

Nitrates in deli meat dangerous? Food labels and cancer claims don't tell the whole story

NPR just ran a [scare piece](#) called "Duped In The Deli Aisle? 'No Nitrates Added' Labels Are Often Misleading," which is about, of course, worrying about whether the sliced ham or turkey from your deli doesn't have an accurate "warning label" about whether nitrate/nitrite preservatives are added to the meat.

When shopping for processed meats, many health-conscious consumers look for products with words like "no nitrates added" or "uncured" on the packaging. But we may have been misled, experts say.

Allison Aubrey, NPR Eating and Health, 8/29/19

SHOULD WE BELIEVE CONSUMER REPORTS?

Let's take a look at the experts and examine what they are really saying. The first two quotes are from [Charlotte Vallaey](#)s, a senior policy analyst at Consumer Reports

1. *"Deli meats carrying these labels pose the same health risks as traditionally cured meats because the nitrate and nitrite levels are essentially the same."*

.... First, deli meats do pose the same health risks as cured meats, but that risk is essentially nil. I will explain this below. Second, nitrite and nitrate levels are "the same" only because they are [interconvertible](#) in the body, especially in saliva.

Read full, original article: [NPR Doesn't Know Spit About Saliva, Nitrates or Deli Meat](#)