

Our Sunday Roast

By Adam Chapman

- 1 It's a staple of the British menu but the Sunday roast has been found to contain some 27. Researchers have found the British classic contains 230,000 microplastic particles. Researchers said eating a similar meal every day would result in swallowing the equivalent of two plastic bags a year. The study was carried out by Portsmouth University scientists and ITV's *Good Morning Britain* (GMB).
- 2 The term microplastics refers to plastic particles that measure less than five millimetres. To see how many microplastics infiltrated food, GMB reporter Michelle Morrison and her children made two roast dinners with chicken, potatoes, carrots, broccoli and Yorkshire puddings. One meal was made with ingredients bought wrapped in plastic but the second had been mostly purchased without any plastic packaging. The roast made from ingredients wrapped in plastic contained seven times more microplastics than the other one. The non-plastic packaged items also cost 37 percent less.
- 3 Doctor Faye Coucerio, an environmental pollution expert at the University, said: "It would appear that the majority of microplastics in our food come from the plastic packaging it is wrapped in. However, there are other ways that plastic can enter the food chain. It could be getting into the vegetables through the soil or into our meat through grazing. Air has lots of microplastics in it too so they could be falling on top of the food. And finally it could be from the cooking utensils used when preparing a meal. Instead of a sterile laboratory, the food was cooked in a normal kitchen so it is likely the microplastics will come from a combination of within the food, the packaging, cooking utensils and the air."
- 4 Miss Morrison said: "Previously there has been very little research into the amount of microplastics contained within an entire meal. Our new investigation has clearly found that we eat far less microplastics when we reduce the amount of packaging we buy. What we now need to know is – are these microplastics harmless? Or, like many believe, are they actually tiny plastic timebombs?"



express.co.uk, 2022