

## **NST : Cancer-causing Red 2G in sausages, burgers banned**

Written by Administrator

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PUTRAJAYA: The use of a food colouring called "Red 2G" is banned with immediate effect.

The colouring, usually found in breakfast sausages and burger meat, has been found to pose a health risk, including cancer.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Chua Soi Lek said the ban was imposed following safety concerns raised jointly by the Food and Agriculture Organisation/World Health Organisation expert committee on food additives and the European Union scientific committee for food.

Red 2G is banned in Australia, Austria, Canada, Japan, Norway, Sweden and the United States. It was banned in Ireland, Israel and Greece in July this year.

Red 2G, Acid Red 1, Food Red 10, Amidonaphthol red G, azogeranine, azophloxine, azofloxin, or C.I. 18050, is a synthetic red azo dye. It is soluble in water and slightly soluble in ethanol. In the intestines, Red 2G can be converted to the toxic compound aniline. As a result, there are concerns that Red 2G may ultimately interfere with blood haemoglobin, as well as cause cancer.

It is also used as a dye for coatings, inks, paper, crepe paper and fine tissue.

Dr Chua said Red 2G was used extensively in Malaysia for burger meat and sausage to add colour to the food.

"An adult weighing 50kg who takes 10mg of food coloured with 2G daily is at high risk," he said.

Speaking from his office, Dr Chua said all food manufacturers and food sellers had been ordered to withdraw food containing Red 2G voluntarily.

"This is because food that has already been manufactured would be allowed to be sold until the expiry date. Food which has no expiry date must be withdrawn from the market within three months from today (yesterday)," he said.

Anyone caught selling food containing Red 2G would be charged in court under the Food Act.