are cheap, convenient foods, what are they wrapped in? What happens once you tear open the snack and throw away the wrapper? These and many things, you're going to find out about snack wrappers.

[00:00:53] Fatal Convenience Intro

Darin: Welcome to fatal conveniences where we address the things we may be doing in our daily lives that are actually harming us, and in some cases, slowly killing us. Tap water, teflon, caffeine, blue light, food additives, you name it, we dive into it. We take a critical look at everyday products that really are affecting us and our bodies and the environment and how we can avoid them and find a solution. So, let's dive in.

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Darin: In today's episode, we're going to dive deep. We are going to uncover, we're going to unwrap what snacks are wrapped in. That's right, today's fatal convenience, snack wrappers. We all know, all of us, every one of us, that's part of this day and age. The history goes way back. Do you know far it goes back?

[00:02:00] The history of food wrappers

Darin: Wrapping our food and gourds and banana leaves and shells and leaves and hollow logs, woven grass, animal organs, you name it. We have placed our food on these things, fur, fabrics, clothing, all of this stuff. We have created this stuff then we moved on. In the second century, the Chinese used paper. They use mulberry bark. The Egyptians in the 1500 BC industrialized glass, making it out of limestone soda, and silica, amazing glass, great idea. Why didn't we stick with it? Throughout history, we also used metals, tin, silver, you name it. Then in the 19th century, we chemicalized everything. We started using plastic. Well, first the military, it was light, it was functional, it was durable. In 1933, the Germans refine this process. In 1947, products started to be packaged in plastic. In 1958, we created heat-shrinkable films, and it goes on and on and on. That's how it happened, and now here we are, everything is wrapped in plastic. We know, you've heard before how bad these plastics are. You're not thinking, you're just buying this protein bar, ripping it open, and then eating it, but what has it been wrapped in, what is it using? These are the crazy things that I want to know. You know why I want to know? It's because regardless of my brain that I think everything is safe, which you know I don't now, no one has my best interest other than me. Unless I look at it, I won't know. Guess what has to deal with that? My body, the endocrine system, the hormonal fluctuations, the cancer igniters, you name it. There's so much going

into it. Listen, the convenience of snack foods, we can buy some food, it's wrapped in this thing. It doesn't get exposed to the outside world. We can find at gas stations, mini markets, schools, hospitals, airports, big-box retailers, street vendors, you name it, over and over and over again. But why should we care? Here's the deal.

[00:04:35] Why you should take a closer look at that snack wrapper

Darin: Plastics and chemicals are absolutely what made up that wrapper. Plastic seeps in the food, poison the wildlife, marine life, the soil, the air we breathe, and it's not biodegradable. That's just off the cuff, you know that. Where is it going? What does it mean? What's that shiny shit about? How many thousands of chemicals are in there? Well, we're gonna dig into it, and I have good reasons. I have alternatives. Believe me, I do, so stick with me.

[00:05:13] The toxicity of snack wrappers, according to science

Darin: An amazing study was done, a comprehensive scientific study on the toxicity of chemicals present in plastic products including, and they named it, snack wrappers. This benchmarking in vitro toxicity and chemical composition of plastics in the consumer products is huge. It was released by the Environmental Science and Technology. They analyze 34 widely used consumer products made out of plastic, including products coming directly in contact with food, such as anything from refillable bottles, to food wrappers, yogurt cups, all of these kinds of things. Here's what all of them demonstrated, 74% of the plastic extracts that they made to make these things contain chemicals triggering at least one endpoint relevant for assessing health impacts including baseline toxicity, oxidative stress, cytotoxicity, which is the endocrine disruptors. Popular plastic consumer products can contain these endocrine-disrupting chemicals. And chemicals certainly used in plastic food contacting directly with food is a major major problem. Plastics contain large mixtures of other chemicals. Many of those are unknown and difficult to identify. This suggests and this alone of thousands of studies suggests we actually need to study this and we are not. We are not doing this effectively at all. 260 chemicals were tentatively identified including monomers, additives, non intentionally added substances. 27 of those in the study were prioritized based on high levels of vitro toxicity, including well-known additives such as benzophenones, butylated hydroxytoluene, and triethyl phosphate, as well as many, many others. The others include PVC, polyvinyl chloride, PUR, polyurethane, and many "bioplastics," which means nothing. These are polylactic acid, PLAs, with high toxic levels similar to PVC and PURs, as well as toxicities of low-density polyethylene, LDPE, and polystyrene, PS. It goes on and on. Are you ever going to know this? Well, there are over 200 unknown, virtually untested chemicals as well as these damn PFASs, polyfluoroalkyl substances.

[00:08:22] PFAS: What they are and why you should avoid them

Darin: This stuff is gnarly. It's everything from the clothing industry to now it's in food packaging, so nothing sticks to something. Every time you wrap something just like the wrapping paper they use in fast food. They wrap the hamburgers and all of this stuff with grease-resistant paper. Fast food containers and wrappers, man, microwave popcorn bags, pizza boxes, candy wrappers, so it doesn't stick. What do you think is making that happen? It's these gnarly PFAS. Most PFASs that doesn't make this stick are forever chemicals. These are environmental disasters. They migrate into the soil, the water, and the animals



and they do not break down. The PFAS are found in blood of people and animals all over the world and are present at low levels in variety of food products and in the environment. This stuff is crazy. Phthalates are in everything. Some types of phthalates have affected the reproductive system in animals, let alone us. What it does is it's an endocrine disruptor that changes the hormone levels, reduces sperm count, leads to birth defects, and male reproductive systems, obesity, diabetes, thyroid irregularities. Environmental badass health expert, Dr. Leo Trasande, and author of this incredible book, *Sicker, Fatter, Poorer*. He is an expert pediatrician on chemical interactions with us, with humans. He is one of the top experts in this field. We actually sit together on the advisory board of Footprint, which is the largest creator of non-plastic single-use items across the industry. His study that he published in the *Journal of Environmental Pollution* calls for urgent regulatory action to tackle health risks of phthalates echoing Environmental Working Groups long-running warnings about these chemicals. Phthalates have been linked to changes in hormone levels, reduced sperm count, all of this stuff like I just said. Nearly everyone in the United States is exposed to phthalates. It's just the level of it. Some studies are finding that almost 100% of Americans have some level of this substance in their body. Dr. Leo's study concludes nationally representative samples of phthalates exposures were associated with all-cause cardiovascular mortality with societal costs approximating \$39 billion a year or more. We got health care costs, we got all of those things underlying and massively affecting our society. How are you feeling about your wrapping paper of your snack foods now? Well, it also has Bisphenol A, BPA, you've all heard of this. Industrial chemical makes plastics and resins since the 1950s is found in a polycarbonate plastic and epoxy resin. These BPAs often are used in containers and store food and beverages and water bottles and of course, it shows up in the study with snack wrappers. Again, Bisphenol A, a very powerful and known endocrine disruptor. Now keep in mind, even when manufacturers are saying, hey, we're Bisphenol A or BPA-free, guess what, they're just coming up with other chemicals now. The bottom line is stay away from packages, really. Do your very best.

[00:12:15] How to avoid snack wrappers

Darin: Don't buy food in packages. I am sorry to say this, it bums you out. Listen, don't buy food wrapped in plastic and shiny paper. It's just not a good idea. Choose glass, stainless steel food containers. Please, please, please avoid heating food or beverages in plastic. Skip fast food altogether. Not only is the food horrible, it's giving you a boost of freaking chemicals on the paper itself and phthalate exposure because a 2016 study showed absolutely people who eat fast food have an infinitely higher phthalate exposure. So what can you do? Guess what? Eat bananas. You got a perfect little covering. It's great. Eat bananas, wash your apples, eat fruits and vegetables, they have their own outer. All you have to do is wash them, take them, get your own containers of glass and stainless steel and try to avoid those go-to snacks that the company themselves cannot prove that their chemical-free of these endocrine-disrupting compounds. Don't feed your children, don't feed yourself these consistently chemicalized cheap products that are wrapped in plasticizers and that are undercutting your health. I know you didn't think about this. It was nothing that you were concerned with but now you're concerned. Now you should be aware. So every time you reach, I hope that I'm in your head saying reach for a banana, reach for an apple, reach for frickin great orange, then you get to peel it when you want it. All of these things, do that instead of these other snacks. Dates and nut butters, incredible. Mix those up yourself, make little balls, take them with you. That is infinitely better than any energy bar or protein bar you



can do and it's cheaper and much better for you and not exposing you to not only the crappy ingredients in there, but the endocrine-disrupting chemical storm that is within these things. I wish this wasn't true, people. I wish I didn't have a part of the podcast that was called fatal convenience. I wish as a modern-day society, we weren't at this place. But guess what? I'm not okay with it. I hope you're not okay with it. Support companies and people doing the right thing because we have 8 billion people on our side. Let's wake up. Let's make better decisions with our money that we're voting with every day and stop giving your money to companies that are chemicalizing in you and are not regulated. So, I'm sorry, that's just where we're at right now. Let's change it, we have the power, make healthier choices.

[00:15:09] Podcast Outro

Darin: That's it for today's fatal conveniences. Thank you so much for tuning in. If you want this valuable information in email form, you can sign up for my fatal conveniences newsletter at fatalconveniences.com. I send out an in-depth breakdown of what we covered in each episode every Monday after an episode airs. If you make any changes in your life or home from these episodes, I want to see them. Tag me in your Instagram posts and show me how you're avoiding these harmful products and making better choices. It's awesome to see the impacts these episodes have, and I love seeing how creative my audience is. Remember, small changes can have a big impact. Oh, and if you haven't had a chance to check out the interview I released earlier in the week, here's what you missed.

[00:16:11] Snippet - Walking and Climbing Towards Dreams

Mike: That's one of the things I started to understand the difference between reasons and excuses. For me, I always thought there was a big difference. On my walk, I started to understand pretty clear, there's no difference. My reasons are excuses because every spring, the time you got to start this thing, it was a reason, I got to finish the album, I got to do a tour to support the last album, I got a wedding, I gotta go to, maybe I do it next year, and it's never gonna be a right time. No one's gonna roll out a red carpet for you to walk across America. No one's gonna tell you this is a great idea. In fact, people are going to roll out red carpets, it's the reason why it's a bad idea. You're going to injure your body irreparably. You're going to commit career suicide. There's not gonna be a music career for you to come back to. I heard them all. It's like you're going to live life according to yours and other people's reasons, or you're gonna live a life that actually inspires and fulfills you. For me, it was just like I just got fed up. I got to do this thing, man. I got to do it, or else I'm not living my life.