

What You Need to Know About Meat Glue



What Is Meat Glue?

- A food enzyme called **transglutaminase**, used to bind small pieces of meat, fish, or poultry into a single chunk for visual appeal and cost efficiency.
- Common commercial names include **Activa**® (microbial-derived) or **Fibrimex** (animal-derived)

Is It a Concern?

1. Hidden Contamination Risk

Bacteria on individual meat pieces can be sealed inside the glued area, increasing foodborne illness risk if the product isn't thoroughly cooked.

2. Undeclared Ingredients

Often labeled vaguely as "enzyme" on packaging. Consumers may be unaware they are purchasing reformed meat products (not labeled).

3. Potential Link to Autoimmunity

Microbial transglutaminase may increase intestinal permeability, stimulate immune reactions, and has been associated with gut inflammation in susceptible individuals.

4. Quality Misrepresentation

Low-grade scraps are marketed as premium cuts, misleading consumers on actual product origin and quality.

How to Avoid It

- **Buy whole, unformed cuts:** "Beef steak" or "chicken breast" instead of "formed" or "reformed" products.



Read ingredient labels for:

- "Enzyme," "TG enzyme," or "TGP enzyme"
- "Formed" or "Reformed" in product names
 - ☒ **Avoid processed meats** like imitation crab, chicken nuggets, deli slices, or fast-food items where meat glue may be used.
 - ☒ **Choose minimally processed, organic, or locally sourced meat** whenever possible.

Should I Be Cautious With My Children?

One Word: YES.

- Individuals with **gluten intolerance, celiac disease**, or other inflammatory gut conditions.
- Persons with **weakened immune systems** or digestive disorders.
- Child



Bottom Line

While **transglutaminase** is technically considered safe and given GRAS (Generally Recognized As Safe) status by the FDA, its use in food processing comes with **real concerns about labeling transparency, food safety, and potential inflammatory effects**, particularly for our most vulnerable.