

Nutrition Action

DECEMBER 2020 \$2.50

HEALTH LETTER®
CENTER FOR SCIENCE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

How News Can Confuse



Rumor has it...

5 weight-loss
claims

MISLEADING ADS

The latest ploys

EASY BEANS

Our top picks

M E M O

The Watchdog Barks



Thanks to the creativity of the food and supplement industries, there is no shortage of labels and ads that are designed to confuse or fool us. This month's *Nutrition Action* features plenty

of examples (see "Fever Pitch," p. 12).

But the Center for Science in the Public Interest, *Nutrition Action*'s publisher, doesn't just clue you in to deceptive claims. We also prod the government and the courts to stop them.

A few examples:

■ **Not so sweet?** In January, we [urged](#) the Food and Drug Administration to ban claims like "just a tad sweet" and "slightly sweet" on drinks that are high in sugar.

■ **Grain games.** Images of wheat on the label and claims like "multigrain," "made with whole grain," and "wheat" confuse people about the difference between whole and refined grains. CSPI has pressed companies and the FDA to fix [misleading grain claims](#) for decades.

■ **Supplement scams.** Covid-19 has been a heyday—or should I say payday!—for supplement scammers seeking to exploit the public's fear. Since the start of the pandemic, CSPI has been urging the FDA to crack down on [unsubstantiated](#) "antiviral" and anti-Covid claims.

The latest crop: 46 supplements with illegal "antiviral" claims sold on [Amazon](#) and 22 products sold online by osteopath Joseph Mercola that he [falsely claims](#) can prevent, treat, or cure Covid-19.

■ **Evidence, schmevidence.** The law requires supplement claims to be backed by the *totality* of the scientific evidence. (Whether companies follow that law is another matter.) But a recent court decision about memory claims for Costco's Ginkgo Biloba with Vinpocetine allows supplement manufacturers to make claims so long as

they have *some* scientific support—no matter how suspect or heavily outweighed by contrary evidence. CSPI's litigation department has joined the legal team [appealing](#) that decision.

■ **Total baloney.** CSPI recently petitioned the U.S. Department of Agriculture to [prohibit claims](#) like "no nitrates or nitrites added" on "uncured" sausages, bacon, and other processed meats that contain nitrates or nitrites from ingredients like celery powder.

■ **Hydroxy moxie.** Misinformation

about Covid-19 is an epidemic of its own, with unproven cures touted by no less than the president. CSPI has exposed misleading claims about [hydroxychloroquine](#), [oleandrins](#), and [injected bleach](#), among others.

Rest assured that the Center for Science in the Public Interest—"America's Food and Health Watchdog"—will live up to its name by pushing food and supplement companies and government officials to stick to the science throughout the pandemic...and long after.

Peter G. Lurie, MD, MPH, President
Center for Science in the Public Interest



"Multigrain" doesn't mean "whole grain." These chips' first ingredient? White flour.

Photo: Frito-Lay North America, Inc.

The contents of NAH are not intended to provide medical advice, which should be obtained from a qualified health professional. For permission to reuse material, go to [copyright.com](#) and search for Nutrition Action.

The use of information from Nutrition Action Healthletter for commercial purposes is prohibited without written permission from CSPI.

© 2020 Center for Science in the Public Interest.

Peter G. Lurie, MD, MPH
Executive Editor

Michael F. Jacobson, PhD
Founder and Executive Editor (1974-2017)

EDITORIAL

Bonnie Liebman, MS
Director of Nutrition

Stephen B. Schmidt
Editor-in-Chief

Lindsay Moyer, MS, RD
Caitlin Dow, PhD
Senior Nutritionists

Kate Sherwood
Culinary Director

Kaamilah Mitchell, BS
Project Coordinator

Jorge Bach
Art Director

BUSINESS & MARKETING

Jennifer Green-Holmes
Director of Business Operations

Chris Schmidt
Senior Circulation & Marketing Manager

Debra Brink
Senior Production Manager

SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD

Kelly D. Brownell, PhD
Duke University

Caldwell B. Esselstyn Jr., MD
Cleveland Clinic Foundation

Christopher D. Gardner, PhD
Stanford University School of Medicine

Stephen Havas, MD, MPH, MS
Northwestern University Medical School

JoAnn E. Manson, MD, PhD
Harvard Medical School

Julie Mares, PhD
University of Wisconsin

J. Glenn Morris, Jr., MD, MPH&TM
Emerging Pathogens Institute
University of Florida

Susan B. Roberts, PhD
USDA Human Nutrition Research Center
on Aging, Tufts University

Frank Sacks, MD
Harvard Medical School

Jeremiah Stampler, MD
Northwestern University Medical School

Regina G. Ziegler, PhD, MPH
National Cancer Institute

Nutrition Action Healthletter (ISSN 0885-7792) is published 10 times a year (monthly except bi-monthly in Jan./Feb. and Jul./Aug.) by the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), 1220 L Street NW, #300, Washington, DC 20005. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, DC and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Nutrition Action Healthletter*, 1220 L St NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20005.

SUBSCRIBER SERVICES

The cost of a one-year subscription or gift (10 issues) is \$24; two years are \$42. For bulk subscriptions: please write for details. To change your address: send us your subscriber number and your old and new address. If you don't want us to exchange your name: send us your name and mailing-label information.

Mail: CSPI, 1220 L Street NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 1-866-293-CSPI (2774)
E-mail: customer@nutritionaction.com
Online: myaccount.nutritionaction.com

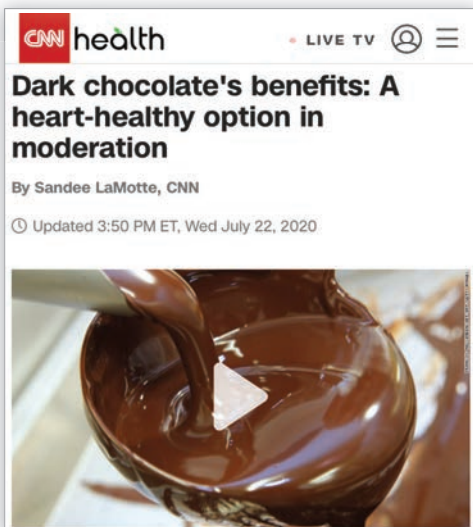
For more offerings from *Nutrition Action*: store.nutritionaction.com



How News Can Confuse

BY BONNIE LIEBMAN

Everyone eats. So news outlets know that the latest food study is likely to grab eyeballs. But sometimes the media doesn't get it quite right. Sometimes they neglect to mention that the headline shocker comes from a study in test tubes or from a study that can't prove cause and effect. Sometimes the study itself is at fault. Often, the media simply repeats a press release's mistakes. Here are a few "Oops!" stories that confused many.



keep the heart's blood vessels healthy," study author Chayakrit Krittanawong of Baylor College of Medicine told [CNN](#).

"This new study looked back over five decades of studies and found eating chocolate more than once a week was associated with an 8% decreased risk of coronary artery disease," reported CNN.com in July.¹

"Our study suggests that chocolate helps

Not quite. The new study combined the results of six earlier studies. But one of them was only published as an abstract (a brief summary). After Krittanawong's team re-examined the data without that study, poof! The link between chocolate and heart disease evaporated. Oops.

Dark chocolate has "a much lower sugar content and fewer calories than milk or white chocolate, because those are mixed with powdered or condensed milk," noted CNN.

Really? An ounce of Dove Dark Chocolate has only 10 fewer calories and 1 gram less added sugar than an ounce of Dove Milk Chocolate.

Bottom Line: Studies like these—which ask people what they eat, then follow them for years—can't prove that chocolate protects the heart. A clearer answer should come from the COSMOS [trial](#). It's testing whether 600 milligrams a day of a cocoa flavanol supplement can cut the risk of heart disease and stroke (see Jan./Feb. 2015, p. 3). That same amount of flavanols from dark chocolate would come with roughly a 600-calorie price tag.

¹[Eur. J. Prev. Cardiol. 2020. doi:10.1177/2047487320936787.](#)

"Three or more servings per day of what researchers call 'ultra-processed food'—mass-manufactured foods containing oils, sugars, fats, starch and little nutrients—may lead to changes in chromosomes linked to aging," reported [foxnews.com](#) in September.

A recent study "found that having multiple daily servings of junk food, like cookies, chips, fast-food burgers or other processed meals, doubles the chance that certain strands of DNA, called telomeres, would be shorter than those who ate healthier," said Fox, adding that "shorter telomeres are a marker of accelerated biological aging."

This study aside, it's smart to cut back on ultra-processed foods. For example, in a carefully controlled trial, people ate an extra 500 calories per day and gained two



pounds after eating largely ultra-processed foods for just two weeks. They lost two pounds after eating unprocessed foods for two weeks.¹

But the study that Fox reported on didn't show that eating ultra-processed foods accelerates aging.

The researchers simply asked people what they typically ate, then measured

the length of their telomeres.²

Did the ultra-processed foods in their diets *cause* the shorter telomeres? Or does something else about people who eat ultra-processed foods explain the link? This type of study can't say.

As the authors noted, "although we adjusted for several potential confounders, other potential confounders may exist." Oops.

Bottom Line: The study didn't randomly assign people to eat either unprocessed or ultra-processed foods, so it can't prove that ultra-processed foods shorten telomeres. But those foods *can* pad your waistline. That's reason enough to build your diet around unprocessed fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains.

¹[Cell Metab. 30: 67, 2019.](#)

²[Am. J. Clin. Nutr. 111: 1259, 2020.](#)

“Here’s one reason not to feel guilty about your next pizza binge,” reported [fastcompany.com](https://www.fastcompany.com) in July.

“A new study of people who overindulged in the popular food found that their bodies maintained healthy blood chemistry, with no immediate poor health effects.”

“Participants were asked to eat pizza until ‘comfortably full,’ and then, at a later date, until they ‘could not eat another bite,’” said the website. They ate about 1,600 calories the first time and 3,100 the second.¹

After they overate, “blood sugar levels stayed steady” compared to after they ate the smaller portion, “while insulin levels doubled (to control the blood sugar levels).” And “blood lipids (triglycerides and fatty acids) were only slightly higher.”

Slightly? In fact, both insulin and triglycerides rose by about 50 percent more after the larger meal than after the smaller one. (Triglycerides rose because people ate a lot of fat.)

“The overeaters were *lethargic* for a prolonged period of over four hours,” noted Fast Company. Guess that’s not one of the “surprisingly good things” about a pizza binge.

“This study shows that if an otherwise healthy person overindulges occasionally, for example eating a large buffet meal or



Christmas lunch, then there are no immediate negative consequences in terms of losing metabolic control,” the senior author, James Betts of the University of Bath in England, told Fast Company.

But who cares about “immediate” consequences?

What’s more, the 14 pizza eaters weren’t typical. The men were 22 to 37 and at or just slightly above normal weight.

In contrast, 72 percent of adults have overweight or obesity, 48 percent have prediabetes or diabetes, 46 percent have high blood pressure, and 29 percent have high LDL (“bad”) cholesterol.

That said, no one would

expect those problems to appear after just one meal. So why make such a fuss about the results?

While the study “did not receive any direct funding,” the paper disclosed that four of the researchers had ties to the food industry. Fast Company—and other news outlets—left that out. Oops.

Bottom Line: With a typical restaurant entrée (sans appetizer, drink, or dessert) hovering around 1,000 calories, the last thing we need is license to “binge.”

¹[Brit. J. Nutr. 124: 407, 2020.](https://doi.org/10.1093/ajcn/92.4.1077)

“Brush, floss, gargle—advice coming now from cancer researchers, not just your mom and dentist,” reported the [New York Post](https://www.nytimes.com) in October.

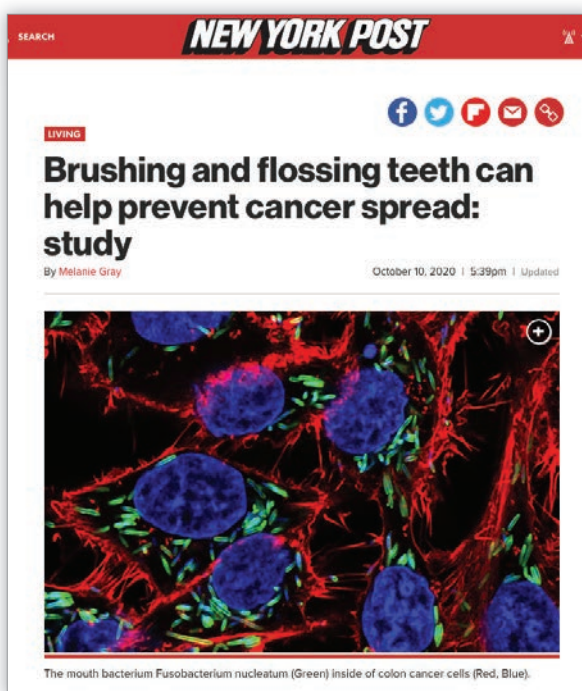
“Scientists are stressing good oral hygiene after they discovered a common mouth germ can push cancer to other parts of the body.”

Yikes.

“And they see their finding as significant because the spread of the cancerous cells—or metastasis—is what causes 90 percent of cancer deaths.”

Needless to say, any study that finds a way to stop cancer cells from metastasizing would be a blockbuster. But this fascinating study didn’t exactly go there.

It focused on *Fusobacterium nucleatum*, one of many bacteria that live in our mouths. According to the *Post*, “colon cancer cells invaded by the germ became inflamed by two proteins called cytokines—and the inflammation in turn



Not quite. It was actually the cytokine-rich goo surrounding the infected cancer cells that led another set of uninfected cancer cells to travel.¹

But that’s just a detail. The glaring error: The *Post* neglected to mention that the study took place *in test tubes*—actually, lab dishes—not in people. Those cells traveled from one end of a lab dish to the other, not “to other parts of the body.”

And what happens in test tubes may not happen inside us. Oops.

What’s more, even if this bacteria matters, it’s a leap to assume that brushing or flossing your teeth might be enough to keep it—and cancer—from spreading.

Bottom Line: Brush and floss frequently to prevent gum disease. But it’s way too soon to know if taking care of your teeth and gums can

keep cancer from spreading.

¹[Sci. Signal. 2020. doi:10.1126/scisignal.aba9157.](https://doi.org/10.1126/scisignal.aba9157)

The study sounds impressive. Researchers “looked at data collected on 112,922 people as part of the Prospective Urban Rural Epidemiology (PURE) epidemiological study,” reported [Newsweek](#) in May.

“Participants were aged between 35 and 70-years-old from 21 countries on five continents.”

Among the results: After asking people what they typically ate and waiting years, “a higher intake of whole fat, but not low fat, dairy was linked with a lower incidence of high blood pressure and diabetes,” explained [Newsweek](#).

Well, not exactly. Those links were only statistically significant when the researchers lumped all dairy foods together, not when they looked at either whole-fat or low-fat by itself.¹

Also, as the researchers noted, “our study was underpowered to detect an association” in the low-fat-dairy eaters “owing to a low number of participants



in this particular group.” Oops.

What’s more, only four of the 21 countries (Canada, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, and the United Arab Emirates) were high-income, and half of the participants were from regions of Asia or Africa where dairy is not frequently consumed. As the study notes, “dairy intake might be a proxy for poverty or access to healthcare.”

So it’s hard to know if the results apply to our dairy-laden diets.

To its credit, [Newsweek](#) provided some balance.

“Choosing low and reduced fat dairy is one easy way to cut down on saturated fat intake to help lower cholesterol levels,” a dietitian for the British Heart Foundation told the magazine.

“The American Heart Association continues to recommend a heart healthy dietary pattern”—like a DASH or Mediterranean diet—noted one of the group’s past presidents.

Too bad [Newsweek](#) failed to mention that the dairy industry helped fund the study.

Bottom Line: Clinical trials are testing high-fat and low-fat dairy on blood sugar and insulin. Until results are in, stick to low-fat dairy to keep a lid on your LDL (“bad”) cholesterol...and to save calories.

¹ [BMJ Open Diabetes Res. Care 2020. doi:10.1136/bmjdr-2019-000826.](#)

“Glaucoma strikes many people as they age, but what if a simple dietary change could lower your risk?” asked a HealthDay article on [USNews.com](#) in July.

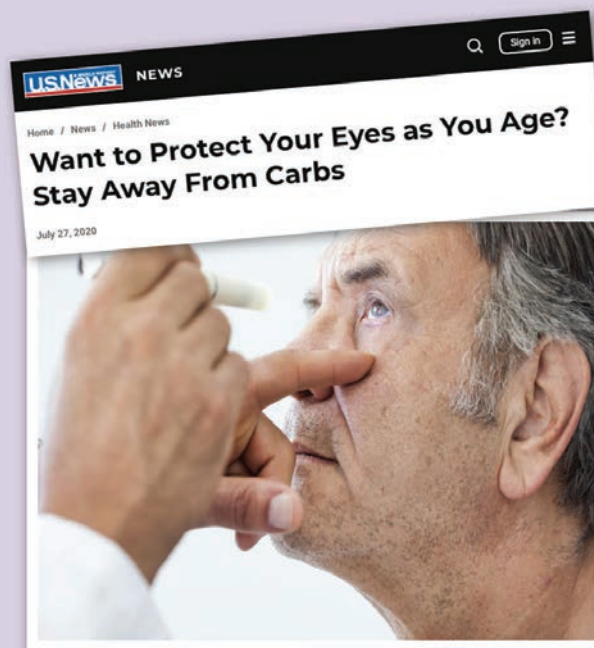
“The researchers analyzed data from 185,000 female nurses and male health professionals, aged 40 to 75,” said the article.

“Maintaining a long-term diet low in carbohydrates and high in fat and protein from vegetables was associated with a 20% lower risk of primary open angle glaucoma (POAG) with early paracentral visual loss, according to the study published online recently in the journal *Eye*.”

Umm. Did the reporter read the study? Here’s its main conclusion: “Low-carbohydrate diets were not associated with risk of POAG.”¹

Nor did the researchers find a link with low-carb diets when they looked separately at glaucomas that damage peripheral vision versus glaucomas that cause damage near the center of the field of vision.

Only when the investigators broke down the *types* of low-carb



diets—into those heavy on animal versus vegetable foods—did they find the reported link with central vision alone...sort of.

Even *that* link wasn’t statistically significant. (The study calls it a “suggestive” association.) Oops.

So what led to the eye-grabbing headline?

“Low-carbohydrate diet may be associated with lower risk of blinding eye disease,” announced a [press release](#) from the Mount Sinai Health System in New York, where one study author is deputy chair for ophthalmology research.

Could that misleading headline have caught HealthDay’s eye?

Bottom Line: Cut back on *refined* carbs (added sugars and white flour) to make room for more vegetables, fruit, beans, whole grains, and nuts (see Nov. 2019, p. 3). Just don’t expect a low-carb diet to lower your risk of glaucoma. The evidence is far too scanty.

¹ [Eye 34: 1465, 2020.](#)

“Poor sperm quality has been linked to using electronic media at night, according to new research released by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine,” [reported](#) foxnews.com in September.

“New research” is an understatement. As Fox later notes, “the preliminary results” were “published as an abstract”—that is, a brief summary—in the journal *Sleep*.¹

“Smartphone and tablet use in the evening and after bedtime was correlated with decline in sperm quality,” said principal investigator Amit Green, Ph.D., in a press release,” wrote Fox.

“Furthermore, smartphone use in the evening, tablet use after bedtime, and television use in the evening were all correlated with the decline of



sperm concentration.”

So...those attention-grabbing headlines were based on a [press release](#) about an [abstract](#)?

Men who used their phones and tablets more in the evening and after bedtime were more likely to have lower

sperm concentration and motility. How much more likely? The abstract didn’t say.

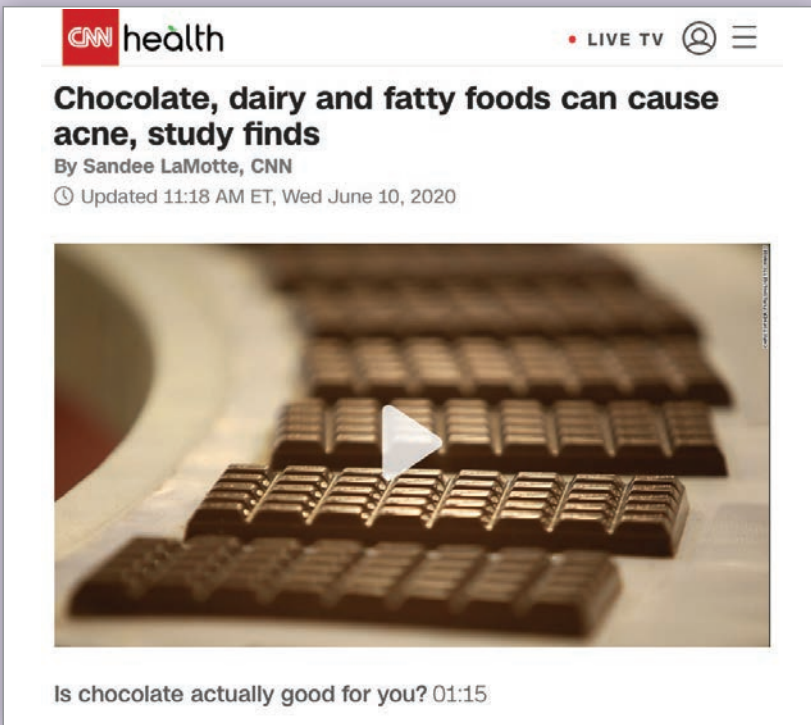
What else about heavy-phone-and-tablet users did the study take into account? Could it be less sleep, not light-emitting screens, that explains their lower sperm quality? The abstract didn’t say.

As it turns out, the full study had been published six months before the Fox News item. And less sleep was indeed linked to low sperm quality.²

But even the full study couldn’t tease out whether sleep or phones and tablets—or neither—causes a drop in sperm quality. Oops.

Bottom Line: It’s far too early to say whether light-emitting screens lower sperm quality.

¹ [Sleep 2020. doi:10.1093/sleep/zsaa056.028.](#)
² [Chronobiol. Int. 37: 414, 2020.](#)



“If you’re an acne sufferer who has long thought chocolate, sweets, dairy and other fatty foods made your acne worse—even though your doctor said it was all in your head, not your face—you’ve been vindicated,” [reported](#) CNN.com in June.

The vindication: a new study of nearly 25,000 French adults.¹ “Compared with people who never had acne, those with current

acne consumed significantly more milk, milk chocolate, snacks and fast foods and fatty and sugary products. They also ate significantly less meat, fish, vegetables, fruits and dark chocolate (which has less milk),” explained CNN.

“After adjusting for sex (including pregnancy and menopause status), age, smoking, physical activity, educational level, depression, weight, diabetes and other diseases,” said CNN, “consumption of milk, sugary beverages, including sports drinks, and fatty and sugary foods were found to be independently associated with current acne.”

Wait, what?

So the links with most items in the first list of foods (like milk chocolate, dark chocolate, and snacks and fast foods) *disappeared* after adjusting for age, smoking, weight, and other potential confounders? Then why even mention those foods...and in the headline, no less? Oops.

The study’s other shortcomings: a third of those with acne had diagnosed it themselves; the researchers didn’t define “fatty and sugary foods”; and the study was done in adults, so the results may not apply to teens, who are most likely to have acne. Sheesh.

Bottom Line: To find out if a food causes acne, researchers can randomly assign people to diets with or without it. This kind of study, on the other hand, can only suggest which foods to test. 🍌

¹ [JAMA Dermatol. 156: 854, 2020.](#)

Quick Studies

A snapshot of the latest research on diet, exercise, and more.

Undoing Diabetes



Losing weight may reverse type 2 diabetes if you haven't had the disease for long.

Researchers randomly assigned 147 people aged 18 to 50 who had had type 2 diabetes for no more than three years to either a control group or an intervention group. All had overweight or obesity.

Every day for 12 weeks, the intervention group consumed only about 800 calories' worth of meal replacement foods (like shakes, soups, and bars), plus raw vegetables and two quarts of water.

They also stopped taking all diabetes medications and boosted their exercise, starting with a goal of taking 10,000 steps a day and then aiming for doing at least 150 minutes of exercise per week. Over the next 12 weeks, they slowly re-introduced foods with help from a dietitian.

The control group received usual medical care for diabetes.

After a year, those in the intervention group had lost, on average, 26 pounds, and 61 percent of them no longer had diabetes. In roughly half of those without diabetes, long-term blood sugar (hemoglobin A1c) had dropped to the prediabetes range, while in the other half, levels were down to normal.

In contrast, people in the control group had lost an average of 9 pounds, and only 12 percent of them no longer had diabetes.

(Note: One of the 15 researchers had previously received a grant from Cambridge Weight Plan Ltd. The company sells the meal replacements used in this study, but didn't supply them for free or fund the research.)

What to do: If you have type 2 diabetes and excess weight, talk to your doctor about a weight-loss and exercise program and whether you can cut back on your meds (see Dec. 2019, p. 3).

[Lancet Diabetes Endocrinol. 8: 477, 2020.](#)

What Did I Just Eat?

Do people eat more if they're too busy to notice what they've already eaten?

Researchers had 120 women drink either a thick 270-calorie smoothie or a thin 75-calorie smoothie while distracted by either an easy or a difficult computer task. Then they were offered potato chips and similar snacks.

The women ate about half as many chips—and reported feeling more full—after drinking the higher-calorie smoothie than after drinking the lower-calorie smoothie ...but only after doing the easy task. After the harder, more-distracting task, the women ate as many chips and felt equally full, regardless of whether they had polished off a higher-calorie or lower-calorie smoothie.

What to do: Keep in mind that eating may not curb your appetite or make you feel as full if you were distracted while you ate.

[Appetite 2020. doi:10.1016/j.appet.2020.104813.](#)



Drugs in your Supplements?

Some "brain enhancement," "memory," or "mental clarity" supplements may contain unapproved drugs.

Researchers analyzed 10 supplements whose labels listed omberacetam (Noopept), aniracetam, oxiracetam, or phenylpiracetam. All are unapproved drugs, and are similar to piracetam, which is prescribed for dementia or memory loss

in some countries but is not approved for use in the United States. The supplements contained just two of the four drugs, in one case at four times a typical dose. And more than half of the doses listed on the labels didn't match what was in the pills.

What to do: Watch out. Many supplements make claims without good evidence, and some may contain unapproved drugs, sometimes at doses that could be risky. 🍷

[Neurol. Clin. Pract. 2020. doi:10.1212/CPJ.0000000000000960.](#)





Rumor Has It

What's up with 5 weight-loss claims

BY CAITLIN DOW

If you're trying to lose weight, you're probably suffering from advice overload. Should you shed pounds slowly? Guzzle water? Stock up on nuts? Eat frequently? Fast for most of the day? Here's the lowdown.

SLOWLY BUT SURELY?

Claim: "People who lose weight gradually and steadily (about 1 to 2 pounds per week) are more successful at keeping weight off," says the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

Evidence: The best study may upend that widely held belief.

"We randomized 200 volunteers with obesity, about 100 to a slow weight-loss group and 100 to a rapid weight-loss group," explains Joseph Proietto, emeritus professor of medicine at the University of Melbourne in Australia.¹

The "slow" group was told to cut their usual intake by about 500 calories a day, with a goal of losing about one pound a week. The "rapid" group consumed only 450 to 800 calories a day, all from meal-replacement drinks.

"The slow group had nine months to lose 15 percent of their body weight," says Proietto. "The rapid group had to do that in three months."

By the end of each group's weight-loss period, "78 percent of the rapid group had achieved their target weight, compared to just 50 percent of the slow group," says Proietto.

What's more, 18 people in the "slow" group—but only three in the "rapid" group—had dropped out. Losing weight quickly might motivate people to stick with a program, Proietto points out.

The researchers then tracked those in both groups who had lost at least 12.5 percent of their starting weight. After three years, both had regained, on average, 75 percent of the weight they had lost.

"There were no differences in the amount or the rate of weight regain be-



Slow and steady weight loss doesn't win the weight-loss race.

tween the two groups," notes Proietto.

Bottom Line: It's hard to keep weight off. But you're no more likely to regain lost pounds if you've lost them quickly. And don't try to slash calories to 450 to 800 a day without a doctor's supervision.

A WATER APPETIZER?

Claim: "Drinking a lot of water has long been a staple of weight-loss programs, in part because doing so makes you feel fuller," wrote the [Washington Post](#) in January.

Evidence: "We have done a couple of studies where we gave folks two cups of water before a meal, presented them with a large tray of food, and asked them to eat as much as they'd like," explains Brenda Davy, professor of human nutrition, foods, and exercise at Virginia Tech.

"After drinking water, middle-aged and older adults ate about 60 to 75 calories less than when they didn't drink water before their meal."^{2,3} (Water had no impact on how much younger adults ate at their next meal.)

"So the question was, if you drank water before a meal repeatedly over a period of time, could it promote weight loss?" Davy wondered.

To find out, "we prescribed a structured weight-loss diet of 1,200 to 1,500 calories per day to 48 middle-aged and older adults with overweight or obesity."

"One group was not given any instructions about water intake, while the other group was told to drink two cups of water prior to each main meal. And we provided the water group with bottled water."

After 12 weeks, "the water group had lost about 15 pounds and the control group had lost around 10 pounds," says Davy.⁴ (That study, as well as one of the single-meal studies, was funded by a nonprofit organization that received money from the water-filter maker Brita.)

How does water help people shed pounds? "We have some evidence that people feel more full before eating a meal if they drink water first," says Davy. "Another possibility is that folks may drink water instead of calorie-containing beverages."

But Davy is cautious. “We have preliminary evidence supporting the effectiveness of pre-meal water to help people lose weight, but those findings need to be confirmed with a larger study,” she says.

What’s more, “we’ve only seen a benefit in middle-aged and older adults. Whether this works in younger folks is a big question mark.”

Bottom Line: Drinking water before a meal may help you eat less. Just don’t expect the pounds to melt away.

GRAZE OR GORGE?

Claim: “Try to stick to small, frequent meals throughout the day,” a dietitian told the Eat This, Not That website in September. “I think that’s very important to speed up the metabolism to make sure you’re not feeling overly hungry.”

Evidence: “Early observational studies showed that people who were grazers—meaning they ate small meals throughout the day—tended to be thinner than those who were eating larger meals,” says Brad Schoenfeld, associate professor of exercise science at Lehman College in New York City.⁵

“But, of course,” he adds, “correlation is not causation.”

Why would grazing keep you trim? “The general hypothesis is that if you eat more frequently, it will stoke your metabolic furnace, helping you burn more calories,” says Schoenfeld.

“But that idea is unfounded,” he notes. In one study, 15 young adults ate the same number of calories—divvied up into either three or six meals—on two separate days. The volunteers burned the same amount of fat and calories on the day they ate six meals as on the day they ate three.⁶

Grazing doesn’t help people lose weight over the long term, either.

For example, researchers told 51 adults with overweight or obesity to eat 1,200 to 1,500 calories a day, either



Drinking two cups of water before a meal may help you eat less, but it’s no miracle.

as three meals or as mini-meals (with at least 100 calories each) every few hours. After six months, the grazers had lost no more weight than the three-meals-a-day eaters.⁷

And when Schoenfeld analyzed the data on weight from 15 trials that lasted two weeks to a year, “there was no difference if people ate, say, one meal or five.”⁸

“It really doesn’t matter.”

Bottom Line: When it comes to how often you eat, “do whatever fits your lifestyle best,” says Schoenfeld. “It comes down to calories in, calories out.”



Eating small meals throughout the day won’t help you shed more pounds.

GO NUTS?

Claim: “Just a handful of nuts may help keep us from packing on the pounds as we age,” reported [National Public Radio](#) in 2019.

Evidence: NPR’s piece was triggered by a study in which researchers (some

partly funded by the nut industry) followed nearly 145,000 people for 20 to 24 years.⁹ Compared to those who didn’t eat nuts, those who ate at least half an ounce of nuts a day (the equivalent of about 12 almonds) had a 23 percent lower risk of gaining roughly 10 pounds over any given four-year period.

Why look at nuts and weight?

“People think nuts are fattening because they’re high in fat,” explains Marion Nestle, the Paulette Goddard professor emerita of nutrition, food studies, and public health at New York University. That may lead people to avoid them.

Enter the nut industry.

“In general, nut-industry groups fund studies to demonstrate that their nuts have health benefits, which can increase the market share of the type of nut they grow,” says Nestle.

The key question: What happens in studies that randomly assign people to either eat or not eat nuts?

In most—they’re typically funded by the nut industry—the nut eaters don’t gain weight, likely because they compensate by eating less of something else.¹⁰

And nearly every study that randomly assigns dieters to eat or not eat nuts as part of a low-calorie diet finds little or no difference in weight lost between the groups.¹¹

For example, in a study funded by the American Pistachio Growers, 96 adults with overweight or obesity were instructed to eat a low-calorie diet that included 1½ oz. of pistachios (about 75 nuts) every day or a nut-free diet with the same number of calories. After four months, each group had lost about 10 pounds.¹²

But that didn’t stop the pistachio growers trade association from [declaring](#) on its website, “Study shows pistachios may be helpful in a weight loss plan.”

“This is an instance of interpretation bias, a common problem in industry-funded research,” Nestle explains.

“Though the study found no difference in weight loss between the groups that did or did not eat nuts, the results are interpreted as favorable to nuts.”

Bottom Line: Nuts are unlikely to have much impact on your weight. Just keep your serving sizes in check (see Oct. 2020, p. 13).



Eat nuts to boost weight loss? That's nuts!

WATCH THE CLOCK?

Claim: “Somehow during lockdown I managed to lose weight instead of gain it,” wrote freelance journalist Dana McMahan on [Today.com](#) in September.

“How on earth did that happen? I stumbled into intermittent fasting.”

Evidence: “Intermittent fasting is an umbrella term for three different types of diets,” explains Krista Varady, professor of nutrition at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

■ **Alternate-day fasting.** “People restrict their intake, often to about 500 calories a day, and they alternate those days with ‘feast’ days on which they can eat whatever they want.”

■ **5:2 diet.** “This is a spinoff of alternate-day fasting where you have two ‘fast’ days and five ‘feast’ days per week.” (See May 2017, p. 3.)

■ **Time-restricted eating.** People limit themselves to eating only between certain hours, with nothing but calorie-free drinks at other times.

“You can apply that window to any part of the day,” says Varady. “A popular version is the 16:8 diet, where people fast for 16 hours and eat during an 8-hour window.”

Most studies show that people lose no more weight when they try alternate-day fasting or the 5:2 diet than when they simply eat fewer calories every day.¹³

In other words, while fasting may be a simple strategy, it isn't magic.

“The reason people lose weight is because they're eating fewer calories,” explains Varady.

In her studies on alternate-day fasting, “you'd think that people would go crazy on their ‘feast’ days, but they don't. They eat about 10 percent more calories than they normally would. So the net result is that they have an average calorie deficit of about 600 to 700 calories per day.”

But for many, eating so little food is a struggle. “A lot of people drop out of the studies because it's really hard to adjust to,” Varady notes.

Instead, she is now looking at time-restricted eating, which “short-term findings suggest is a lot easier to stick to.”

In a recent study, researchers randomly assigned 116 adults with overweight or obesity to eat three meals at any time of day or to eat only between noon and 8 p.m. After 12 weeks, the time-restricted



Eating as much as you want for only about six hours a day may help you lose weight.

eaters had lost no more weight than the control group. (Each lost, on average, about two pounds.)

And in a subgroup of the time-restricted eaters whose body composition was measured, 65 percent of the weight they

lost was muscle.¹⁴

Those results give Varady pause.

“The researchers didn't collect diet records,” she notes. Without knowing what people ate, it's hard to explain why the time-restricted volunteers lost so much more muscle than fat.

In a new study, Varady tested whether a shorter eating window would boost weight loss.

She randomly assigned 58 people with obesity to one of three daily eating patterns: eat their usual diet; eat only between 1 p.m. and 7 p.m.; or eat only between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

(Why those time frames? “People really don't want to skip dinner,” says Varady.)

After eight weeks, only people in the two time-restricted groups had lost weight—about seven pounds each.¹⁵

“You don't have to torture yourself and eat within a small, four-hour window when a six-hour window produces the same weight loss,” says Varady.

But the research on time-restricted eating for weight loss is limited, she adds. “It's so popular, but there are only a handful of studies.”

Varady is hoping to run a year-long study comparing time-restricted eating to daily calorie cutting. Stay tuned.

Bottom Line: “If you want to lose weight, find something that works for you long term,” says Varady. “I'm not pushing intermittent fasting, but it's simple and it probably works better than cutting calories for some people.” 🍌

¹ *Lancet Diabetes Endocrinol.* 2: 954, 2014.

² *Obesity* 15: 93, 2007.

³ *J. Am. Diet. Assoc.* 108: 1236, 2008.

⁴ *Obesity* 18: 300, 2010.

⁵ *Am. J. Clin. Nutr.* 30: 712, 1977.

⁶ *Obesity* 21: 336, 2013.

⁷ *Obesity* 20: 985, 2012.

⁸ *Nutr. Rev.* 73: 69, 2015.

⁹ *BMJ Nutr. Prev. Health* 2: 90, 2019.

¹⁰ *Adv. Nutr.* 2020. doi:10.1093/advances/nmaa113.

¹¹ *Am. J. Clin. Nutr.* 96: 249, 2012.

¹² *Nutrients* 12: 2155, 2020.

¹³ *Nutrients* 11: 2442, 2019.

¹⁴ *JAMA Intern. Med.* 2020. doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2020.4153.

¹⁵ *Cell Metab.* 32: 366, 2020.

The Healthy Cook

The Lentil Variations



Enjoy this simple, delicious, and amazingly versatile soup tonight. Then pack your bags. The recipe makes 9 cups, so you can be in Greece tomorrow, Mexico the day after, then India. 🍴



GREEK

MEXICAN


INDIAN

Simple Lentil Soup

- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 large onion, diced
- 2 carrots, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 Tbs. tomato paste
- 2 bay leaves
- ½ lb. (1¼ cups) black, green, brown, or red lentils, or yellow split peas, rinsed and picked over
- 1 15 oz. can no-salt-added diced tomatoes
- 1½ tsp. kosher salt
- freshly ground black pepper, to taste

1. In a large heavy pot over medium heat, heat the oil until shimmering. Sauté the onion and carrots until lightly browned, 5–7 minutes. Stir in the garlic, tomato paste, and bay leaves. Cook, stirring, for 1 minute.
2. Stir in the lentils, tomatoes, and 5 cups water. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the lentils are tender, 25–30 minutes (15–20 minutes for red lentils or yellow split peas). Remove and discard the bay leaves.
3. Optional: For a smoother consistency, purée some or all of the soup with a hand blender.
4. Season with the salt and pepper. (Don't worry if you don't use all the soup. It freezes beautifully.)

PER SERVING (1 cup): calories 170 | total fat 6 g | sat fat 1 g | carbs 22 g | fiber 4 g | total sugar 3 g | added sugar 0 g | protein 7 g | sodium 340 mg

 MAKES 9 CUPS

Variations

For the toppings that create the **Greek**, **Mexican**, and **Indian** variations, go to nutritionaction.com/lentilsoup

Cooking questions?

Write to Chef Kate at healthycook@cspinet.org

FEVER PITCH

BY LINDSAY MOYER

Getting enough vegetable powder? Protein-packed junk food? High-calorie candy? Dressed-up sugar water?

It's hard enough to eat—and stay—healthy. Who needs tricky ad pitches to confuse us!

Here's a sampling.

Vitamin Duped



Vitamin D helps your immune system stay strong. Eggland's Best has 6 times more vitamin D than ordinary eggs.

In today's uncertain times, it's more important than ever to maintain a strong immune system. No other egg provides 6 times more vitamin D, 10 times more vitamin E, more than twice the iodine, and 25% less saturated fat. Plus, more of the delicious, fresh-from-the-farm taste everyone loves. Your love for your family isn't ordinary, so why serve ordinary eggs? Give them only the best—Eggland's Best.



Official supporter of American Heart Association
Healthy for Good

"Vitamin D helps your immune system stay strong. Eggland's Best has 6 times more vitamin D than ordinary eggs," says the magazine ad.

"In today's uncertain times, it's more important than ever to maintain a strong immune system."

"In today's uncertain

times"? Surely, Eggland's Best isn't suggesting that its eggs will shield you from the coronavirus. Nah.

After all, we're still waiting for results from dozens of trials testing vitamin D to prevent or treat Covid-19. When it comes to other respiratory tract infections, taking the vitamin matters most for people who are deficient (see June 2020, p. 3).

That "6 times more vitamin D" sounds impressive. But a regular large egg has a paltry 5 percent of the Daily Value. So Eggland's "6 times more" comes to just 30 percent. At that pace, you'd need three eggs a day to just about reach the DV.

Want to make sure you're getting enough D (600 IU a day up to age 70 and 800 IU if you're older)? Vitamin D is rare in foods and hard to get from sunlight if you use sunscreen (you should). Solution: Take an inexpensive vitamin D supplement or a multivitamin-and-mineral.

This is Not a Health Food

13-14G PROTEIN + 5-7G SUGAR*

THIS IS PROTEIN RE-IMAGINED



*Actual nutritional values vary by flavor

"This is not a candy bar," says the [TV ad](#) for **Power Crunch Protein Energy Bar**. "This is protein re-imagined."

Thanks to monk fruit and stevia extracts, a **Triple Chocolate** Power Crunch bar has only 5 grams of added sugar. (That's far less than a candy bar, but still 10 percent of the Daily Value.)

But the 220-calorie bar is one heckuva ultra-processed food: It's made largely of hydrolyzed whey protein and protein "isolates" plus white flour, palm oil, and palm kernel oil.

Those oils give it enough saturated fat (7 grams) to rival a full-size Kit Kat or Milky Way bar.

And its 13 grams of protein is no bargain. You'd get 12 grams in a 5.3 oz. Chobani Less Sugar Greek yogurt...for 100 fewer calories. A 3 oz. chicken breast (140 calories) has 26 grams of protein. Power sure sounds good. But you can't get it from a bar.

All Day Sugar



NBA star Karl-Anthony Towns sits down at a barber shop. The Phillies' Bryce Harper reclines during physical therapy. Tennis pro Serena Williams works on her clothing line. They all take swigs of **Bolt24**.

"Athletes are 24/7," says the [TV ad](#) for Gatorade's new drink that offers "all day hydration" for the "all day athlete." But even athletes don't need a sugary sports drink when they're not playing sports.

Bolt24 cuts Gatorade's sugar by a third. But a 16.9 oz. bottle still has 80 calories and 4½ teaspoons (19 grams) of added sugar.

Which sugar-free drink can also hydrate you all day, anytime you're not exercising intensely for hours?

Water.

Balance of Nonsense



“My name is Dr. Roger Bond,” says the [TV ad](#) for **Balance of Nature Fruits** and **Veggies** supplements. “One of the products that I recommend to my patients, I highly recommend, is getting Balance of Nature into their diet, and getting more fruits and vegetables.”

Why bother with a randomized placebo-controlled trial to see if your supplements help people stay healthy, when you can find a chiropractor to just say so...and a few more folks to gush that they’re “the most natural form of fuel,” that after two years, “I don’t even think I’ve had a cold,” or that, after taking them, “other good things were happening with my health”?

And why bother eating 10 servings a day of fruits and veggies, when you can just swallow six capsules of fruit or vegetable powder? Balance of Nature will happily sell you a month’s supply for \$45 to \$90. There goes your blueberry budget.

Last year, the FDA warned Balance to stop making illegal claims about flu, colds, allergies, diabetes, arthritis, multiple sclerosis, asthma, pneumonia, and melanoma. Whew.

Maybe the company should just stick with “other good things.”

Calorie Bomb

“Decadent **Slimfast Keto Fat Bomb Peanut Butter Cup** candy” has zero added sugar, so you can “have one, and then another” to “lose weight and keep it off,” says the [TV ad](#).

Somehow, Slimfast forgot to mention the calories. Oops!

Have one, and then another, and the tally is 180—just shy of the 210 calories in a sugary Reese’s peanut butter cup two-pack. How’s *that* for a magic weight-loss bullet?



Check with your doctor if nursing, pregnant, under 18 or receiving a doctor prescription.

C Right Through It



“Find your breaking point. Then break it,” says the [Emergen-C TV ad](#), as super-fit actors bike, run, or strike yoga poses.

“Every Emergen-C gives you a potent blend of nutrients so you can emerge your best.”

“Emerge your best”? What on earth does *that* mean? Pretty much whatever you want it to.

So what if you assume that Emergen-C’s B vitamins, electrolytes, and vitamin C will boost your immune system or energy level or fitness?

That’s okay with Emergen-C.



Fruit Flimflam

“New **One A Day Natural Fruit Bites Multivitamins** are made with farm grown apples as the first ingredient,” says the [TV ad](#) as a bottle of the **Women’s** multi is chopped into fresh apple slices and sprinkled with the “key nutrients you want.”

“Farm grown apples”? Make that “apple puree concentrate,” according to the *barely* visible fine print. The second ingredient: apple juice concentrate (aka added sugar).

But all that apple business is just a diversion. The truth: Fruit Bites’ nutrients fall short. For starters, the multis are missing folate, iron, and vitamins B-1, B-2, C, and K. And they’re lower in zinc, iodine, and vitamins A and E than many multis. Not exactly the “key nutrients you want.” 🍏

Beans, By Any Means

Stash 'em in your pantry, freezer, & fridge

BY LINDSAY MOYER & KAAMILAH MITCHELL

When we say beans, of course, we mean beans, lentils, chickpeas, and split peas. All legumes are superstars. They're a solid source of fiber and plant protein. They're also packed with other nutrients (hello potassium, magnesium, folate, zinc, and iron!). And they're easy on the planet.

One more upside: Think of already-cooked beans as nature's fast food. Here are some of our favorite supermarket finds for a quick and easy meal.



Lentils to Love

All legumes are good legumes. But lentils steal the show.

For starters, they're equally at home in a salad, side dish, soup, or stew. (See *The Healthy Cook*, p. 11.)

Next up: speed. Most lentils take just 15 to 25 minutes to cook. (Sprouted brands like **TruRoots** can cut that in half.) Dry beans, on the other hand, typically hover around 45 to 75 minutes after an overnight soak. Lentils? No soaking needed.

Even quicker: stockpile pre-cooked pouches like **Target's Good & Gather 90 Second Black Lentils** or **Trader Joe's** refrigerated (salted) **Steamed Lentils**. Just heat 'n eat.

Ready to sample the rainbow?

■ **Brown or green lentils.** The go-to for soups and stews.

■ **French green lentils.** These dark-green gems hold their shape after cooking, so they're ideal for salads and pilafs. Look for "French," "French style," or "Le Puy" on the bag.

■ **Black lentils.** Like their French kin, black (aka "beluga") lentils stay firm when cooked. And that dazzling black, caviar-like look!

■ **Red or other split lentils.** Got just 10 or 15 minutes? Red lentils (like split peas) have their skins removed, so they're soft and quick cooking. That makes them the perfect lentils for dal (see "Spice It Up").



Spice It Up

"This is our riff on 'dal,' the staple bean dish," says **Maya Kaimal Organic Everyday Dal**.

"We're inspired by the countless variations dreamed up by Indian cooks."

Flavorful dals treat legumes right. Try Maya's **Kidney Bean + Carrot + Tamarind**, **Black Lentil + Tomato + Cumin**, or **Green Garbanzo + Corn + Coriander**. (Skip the "coconut" varieties, so you can dodge their extra saturated fat.)

Another plus: the sodium in those three dals ranges from 310 to 350 milligrams per serving (half the pouch, or about $\frac{2}{3}$ cup). Most varieties of other brands, like **Tasty Bite**, hit 450 to 490 mg. To cut the sodium in any packaged dal (or curry), serve it over unsalted brown rice. Or stir in $\frac{1}{2}$ cups of cooked red lentils or no-salt-added beans, which also boosts the protein and fiber. There's ample sauce to go around.

To play it safe, take your food out of "microwaveable" pouches before heating to lower the risk that any chemicals in the package end up in your mouth. Use a microwave-safe glass or ceramic bowl (or the stovetop) instead.



Hold the Salt

Need some beans for that recipe?

■ **Look for less salt.** If you're starting with a can, carton, or pouch of unseasoned cooked beans, keep in mind that just a half cup of most brands has 250 to 500 milligrams of sodium. Draining and rinsing only cuts that by about a third. Instead, look for "low sodium" (140 mg or less) or "no salt added" on the label.

■ **Can the can.** At [nutritionaction.com/drybeans](https://www.nutritionaction.com/drybeans) you can find out how to perfectly cook your own from scratch. Rule of thumb: It takes $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ cups of cooked beans to replace a 15 oz. can or pouch. And a pound of dry beans (about $\frac{2}{3}$ cups) makes 6 to 8 cups.

Freezer Finds

Don't limit yourself to the supermarket's shelf-stable aisles. Odds are, the freezer case has some winners...especially for the lucky folks with a Trader Joe's nearby.



■ **Trader Joe's Melodious Blend.** Its half dozen ingredients are music to our ears: green lentils, red lentils, green garbanzos, tomatoes, and extra-virgin olive oil, plus salt. (Each serving—it cooks down to about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup—has 370 mg of sodium.) Ta-da! Instant side.

■ **Trader Joe's Soycutash.** This updated succotash starter



mixes corn and red bell peppers with edamame (soybeans) instead of limas.

■ **Cascadian Farm Organic Hearty Blend.** The **Brown Rice, Corn, Black Beans and Red Bell Pepper** is both its name and nearly all of its ingredients.

(There's also a touch of salt—enough to supply just 85 mg of sodium in a $\frac{2}{3}$ cup serving.) Let the bag sit in your freezer until you're ready to sauté a quick side or are looking for an instant starter for a Mexican-inspired bowl or salad.

Tacos & Beyond

A "sofrito" is a base used to season beans, rice, stews, and other dishes in Latin America and the Mediterranean. It's made by sautéing and then slowly cooking finely chopped vegetables (think peppers, onions, tomatoes, garlic) in olive oil to concentrate their flavor.

And that's what makes every pouch in **Fillo's Beans and Sofrito** line a real standout.

It's hard to believe that these beans didn't spend the whole day simmering on your stovetop. The varieties range from **Cuban Black Beans** to **Mexican Mayocoba** (a mild-flavored pale yellow bean). And the sodium—most have around 400 milligrams per half pouch, or about $\frac{2}{3}$ cup—isn't too bad for something that can be the star of your meal.

Toss 'em in tacos, salads, or bowls with veggies, avocado, etc. No Fillo's around? Try **A Dozen Cousins Cuban Black Beans**.

Prefer refried beans? Turn the page for an oh-so-simple recipe (our Dish of the Month). And if you're looking for hummus, we've got a fantastic new one (**Ithaca**) there, too.



Beany Rotini

Red lentil rotini, anyone? Green lentil penne?

They and their cousins from brands like **Tolerant Organic** and **Barilla** have just one ingredient: legume flour. That means 6 to 8 grams of fiber per 2 oz. serving (about 1 cup, cooked). White pasta

has just 3 grams; whole wheat has 7.

The legume-only pastas also supply 11 to 14 grams of protein—more than white or whole wheat's 7 or 8 grams. And if you're gluten-free, well, so are these pastas.

The downside: legume pastas can overcook—and turn gummy—in a flash. So check the cooking time before you turn on the burner.

Our favorites: chickpea or red lentil pasta in short shapes (like penne or rotini). 🍝

Upgrade Your Grains

If your go-to side dish is rice or some other grain, you can do better:

■ **Let in the legumes.** Beans, lentils, and chickpeas aren't just plant-based protein. They also supply fiber-rich carbs. So why not sub them for whole grains once in a while? Try serving chicken or fish on a bed of black lentils.

■ **Mix it up.** Beans & rice are nice, but how about branching out? What about lentils on a bed of bulgur, wheat berries, or another whole grain? Pouches like **Whole Foods' 365 Spelt, Green Lentils & Long Grain Brown Rice** make it easy for you. (They also salt everything for you, to the tune of roughly 230 mg of sodium in every half cup. So if you're not in a pinch, why not DIY?)



The Healthy Cook's Kitchen



Try these recipes, and you'll never look at legumes the same way again.

To order "Beans & Lentils"—or the other volumes in *The Healthy Cook's Kitchen* series—go to store.nutritionaction.com.



FOOD FIND

Yum-m-mus



“Since we debuted our original lemon garlic hummus at the Ithaca Farmers Market back in 2013, our mission has been to introduce America

to its new favorite brand of hummus,” says the **Ithaca Hummus** website. “Nice to finally meet you.”

The pleasure is all ours. Ithaca’s “cold crafted” hummus handily won over our taste buds. Why? The company makes its chickpea dip using high levels of pressure instead of heat (or preservatives).

“Unlike most brands who blend their hummus while the chickpeas are still hot, we cool the chickpeas and blend our hummus cold to keep the ingredients fresh,” says Ithaca.

That’s why you can taste the sweet beets in the **Lemon Beet**, the fresh garlic in the **Lemon Garlic**, and the tart lemon in—our favorite—the **Lemon Dill**.

Don’t love lemon? Try the zingy **Smoked Chipotle**, the **Roasted Red Pepper**, or the **Kalamata Olive**. Or go with the **Classic**.

All supply healthy fat from sunflower oil and tahini, with 50 to 70 calories in two tablespoons. That’s typical for hummus. So is the sodium (95 to 120 milligrams).

With no preservatives, Ithaca stays fresh for about a week after you open it—that is, if you don’t gobble it up sooner.

Got some carrot sticks, cukes, crunchy snap peas, bell peppers, or whatever?

Take a dip from us.

ithacahummus.com

Photos: Lindsay Moyer/CSPI (left), Domino’s Pizza (right), Kate Sherwood/CSPI (bottom).

FOOD FAIL



Domi-NO’s



“There are a ton of social media posts out there about soggy burgers and tacos,” **Domino’s** chief marketing officer told Nation’s Restaurant News in August.

That’s right. With Americans relying more on takeout, “soggy” complaints have apparently gone viral. Domino’s solution: swap buns and tortillas for pizza crusts! Enter its new **Cheeseburger** and **Chicken Taco Pizzas**.

Never thought of adding “ketchup-mustard sauce,” American cheese, and beef to a pizza? What about taco seasoning, American cheese, and grilled chicken? Domino’s took those giant leaps for mankind.

In fact, each 280-calorie slice of a medium Cheeseburger Pizza—with its third of a day’s saturated fat and sodium—is like eating a McDonald’s cheeseburger.

The catch: Domino’s says that an 8-slice medium pizza “feeds 2–4.” That’s 2 to 4 slices per person. So each serving has 560 to 1,120 calories, mostly from salty meat, cheese, and white flour.

But you won’t see those numbers. Why? Most chains have to list calories *per serving*. Domino’s led—and won—the fight to list pizza calories *per slice*.

What’s next? Buttered Popcorn Pizza? Loaded Fries Pizza? Reese’s Pieces Pizza?

Domino’s...putting its patrons first.

dominos.com—(734) 930-3030



DISH of the month

Refried Beans

Sauté 1 minced garlic clove in 2 Tbs. oil for 1 minute. Add a pinch of dried oregano, ¼ tsp. salt, and a 15 oz. can no-salt-added beans with their liquid. Bring to a simmer. Mash or puree. Eat on tacos or tostadas.

WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

Because CSPI takes no donations from corporations or the government and accepts no advertising in *Nutrition Action*, our work remains free of political or corporate influence. That means we need the generous support of people like you. To make a tax-deductible donation, please go to nutritionaction.com/donate1220 or call (866) 293-CSPI (2774).