



The Unhealthy Truth: How Our Food Is Making Us Sick - And What We Can Do About It

By Robyn O'Brien, Rachel Kranz

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Robyn O'Brien is not the most likely candidate for an antiestablishment crusade. A Houston native from a conservative family, this MBA and married mother of four was not someone who gave much thought to misguided government agencies and chemicals in our food—until the day her youngest daughter had a violent allergic reaction to eggs, and everything changed. *The Unhealthy Truth* is both the story of how one brave woman chose to take on the system and a call to action that shows how each of us can do our part and keep our own families safe.

O'Brien turns to accredited research conducted in Europe that confirms the toxicity of America's food supply, and traces the relationship between Big Food and Big Money that has ensured that the United States is one of the only developed countries in the world to allow hidden toxins in our food—toxins that can be blamed for the alarming recent increases in allergies, ADHD, cancer, and asthma among our children. Featuring recipes and an action plan for weaning your family off dangerous chemicals one step at a time *The Unhealthy Truth* is a must-read for every parent—and for every concerned citizen—in America today.

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Book Description

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A Q&A with Robyn O'Brien

Question: What inspired you to write *The Unhealthy Truth*? Have you worked in nutrition or science over the years?



Robyn O'Brien: My background is motherhood and finance (I helped manage \$20 billion in assets prior to having four children). When I realized that the United States recently allowed certain chemicals into the US food supply in order to enhance corporate profitability while countries around the world either banned or labeled these ingredients, I felt an obligation to convey to American eaters what eaters around the world have known for the last 15 years.

Question: Scientists claim that these ingredients have never been proven harmful. What is your response?

Robyn O'Brien: That these ingredients have never been proven safe, either, which is why governments around the world have not allowed them into their food supply. Health data presents a different picture than the one being claimed by industry funded scientists: for example, according to the American Cancer Society, the United States has the highest rates of cancer of any country in the world and migration studies show that if you move here from another country, your likelihood of developing cancer increases fourfold. Additionally, it is important to note who is funding the scientists making these claims and whether they serve on speakers bureaus for industry.

Question: Why is the U.S. the only developed country to have allowed these substances into our food

supply?

Robyn O'Brien: In the United States, we allow ingredients into our food supply until they are proven dangerous. In other developed countries, substances are not allowed into the food supply until they are proven safe--a precautionary measure that puts additional burdens on corporations in the form of testing requirements and extensive research and development. This precautionary principal protects consumers, not profits.

Question: Why would the U.S. do this?

Robyn O'Brien: I think that the answer is two-fold. Looser standards and deregulation allow for enhanced corporate profitability. On top of that, I believe that we have a flawed federal policy when it comes to health care: under our commercial health care system, there is profitability in our illness. In the U.S., almost half of all Americans have at least one chronic disease. If other developed countries had populations as sick as ours, their economies would suffer given that health care is not a for-profit industry overseas.

Question: If you could speak to our government leaders about this issue, what would you say?

Robyn O'Brien: I would grab Michelle Obama and make sure that she joined us! And then I would talk about budget allocation: If we allocate \$600 billion to the Pentagon and only \$2.4 billion to the FDA, how can we expect the FDA to ensure the safety of the food supply?

If we allocate government and taxpayer funded subsidies to farmers growing crops laced with chemicals and then charge organic farmers fees to prove that their crops are safe and then fees to label them, how could organic food ever be affordable to everyone?

Safe food is a social justice issue. We are a nation of 300 million eaters, and I think we deserve to have the same food standards that other developed countries have.

Question: Until there is change on a national level, what can we do as individuals?

Robyn O'Brien: Take baby steps. It's important to remember not to make "the perfect" the enemy of "the good." We live in a real world, where kids go to Chuck E. Cheese for birthday parties and get blue cupcakes. Do what you can, when you can.

Target the 80/20 rule, as I highlight in the book: do as much as you can to try to reduce your families' exposure to these substances 80 percent of the time, then give yourself a 'free pass' for the other 20. Instead of blue yogurt, opt for white yogurt and add sprinkles. Instead of using the full packet of fluorescent orange powder on your kids' mac n' cheese, use half of the packet. Chances are that these baby steps are going to feel so good that you will want to do more. There is a lot that we can do to protect the health of our families, we just have to get savvy about it!

(Photo © Brooks Freehill)

Review

?In the absence of the truth, all of us stand helpless to defend ourselves, our families and our health, which is the greatest gift we have. Robyn O'Brien's courageous pursuit is an example of how we can all do our parts to protect the health of our families.? ---Erin Brockovich

About the Author

Robyn O'Brien is the founder of AllergyKids. She has been featured in the *New York Times* and has appeared on CNN, *Good Morning America*, and the *CBS Early Show* and *Evening News*. She lives with her family in Boulder, Colorado.

Rachel Kranz is a novelist, nonfiction writer, and playwright who lives in New York City. Her most recent novel is *Leaps of Faith* (2000).

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Mark McKinney:

The reason? Because this *The Unhealthy Truth: How Our Food Is Making Us Sick - And What We Can Do About It* is an unordinary book that the inside of the publication waiting for you to snap it but latter it will jolt you with the secret the item inside. Reading this book close to it was fantastic author who all write the book in such remarkable way makes the content within easier to understand, entertaining method but still convey the meaning fully. So , it is good for you because of not hesitating having this any longer or you going to regret it. This excellent book will give you a lot of gains than the other book have got such as help improving your ability and your critical thinking approach. So , still want to hold up having that book? If I were being you I will go to the reserve store hurriedly.

Christopher Palmer:

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