

Nutrition Action

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HEALTH LETTER®
CENTER FOR SCIENCE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

UNEXPECTED

5 recent findings that may surprise you



Where to get
COVID-19
info

*Have you
been fooled?*
SUPPLEMENT TRICKS

What **organic**
labels mean

M E M O

MEETING THE CHALLENGE



If anyone nursed the idea that the coronavirus would be behind us by summer, they were sorely mistaken.

This spring, as Covid-19 continued its deadly spread, the pandemic shined an

unflattering light on our nation's food and public health systems.

Meanwhile, the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), *Nutrition Action's* publisher, sprang into action (cspinet.org/covid-19).

Here are some of the steps we've taken:

■ **Fighting for workers.**

Workers across the food supply chain, especially in the meatpacking industry, continued to bear the brunt of the pandemic. In April, President Trump classified meat processing plants as "critical infrastructure" and promised to "take all appropriate action" to keep them operating.

In effect, he was asking workers, many of whom are people of color or recent immigrants, to return to risky slaughterhouses even as infections continued to mount.

The men and women who produce our food deserve better. CSPI [opposed](#) the move and called for personal protective equipment, strictly enforced distancing—critical where workers toil shoulder to shoulder—and paid sick leave.

■ **Spreading science.** As misinformation turned as viral as the pandemic, I started a blog. "Beyond the Curve" explores the scientific and human dimensions of Covid-19, from vaccines to antibody testing to drugs. I debunked claims about hydroxychloroquine, bleach, and colloidal silver. (For more, subscribe at cspinet.org/beyondthecurve.)



Food workers need distancing, protective gear, and paid sick leave.

■ **Expanding food assistance.** Food banks have been inundated as millions have lost their jobs. A crucial step to address this hunger emergency: expand the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

CSPI [pushed](#) for raising the maximum monthly benefit (which largely helps families with the lowest incomes), boosting the minimum benefit, and protecting participants from attempts to restrict who is eligible for SNAP. That would not only help millions of Americans put food on the table but also provide a much-needed economic boost.

■ **Supporting school meals.** Though many schools switched to virtual teaching, they continued to distribute meals to schoolchildren and families in need. CSPI called on Congress to increase funding for school food programs and provide free meals to all children at all schools next year.

The pandemic continues to challenge us in ways we never thought possible. But we're all in this together. And CSPI will be here to harness strong science and advocacy to meet the challenge.

Peter

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

Share your weight loss experience

Have you lost weight, even if you gained it back? Or have you tried but been unable to lose weight? If yes, researchers at **The International Weight Control Registry** would love to hear about it to inform weight control strategies for the global community. To sign up, please go to bit.ly/iwcr-enroll.

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

5 recent findings that may surprise you

BY BONNIE LIEBMAN

With science news laser-focused on the coronavirus pandemic, research on other topics has taken a back seat. Here are some recent study results that may come as a surprise.

1 You can be a “healthy” weight but metabolically unhealthy.

Think your risk of type 2 diabetes is near zero because your weight is in the normal range? Not quite.

“The most important thing you can do to lower your risk of type 2 diabetes is to avoid weight gain and lose excess weight,” says JoAnn Manson, chief of preventive medicine at Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston.

That’s because roughly nine out of ten people with diabetes are overweight or have obesity.

But weight isn’t the whole ballgame.

Manson and her colleagues tracked roughly 17,000 postmenopausal women in the Women’s Health Initiative for 16 years.¹ Along with weight, they looked at women who were “metabolically unhealthy”—that is, they had at least two of these four risk factors:

- **Fasting blood sugar:** at least 100 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL), or on drugs to lower blood sugar;
- **Blood pressure:** at least 130 systolic or 85 diastolic, or on drugs to lower blood pressure;
- **Triglycerides:** at least 150 mg/dL; and
- **HDL (“good”) cholesterol:** below 50 mg/dL.

“By far, the lowest-risk group had both a normal weight and were metabolically healthy,” says Manson, who is also a professor of epidemiology at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

Only 162 of the roughly 3,200 women in that group were diag-

nosed with diabetes during the study.

However, the risk roughly doubled for women with a healthy weight who were metabolically unhealthy. Ditto for metabolically healthy women who had excess weight.

Not surprisingly, “metabolically unhealthy women with excess weight had more than four times the risk of type 2 diabetes,” notes Manson.

What do risk factors like blood pressure or triglycerides have to do with diabetes?

“If you have a cluster of cardiometabolic abnormalities like high triglycerides, a low HDL, and high blood pressure, it’s almost always a marker of insulin resistance,” explains Manson.

That is, it’s a sign that your insulin is no longer efficiently lowering blood sugar by admitting it into cells.

Researchers have some clues about what causes insulin resistance—often associated with the metabolic syndrome—but questions remain.

“The inflammation associated with

abdominal fat appears to play a role,” says Manson. And women tend to gain more of that deep belly (visceral) fat after menopause.

“It makes a strong case for measuring waist circumference in clinic visits,” says Manson.

“If people have an expanding waist or elevated triglycerides or their blood pressure is creeping up,” she adds, “they may have added incentive to be more active, to eat a healthier diet, and to lose weight. That would also help reduce their risk of heart disease and stroke.”

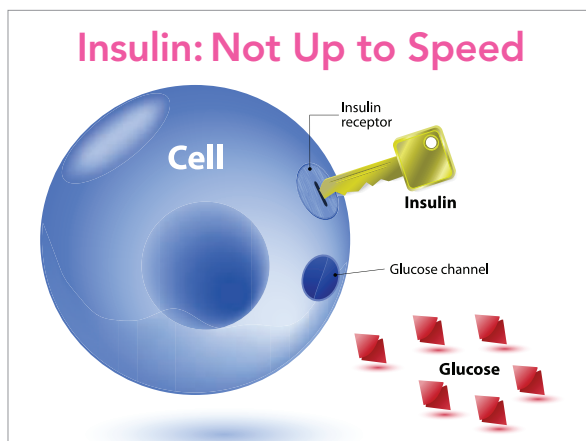
The good news: “About 90 percent of type 2 diabetes cases could be prevented if people could maintain a healthy weight, stay physically active, not smoke, eat a diet that’s high in fruits and vegetables, and consume good fats rather than bad fats, whole as opposed to refined grains, and fewer sugar-sweetened beverages and refined sugars,” says Manson.²

2 Muscle strength drops rapidly in your 80s.

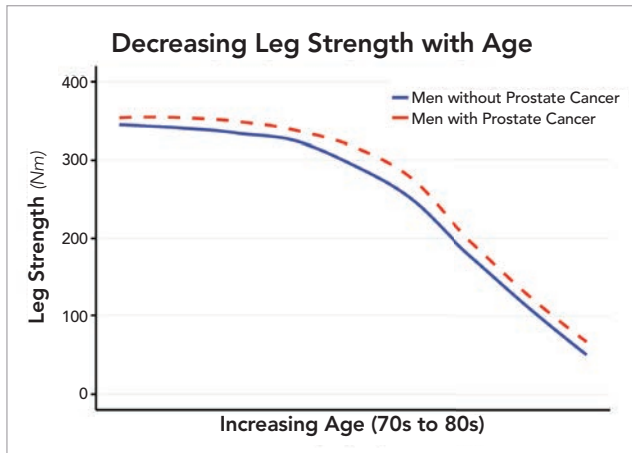
It’s no surprise that most people lose muscle strength as they get older. But when researchers tracked 585 80-year-old men, they saw a whopping 70 percent loss of quadriceps (thigh muscle) strength over a seven-year period once men reached their 80s.³

“The fact that normal aging men experience such a significant decline in strength over time is quite important,” says Alexander Lucas of Virginia Commonwealth University, who led the study. In contrast, the men had lost only 7 percent of their quad strength over the initial seven years when they were in their 70s.

The study looked at 117 men with prostate cancer and 468 similar men without. “We expected to see a greater decline in strength in



If you’re metabolically unhealthy, you may be insulin resistant—that is, your insulin is doing a poor job of allowing blood sugar to enter cells.



Leg muscle strength fell rapidly when men hit their 80s, whether they had prostate cancer or not.

the men with prostate cancer, because of a variety of treatments they receive,” says Lucas. But they saw the same decline, cancer or no cancer (see graph).

And these guys were in better shape than many older people.

“The men were enrolled in the Health, Aging and Body Composition study, which selected people who were free of disabilities at the start of the study, so we could see how things changed as they aged,” explains Lucas.

What could explain such a dramatic loss of strength?

“Older men may lead more sedentary lifestyles,” says Lucas. “So they may lose fitness, which exacerbates the loss of muscle mass.”

But muscle strength drops about three times more rapidly than muscle mass.⁴ It’s not clear why.

“With aging, people start to put on body fat and lose lean tissue, and some of that fat is deposited between the muscle fibers,” explains Lucas. “The fat affects how well the muscle is able to contract.”

The nerves that make muscles contract may also play a role.

“Each muscle group is innervated by motor neurons,” says Lucas. “If you’re not active, you may lose the ability to effectively activate motor neurons.”

Would strength training slow the loss of strength? “Absolutely,” says Lucas.

In a study of 42 men and women aged 70 to 89, those who were randomly assigned to a control group lost 20 percent of their muscle strength (for a given muscle mass) after a year, while those

who were assigned to strength, aerobic, flexibility, and balance training lost no muscle strength.⁵ The control group also gained muscle fat.

“The more muscle you have by age 80,” says Lucas, “the better off you are, because if you already have deficits in your 70s, they can curb your independence and quality of life from that point on.”

Strength ought to be part of an annual checkup, he adds.

“If you’re told, ‘Since the last time we saw you, you’ve lost 20 percent of your strength, so you need to do something about it,’ that could make a difference.”

3 Beef doesn’t beef up your muscles.

“Get your strength from beef,” says beefitswhatsfordinner.com, a website run by the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association.

Does beef—or extra protein from any



Extra beef won’t build muscle.

food—boost your strength?

In May, researchers reported the results of a study (funded by the Australian meat industry) that enrolled 145 older adults in a supervised strength-training program three days a week.⁶

After six months, those who were randomly assigned to eat two servings of lean red meat on each day they did strength training gained no more muscle or strength than those who ate two

servings of rice, pasta, or potato instead.

“More and more evidence is showing that there isn’t a lot of benefit from extra protein, whether you’re engaged in resistance training or not,” says Bettina Mittendorfer, professor of medicine at the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis.⁷

A possible exception: young adults.

“The early studies were done in young, college-aged people,” notes Mittendorfer. “If you train as much as possible and get extra protein while you’re still in that growth phase, you can see a benefit. But in middle-aged or older people, it’s very hard to find studies that show a benefit.”

And if they do, it’s usually minor.⁸

For example, the same Australian researchers found a statistically significant effect on lean body mass in an earlier study.⁹ “But when you do the math, it comes out to about a 1 percent difference,” explains Mittendorfer. “That’s unlikely to have a clinically meaningful impact.”

And that’s the bottom line. “Even if studies find a small increase in muscle or lean body mass, most don’t find an increase in strength or physical function, which is the ultimate goal,” she says.

Why doesn’t more protein help?

“The majority of people, including healthy, free-living older adults, get enough protein,” says Mittendorfer.

On average, women get 35 percent more—and men about 65 percent more—than the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA), and both reach higher targets proposed by some experts (see Sept. 2018, p. 3).

Only 19 percent of women and 13 percent of men over age 70 get below the RDA—0.36 grams of protein for every pound you weigh.¹⁰ For someone who weighs about 150 pounds, that’s roughly 54 grams of protein a day, or 18 grams per meal.

“That comes down to a deck-of-cards-size piece of chicken breast at each meal,” says Mittendorfer. “It’s a small amount. We’ve become desensitized to what a normal amount of protein is.”

4 More vitamin D isn’t necessarily better.

“Bone health,” says CVS brand vitamin D, which comes in five doses

—400 IU, 1,000 IU, 2,000 IU, 5,000 IU, and 10,000 IU.

Whoa. The Recommended Dietary Allowance is only 600 IU a day up to age 70 and 800 IU over 70.

Do your bones need doses in the thousands?

The VITAL trial randomly assigned 25,871 people to take 2,000 IU of vitamin D or a placebo every day for five years. Roughly 770 of the participants had their bone mineral density tested when they entered the study and again after two years.¹¹

“Overall, taking vitamin D did not improve bone mineral density,” says Harvard’s JoAnn Manson, who led the main trial.

Vitamin D is essential for protecting bones, she adds. “It’s important not to be low, but more is not necessarily better.”

What’s the bottom line?

“We’re not recommending that everyone start taking high doses of vitamin D,” says Manson.

“If you start out at what’s already being recommended, you’re not likely to derive benefits for bone health by taking more.”

Megadoses may even weaken bones. In 2019, Canadian researchers reported that among 303 middle-aged and older adults (none were deficient in vitamin D), those who were randomly assigned to get 4,000 IU a day for three years lost *more* bone in their arms than those who got 400 IU a day.¹²

And those who got 10,000 IU a day lost more bone in their arms and shins than those who got 400 IU a day.

Tell that to CVS.



Megadoses of vitamin D may weaken your bones.

5 Just two weeks of inactivity takes a toll.

What happens when you’re stuck at home with fewer opportunities to exercise? Even before the coronavirus, researchers wanted to know.

“A lot of work has been done on complete bed rest or immobilization, but little attention has focused on how acute periods of limited activity affect older adults,” says Chris McGlory, assistant professor of exercise metabolism at Queen’s University in Canada.

So he and his colleagues had 22 older overweight people with prediabetes slash their usual steps per day—from 7,000 to about 1,000—for two weeks and then return to their normal activity for another two weeks.¹³

“We tried to mimic the number of

“If you start off without prediabetes, you’d shift toward the prediabetic state, and if you have prediabetes, you’d shift toward the diabetic state,” says McGlory.¹⁴

Most older people have already shifted. Among Americans aged 65 or older, 47 percent have prediabetes and another 27 percent have diabetes.¹⁵

When it comes to muscle, older people are also at a disadvantage.

“After the fourth or fifth decade of life, we start to lose 1 to 2 percent of our muscle mass per year,” says McGlory.

“And during a period of inactivity, you lose muscle whether you’re young or old. So inactivity combined with the biological loss of muscle is a double whammy for older people.”

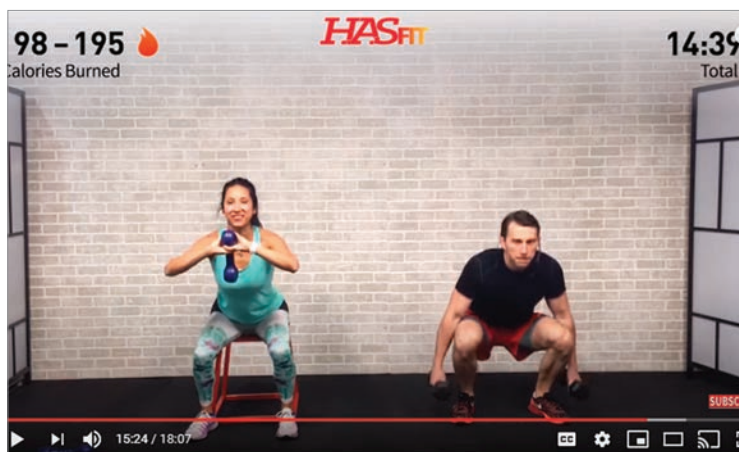
What’s more, adds McGlory, seniors don’t regenerate lost muscle as well, “so they don’t recover as quickly as younger people.” Odds are, the participants would have returned to normal if the

study had lasted longer, he notes. “But we don’t know how long it would have taken.”

What we do know: staying as active as possible, especially with exercises that build strength, should help.

“If you have stairs in your home, walk up and down to keep up your daily step count,” suggests McGlory. Climbing stairs is ideal because it’s both aerobic and strength exercise.

“You can also do squats and go for a daily walk or jog or cycle within safety guidelines for avoiding coronavirus.” 🍌



Looking for a strength-training video or app to use at home? HASfit is one of 22 (mostly free) workouts reviewed by [Wirecutter](#), a *New York Times* website, in April. [Mayoclinic.org](#) also has strength-training videos.

steps someone would take, say, when they stay at home because there’s a flu outbreak or because it’s too cold to go outside, so they’re physically inactive for a number of weeks,” says McGlory.

The results: During the inactive period, “we found an increase in insulin resistance and blood sugar and a decrease in the rate at which muscle proteins were created,” says McGlory. “And none of those things were fully recovered after the two-week period when they returned to their usual activity.”

What if you don’t have prediabetes?

- ¹ *Menopause* 27: 640, 2020.
- ² *N. Engl. J. Med.* 345: 790, 2001.
- ³ *PLoS One* 2020. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0228773.
- ⁴ *J. Gerontol. A Biol. Sci. Med. Sci.* 61A: 1059, 2006.
- ⁵ *J. Appl. Physiol.* 105: 1498, 2008.
- ⁶ *Am. J. Clin. Nutr.* 2020. doi:10.1093/ajcn/nqaa104.
- ⁷ *JAMA Intern. Med.* 178: 530, 2018.
- ⁸ *Br. J. Sports Med.* 52: 376, 2018.
- ⁹ *Am. J. Clin. Nutr.* 99: 899, 2014.
- ¹⁰ *Am. J. Clin. Nutr.* 108: 405, 2018.
- ¹¹ *J. Bone Miner. Res.* 35: 883, 2020.
- ¹² *JAMA* 322: 736, 2019.
- ¹³ *J. Gerontol. A Biol. Sci. Med. Sci.* 73: 1070, 2018.
- ¹⁴ *J. Clin. Endocrinol. Metab.* 98: 2604, 2013.
- ¹⁵ [cdc.gov/diabetes/pdfs/data/statistics/national-diabetes-statistics-report.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/pdfs/data/statistics/national-diabetes-statistics-report.pdf).

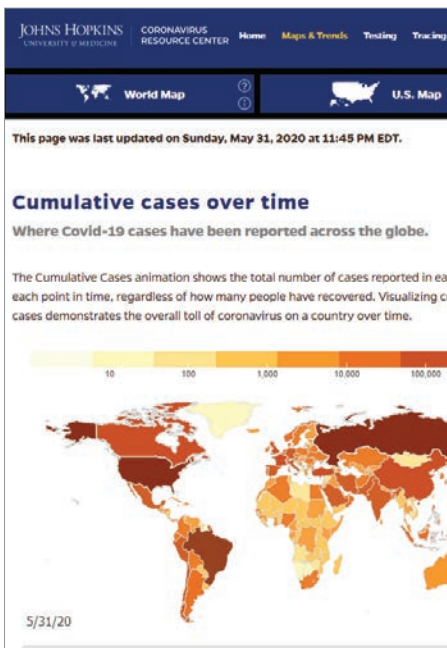
Questions about Coronavirus

We can't give you the latest news on the coronavirus because *Nutrition Action* goes to press weeks before it shows up in your mailbox. How to keep up to date? Here are three websites that will help. So will CSPI's evidence hub, which compiles links to sites that track Covid-19 research (cspinet.org/covid-19-evidence-hub).

Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center (coronavirus.jhu.edu)

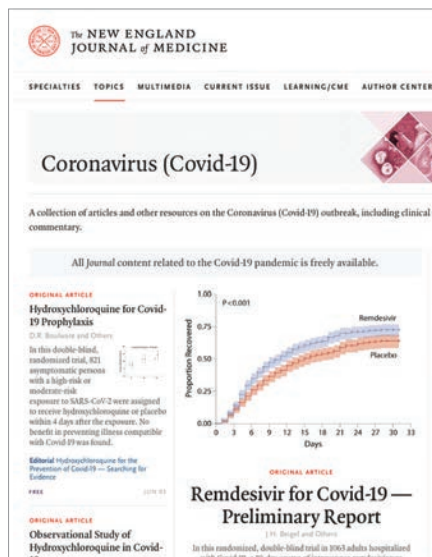
Like scientists and policymakers, you can keep track of the latest info on the virus. Among the features:

- **Covid-19 basics.** What to do if you feel sick, which symptoms are most common, myths about the virus.
- **Covid-19 case tracker.** Daily updates show U.S. and global cases and deaths.
- **Maps & trends.** What does the pandemic look like in your state? Is the number of new cases per day rising or falling? What percentage of tests are positive?
- **Testing.** What the different Covid-19 tests can—and can't—tell you.



Watch a video showing cases accumulating worldwide, and more.

New England Journal of Medicine (nejm.org/coronavirus)



Read the latest studies on Covid-19, watch a video of a sneeze, and more.

Want to stay on top of some of the best new Covid-19 research that doctors and scientists are reading about? Check out the *New England Journal of Medicine*, one of the world's most respected medical journals. Though it's aimed at physicians, some of its content may interest you.

For example:

- **The latest research.** How accurate are tests to see if you have or had the virus? What can help you decide if it's safe to go back to work?
- **Videos of coughs, sneezes, etc.** See the aerosols created by a cough or the droplets generated by a sneeze or from a person's

mouth as they say "stay healthy," with and without a mask.

- **Videos of meetings.** Watch a 2020 symposium on Covid-19 held with experts from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

Many other leading scientific journals—like the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, *The Lancet*, *Nature*, and *Science*—are also making Covid articles free during the pandemic.

Federal Trade Commission (ftc.gov/coronavirus/scams-consumer-advice)

The FTC can help you dodge scams and get assistance. Learn about:

- **Health scams.** Phony testing kits, treatments, and vaccines.
- **Financial scams.** Info on robocalls or emails about relief checks, health insurance, Medicare, or Social Security.
- **Financial help.** How to get help with unemployment benefits, mortgages, car payments, debt collectors, etc.

You can also see warning letters that the FDA has sent to companies marketing bogus products that claim to prevent or cure Covid-19. (Go to fda.gov/consumers/health-fraud-scams/fraudulent-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-products.)



Scammers are offering Medicare come-ons or Covid testing kits to get your Social Security number.

Quick Studies

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

Not-So-Fine Whole Grains



All whole grains are not created equal, at least for people with type 2 diabetes.

Scientists gave 31 people with diabetes devices to continually measure their blood sugar and instructions to eat a supply of whole grains—either less-processed (rolled oats, brown rice, and bread made with coarsely milled

whole-grain flour and kernels) or more-processed (instant oats, brown rice pasta, and bread made with finely milled whole-grain flour)—for two weeks each.

Blood sugar levels spiked less on the less-processed than on the finely milled whole grains. On average, participants lost a pound on the less-processed grains and gained a pound on the finely ground grains.

What to do: Whole grains beat refined grains, but less-processed whole grains may be best. Others include bulgur, quinoa, and wheat berries.

[Diabetes Care 2020. doi:10.2337/dc20-0263.](https://doi.org/10.2337/dc20-0263)

Aspirin & Memory

Does aspirin help keep your mind sharp?

Scientists randomly assigned roughly 19,000 older people to take a daily 100 mg enteric-coated aspirin or a placebo. (A low-dose aspirin has 81 mg; a regular has 325 mg.)

After five years, the risk of dementia, Alzheimer's, mild cognitive impairment, and cognitive decline was the same in both groups.

What to do: Don't take aspirin to protect your memory.

[Neurology 2020. doi:10.1212/WNL.0000000000009277.](https://doi.org/10.1212/WNL.0000000000009277)



Sleepier & Hungrier

Less sleep may make you more hungry.

Researchers randomly assigned 24 women who typically slept 7 to 9 hours a night to one night of sleep for their usual duration or to a night of sleep for a third fewer hours.

The day after sleeping less, the

women reported more hunger and stronger food cravings than after a normal night of sleep. They also served themselves 14 percent more calories for lunch and clicked a computer mouse button in exchange for chocolate candy more often.

What to do: Be aware that less sleep may make you hungrier. 🍫

[Nutrients 11: 663. 2019.](https://doi.org/10.1093/ajcn/111.4.663)

The Knees Have It



Does strenuous exercise boost your risk of osteoarthritis of the knee?

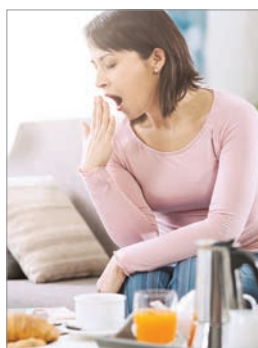
Researchers followed nearly 1,200 middle-aged and older people at high risk for knee arthritis—that is, they had symptoms (like pain or stiffness) or other risk factors (like excess weight, family history, or knee injury)—but with no sign of arthritis on x-rays.

After 10 years, those who did strenuous activities—like jogging, swimming, cycling, singles tennis, aerobic dance, or skiing—were no more likely to be diagnosed with arthritis on x-rays than those who did none.

And in a one-year study of 156 people with knee arthritis, those who were randomly assigned to get physical therapy had less pain, stiffness, and impaired function than those who got glucocorticoid injections.

What to do: Keep moving! And consider physical therapy if you have knee arthritis.

[JAMA Network Open 2020. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2020.4049. N. Engl. J. Med. 382: 1420. 2020.](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2020.4049)





Tricks of the Trade

Are supplement companies playing you for a fool?

BY CAITLIN DOW

Hoping to boost your immunity? Keep your brain sharp? Improve your mood? Look no further than the supplement aisle at your local drugstore. At least that’s what supplement makers want you to believe. Here’s how the industry uses sleight of hand to sell the vitamins, minerals, and herbals that most of us don’t need.

Linguistic Loopholes



“Claims, especially structure/function claims, may help sell product,” says [NaturalProductsInsider.com](https://www.naturalproductsinsider.com). “However, they may also invite regulatory action if improperly phrased or inadequately supported.”

But supplement makers needn’t fear. They’ve got plenty of tools at their disposal.

Companies can make claims about how a supplement (or food) affects the normal *structure* or *function* of the body with little oversight by the Food and Drug Administration, as long as the claims don’t name a disease or promise to treat a condition.

So odds are you won’t see a supplement that can “lower cholesterol” but you’ll see plenty that “help maintain healthy cho-

lesterol levels.”

And you’ll see shelves full of pills that claim to “enhance vitality,” “support healthy brain function,” “help calm your mind,” and “promote digestive health.”

A case in point: “[Renew Life](https://www.renewlife.com) probiotics can help improve digestion and boost energy to keep your guts strong so you can be the best possible human you can be.”

See how Renew stayed vague... but inspiring? Little worry about “regulatory action” from the FDA with that strategy.

Or marketers can skip the specifics altogether. “Every Emergen-C gives you a potent blend of nutrients so you can emerge your best,” says the [TV ad](#).

Nicely done. Keep it simple. Keep it general.

Trickytorials

Glance at the ad from Zebra CBD (which sells CBD oils, tablets, and more), and you’d be forgiven for thinking it’s a run-of-the-mill magazine article. Only the word “Advertisement,” printed in tiny type at the top of the page, says otherwise.

In this “[advertorial](#),” which has appeared in magazines like *Clean Eating* and *Yoga Journal*, author Jennifer Love explains that her 40s brought “some new gifts from dear ol’ Mother Nature—frequent knee pain, stress, low energy and sleeplessness.” That is, until her “marathon-running niece” recommended CBD. (CBD is a cannabis extract. See March 2019, p. 9.)

In her search for “cold hard facts,” Love “came across Emily Gray M.D.,” who wrote that Zebra CBD “produces top-quality products with easy to use instructions.”

Gray is a CBD researcher at the University of California, San Diego. She also just happens to be the [medical advisor](#) for Zebra CBD...something the advertorial never mentions. (We asked Zebra CBD and Gray if she is paid. Neither responded.) Sneaky.



Photos: stock.adobe.com; Arpad Nagy-Bagoly (magician); Sergey Ilin (pills).

“Clinically Proven”

“Clinically proven,” says the [ad](#) for Longevity by Nature’s Telos95 Telomere Health Support.

Take the supplement (made of grapevine and olive leaf extracts) to “reverse cellular aging” by lengthening telomeres—the caps on our chromosomes—“by an astounding 80 percent.”

Here are some of the tricks that the company used to “prove” that Telos95 works.

■ **Outsource the research.** To conduct its study, [Longevity by Nature](#) hired [Princeton Consumer Research](#).

“Whatever your product does, PCR is here to provide your brand with the appropriate efficacy testing to make your claims a fact by proving their legitimacy,” says Princeton’s website.

Why design a good study to see if your product actually works, when you can concoct one that will simply “make your claims a fact”?

■ **Ditch the placebo group.** Any good supplement trial needs a placebo group. If the results don’t differ between pla-



cebo takers and supplement takers, you can’t claim that the supplement works.

Uh-oh. So PCR randomly assigned 50 adults to one of two groups that took 65 milligrams of Telos95 either once or twice a day.¹ No placebo, no problem! But without a placebo group, the results are worthless.

■ **Measure something that may not matter.** The authors sent volunteers’ blood samples to [TeloYears](#), a company that will measure almost anyone’s telomeres for \$89 (and that’s happy to sell you a month’s supply of its own supplements for \$25 to \$59).

The company calculates “TeloYear” age by comparing the length of your

telomeres to those of people of the same age and sex (see May 2017, p. 7).

But even if the tests are accurate, they might not tell you much.

In one study, telomere length was only slightly better than flipping a coin at predicting who would die over five years.²

■ **Skip the statistics.**

After six months, the average “TeloYear” age dropped by 7½ years in

the once-daily Telos95 takers and by 8½ years in the twice-daily takers, said the authors. How did they test to see if the difference was statistically significant? The study didn’t bother to say.

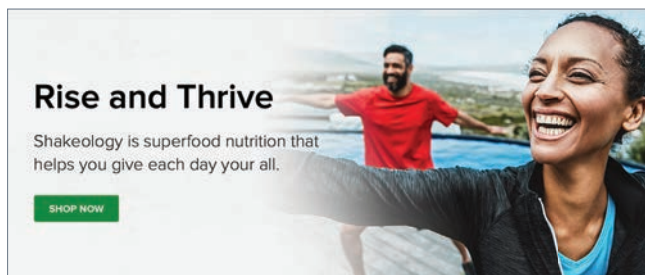
■ **Publish results in a low-tier journal.** The Telos95 study was published in *HealthMED*, the “Journal of Society for development in new net environment in B&H.” (That’s Bosnia & Herzegovina.)

The cost: probably around \$800, judging by the journal’s [fees](#). Small price to pay to be able to say “Clinically Proven.”

¹ [HealthMED 13: 38, 2019.](#)

² [PLoS One 11: 0152486, 2016.](#)

If at First You Don’t Succeed...



Study didn’t pan out as you had hoped? Get creative!

Shakeology knows what we’re talking about. “Shakeology can help curb cravings and help you lose weight,” says [Beachbody](#), Shakeology’s parent company.

In a Beachbody-funded study co-authored by company employees, 41 adults drank a Shakeology smoothie, which was high in protein and added fiber, or a calorie-matched placebo

smoothie with less fiber and almost no protein. A half hour later, they were told to eat as much pizza as they wanted.¹

Unfortunately (for the Shakeology marketing team), the volunteers ate no less pizza after they drank Shakeology than after they drank the placebo.

So the researchers sliced and diced the data. When they grouped the volunteers into “less than 25 years” or “25 years and older” categories (the average age of the entire group was 30), they found that the older group ate roughly 180 fewer calories’ worth of pizza after drinking Shakeology than after downing the placebo.

So do Shakeology smoothies curb cravings and lead to weight loss if you’re 25 or older? The study wasn’t designed to look at that, so you’d need a new study to find out. But why bother? Shakeology got something good enough to advertise.

¹ [Curr. Dev. Nutr. 2: nzy022, 2018.](#)

“Don’t take our word for it!”



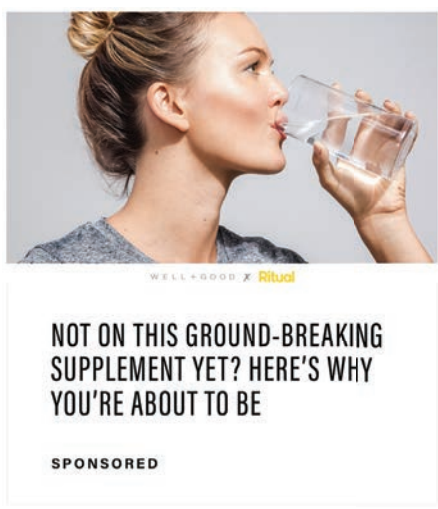
“Results speak for themselves,” declares the website for Equelle, a supplement that claims to reduce hot flashes.

“Hear it from the women who told us.” Testimonials build

trust in potential customers...who may not realize that the plugs are often paid for or come with perks.

“This user participated in a free product sampling program,” says the small, easy-to-miss type on Equelle’s video reviews.

Better yet, pay a celebrity like Kate Walsh to rave about your supplement on her personal [social media](#) account. Worth every penny!



A Word from Our Sponsors

“Not on this ground-breaking supplement yet? Here’s why you’re about to be,” ran the 2018 headline on [wellandgood.com](#) about Ritual, a pricey multi-vitamin made for women.

Savvy readers may have noticed the word “sponsored” below the headline. Just like companies pay for advertorials, they “sponsor” articles in magazines and newspapers and on websites.

But if you missed it, and if you didn’t scroll to the end of the article (which was written “by Well+Good editors”) and see the “in partnership with Ritual” disclosure, you might have thought that it was an objective look at the supplement. Far from it.

Beware the Fine Print



“Leanfire supplements from Force Factor contain ingredients clinically shown to help increase energy, burn fat, and double your weight loss,” says the [commercial](#).

Double your weight loss? Sounds great!

Good luck catching the fine print (enlarged above) in the next frame, which appears for only a couple of seconds: “Results not typical. Healthy diet and exercise recommended for optimal results.” Sounds about right.

Quality Not Assured

“3rd Party Lab Tested,” says Best Naturals’ Glucosamine + Chondroitin + MSM. And see that “GMP” seal on the label? It stands for “Good Manufacturing Practice.”

Ignore both. All supplement companies are *supposed* to follow the FDA’s good manufacturing practices. In reality, most facilities evade inspection in any given year, and many inspected facilities are cited for violations.

And the FDA doesn’t endorse or verify seals, logos, or quality claims.



Even so, there *are* quality seals you can trust. If a label carries a [USP](#) (U.S. Pharmacopeia) or [NSF](#) (NSF International) seal, you can rest assured that the supplement contains what the label says, that it’s free of tested contaminants, and that it disintegrates fast enough to get into your bloodstream. (Whether it works is another matter.)

Just keep in mind that many companies don’t opt to pay NSF’s or USP’s fees. So good luck with that. 🍀

The Healthy Cook

Spice It Up



To really knock this dish out of the park, serve it with a salsa verde made with cilantro and mint (see back cover). 🍋

Indian Chicken Stir-Fry

 SERVES 4

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">1 Tbs. grated ginger1 Tbs. grated garlic1 serrano pepper, minced½ tsp. garam masala1 Tbs. + 1 Tbs. peanut oil1 bell pepper (any color), chopped1 small onion, chopped1 lb. skinless, boneless chicken breasts or thighs, chopped1 large tomato, chopped½ tsp. kosher salta few cilantro sprigs | <ul style="list-style-type: none">1. In a small bowl, mix together the ginger, garlic, serrano, garam masala, and 1 Tbs. oil.2. In a large nonstick pan, heat the remaining 1 Tbs. oil over high heat until very hot but not smoking. Stir-fry the bell pepper and onion until charred in spots, 1–2 minutes. Remove from the pan.3. Add the ginger mixture to the pan. Stir-fry until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add the chicken, tomato, and salt. Stir-fry until the chicken is cooked, 2–3 minutes. Return the vegetables to the pan and toss everything together.4. Garnish with the cilantro. |
|--|---|

PER SERVING (1 cup, not including rice): calories 210 | total fat 10 g | sat fat 2 g | carbs 5 g
fiber 1 g | total sugar 2 g | added sugar 0 g | protein 26 g | sodium 290 mg

Photo: Kate Sherwood/CSPH

**For more
summer recipes**

Go to nutritionaction.com/summer
for *Stuffed Italian Eggplant* and
Grilled Sesame Chicken & Vegetables

**For cooking
advice**

Write to Chef Kate at
healthycook@cspinet.org

Farm to Table

BY LINDSAY MOYER & KAAMILAH MITCHELL

What do “organic” and other claims tell you about how your foods were grown? Here’s a primer, based on the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s rules.

WHAT ORGANIC LABELS MEAN



ANY ORGANIC FOOD



No synthetic fertilizers or pesticides*



Not genetically modified



No sewage sludge fertilizer



Not irradiated

ORGANIC MEAT & POULTRY



No growth hormones or antibiotics



Fed organic feed with no animal byproducts



At least 30% of cows’ diets from organic pasture during the grazing season



Animals have some access to the outdoors

ORGANIC EGGS



No growth hormones or antibiotics for hens



Hens fed organic feed with no animal byproducts



Hens have some access to the outdoors

ORGANIC DAIRY**



No growth hormones or antibiotics for cows



Cows fed organic feed with no animal byproducts



At least 30% of cows’ diets from organic pasture during the grazing season



Cows have some access to the outdoors

* Most synthetic substances are prohibited. Exemptions are based on the need for a substance and its impact on health and the environment, says the USDA.

** Cows must be raised organic for at least a year before their dairy products can be labeled “organic.”

WHAT OTHER CLAIMS MEAN

The USDA doesn’t precisely define many other claims. But most labels have to explain them, and the USDA must approve meat and poultry labels. Here’s what to expect from typical claims.

NATURAL

“Natural” meat and poultry contains no artificial ingredients or added colors and is no more than “minimally processed.” But “natural” tells you nothing about how an animal was raised, what it was fed, or whether it got antibiotics or hormones.

NO ANTIBIOTICS EVER

The animal was raised without antibiotics. (Sick animals that need antibiotics are treated, but their meat cannot carry a “no antibiotics” or “organic” claim.)

GRASS-FED

Cows were only fed grass or other forage, not grain, after weaning. They have continuous access to pasture during the growing season and weren’t confined in feedlots.

NO ADDED HORMONES

Cows or pigs were not given hormones. The claim is meaningless for chickens or turkeys (or eggs), since farmers are prohibited from giving those animals hormones.

FREE RANGE OR FREE ROAMING

For poultry or eggs: Hens weren’t confined in cages. They have access to the outdoors. The outdoor area may be covered with netting.

For beef: Cows weren’t confined in feedlots. They have access to the outdoors.

CAGE-FREE

Eggs come from hens that weren’t confined in cages. They may or may not have access to the outdoors, though.



WANT HUMANELY RAISED? Two good bets: a “[Certified Humane](#)” or “[Animal Welfare Approved](#)” seal. (Independent organizations, not the USDA, set those standards.)



CREAM of the CROP

The scoop on better frozen desserts



BY LINDSAY MOYER & KAAMILAH MITCHELL

Supermarket sales of ice cream shot up this spring as shoppers reached for comfort during the coronavirus pandemic. (Of course, pausing dine-in service also put restaurant sales of frozen desserts on ice.)

Clearly, ice cream has held onto its comfort food image. Yet food companies have been busy giving it a makeover.

Whether it's less sugar, more protein, oat milk, avocado, or extra cream for your keto diet, brands are churning out ice creams that sound better for you. Which are? How's the taste? Read on.

What to Look For

Even better-for-you ice cream is still no health food. That's why we gave *Better*, not *Best*, Bites. Our criteria, per ⅓ cup:

- **Calories.** No more than 200. That's a steal compared to super-premiums like Häagen-Dazs (300 to 450).
- **Saturated fat.** No more than 4 grams. That's where most "light" ice creams max out. But even 4 grams—20 percent of a day's worth—still counts as "high" on labels.
- **Added sugars.** No more than 4 teaspoons (17 grams). That's also high, but it's as good as it gets for ice creams that contain no low-calorie sweeteners.
- **Low-calorie sweeteners.** No acesulfame potassium, aspartame, or sucralose. All are rated "avoid" (see chemicalcuisine.org). We didn't disqualify ice creams with allulose, maltitol, erythritol, or monk fruit or stevia extract (see "How Low Can You Go?" p. 14).

Heavenly Lights

"We flow our milk through special soft filters to concentrate the protein and calcium," says Fairlife's website. The company introduced ultra-filtered milk to Americans in 2014. Since then, it's popped up in yogurts, coffee creamers, and more. Next up: ice cream.

Ultra-filtered milk gives **Fairlife** and fellow newbie **Häagen-Dazs Heaven** up to twice the protein (7 to 10 grams) and calcium (10 to 15 percent of a day's worth) of regular ice cream.

We loved Fairlife's flavor-packed pints. Your tastebuds won't believe that they cut the added sugars with allulose and monk fruit extract.

That makes most Fairlife varieties *Better Bites*. (Exceptions: Chocolate Peanut Butter, Java Chip, and Mint Chip, whose coconut oil "chocolatey flakes" nudge up the saturated fat.) A plus for some: Fairlife is lactose-free.

Häagen-Dazs Heaven promises "decadent ice cream" that's "just lightened up." Most varieties fall just out of *Better Bite* range. But 200-ish calories sure beats the usual 350. And Heavens deliver all the rich intensity you'd expect from Häagen-Dazs.



Ch-ch-changes

Has your ice cream gained some calories?

Blame the (more realistic) new Nutrition Facts label that's now on most foods. Some changes:

■ **Serving size.** Ice cream has jumped from ½ cup to ⅓ cup to reflect how much Americans eat.

That's why new pints show "3 servings per container," not 4.

■ **New column.** Most pints must tack on a second column, with "Per container" Nutrition Facts. Sayonara, calculator. Surprise! Most Ben & Jerry's pints top 1,000 calories.

■ **Added sugars.** The "Added Sugars" line only counts sugars from cane sugar, corn syrup, and other sweeteners. "Incl." is short for "includes," because the "Total Sugars" line right above it includes the naturally occurring sugars in milk and fruit *plus* any added sugars.

Nutrition Facts		3 servings per container	
Serving size 2/3 cup (92g)			
	Per serving	Per container	
Calories	190	580	
	% DV*	% DV*	
Total Fat	6g	12g	24%
Saturated Fat	3.5g	11g	22%
Trans Fat	0g	0g	
Cholesterol	50mg	100mg	20%
Sodium	95mg	190mg	38%
Total Carb.	30g	60g	12%
Dietary Fiber	<1g	2g	4%
Total Sugars	20g	40g	8%
Incl. Added Sugars	17g	34g	68%
Protein	4g	8g	16%

Dairy Free for All

Most dairy-frees have little to no calcium or protein and enough coconut oil to bump up their saturated fat. What to know about the handful of Better Bites:

■ **Halo Top, Arctic Zero, Enlightened.** The texture of **Halo Top Dairy Free** (chalky) and **Arctic Zero Non-Dairy** (icy) didn't win them any taste awards. **Enlightened Dairy-Free** scored points for creamier texture, but it's laced with a hint of low-calorie-sweetener aftertaste.

■ **So Delicious Frozen Mousse.** How does **So Delicious's** answer to Halo Top get its calories so low (100-ish) and its texture über-fluffy? Erythritol cuts the sugar. Air adds the fluff. The mousse is about 40 percent less dense than



other So Delicious frozen desserts. That makes it easy to scoop straight from the freezer...but might also make it easy to eat more.

Some other new kids on the non-dairy block:

■ **Avocado.** "Who says ice cream doesn't grow on trees?" asks **Cado Avocado Frozen Dessert.**

Cado's buttery texture comes from avocado oil plus (in most varieties) avocado purée. But it doesn't taste like avocado. All eight flavors miss a Better Bite by just 30 calories.

■ **Oat.** Thanks to **Oatly, Planet Oat,** and others, the oat milk craze has hit ice cream. None get Better Bites (too much coconut oil, alas), though the "Wow No Cow!" exclamation on velvety Oatly is no joke.

How Low Can You Go?



How do Better Bites like **Breyers Delights, Enlightened, Halo Top,** and **Fairlife** slash added sugars? With help from some of these:

■ **Monk fruit extract, stevia extract.** Monk fruit extract hasn't been well tested in animals, but the fruit has been eaten in China for centuries. Stevia is a safe natural sweetener.

■ **Sugar alcohols, allulose.** Maltitol and other sugar alcohols are safe, though they can cause diarrhea—or, for erythritol, nausea—if you overdo them. Ditto for allulose, a sugar that's poorly absorbed, so labels don't need to count it as "sugar."

■ **Processed fibers.** Soluble corn fiber, chicory root or inulin (they're the same thing, and they can cause gas), and gums give lower-sugar treats a creamy texture.

Do Halo Top & friends rack up fewer calories than Ben & Jerry's? Sure. Are they unprocessed real foods? Nope.

"Here at Halo Top, we believe that rules are meant to be frozen," says the company's website. "That's why we think you can eat the whole pint. Or not."

If a whole pint of any ice cream has enough sugar alcohols or processed fibers to give *you* GI distress—or if it has enough calories to match a serving of Ben & Jerry's—better not.

Keto or No?



"Rebel Ice Cream uses only all-natural, high quality ingredients that are keto-friendly," says the company's website. "Its healthy fats and zero sugars will allow you to indulge in creamy, full-fat ice cream without the negative impacts of sugar."

What about the negative impacts of...cream?

Rebel has enough cream (its first ingredient) to supply more than half a day's saturated fat in $\frac{2}{3}$ cup. Ditto for **Enlightened Keto Collection.** That's in Ben & Jerry's territory. As for Rebel's "healthy fats" claim, the best evidence shows that dairy fat raises LDL ("bad") cholesterol compared to unsaturated fats. Over time, that boosts your risk of heart disease.

And with roughly 200 calories (Rebel) to 250 calories (Enlightened) per $\frac{2}{3}$ cup, keto ice cream is no magic weight loss bullet.

The first ingredient in **Halo Top Keto Series** is ultra-filtered skim milk, which cuts the sat fat in half (to 6 to 8 grams) and the calories to 150 or so.

Sugar Shock



Before the new Nutrition Facts labels hit tubs and pints, we couldn't even estimate how much of the total sugars in sorbets came from fruit instead of *added* sugars. (Estimating was easier with ice cream.)

Now we know. And it's mostly added sugars.

Just 4 grams (about a tenth) of the sugars in $\frac{2}{3}$ cup of **Häagen-Dazs Mango**, for example, come from fruit. The remaining 40 grams are added sugars.

That's $9\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons—about what you'd get in a 12 oz. can of Coke. Why? The sorbet has more water and sugar than mango.

At least the first ingredient in **Talenti Alphonso Mango** is fruit, which supplies a quarter of its total sugars. So each $\frac{2}{3}$ cup has about 6 teaspoons of added sugars. Not ideal, but we are talking dessert. The upside: each serving comes with just a 160-calorie price tag. 🍌

Freeze Frame

Better Bites (✓) have no more than 200 calories, 4 grams of saturated fat, and 4 teaspoons of added sugars in a 2/3-cup serving, and are free of aspartame, acesulfame potassium, and sucralose. Products are ranked from least to most saturated fat, then added sugars, then calories. *Some numbers may not match the labels in your freezer because we estimated added sugars (*) and adjusted serving sizes for products that still carry the old Nutrition Facts label.*

Ice Cream & Frozen Desserts (2/3 cup)	Calories	Sat Fat (g)	Added Sugars (tsp.)	Protein (g)
✓ Halo Top ¹	110	1.5	1	6
✓ Breyers Delights ¹	100	2	0.5	7
✓ Enlightened Light ¹	110	2	0.5*	8
✓ Dreyer's or Edy's Slow Churned Triple-Filled—except Rich Caramel Cores ¹	150	2	3.5	3
✓ Breyers Peach	140	2	4	2
✓ Breyers—Butterscotch Blondie, Cherry Vanilla, or Coffee ¹	150	2.5	3.5	2
Breyers No Sugar Added ¹	120	3	0 ⁵	2
Dreyer's or Edy's Slow Churned No Sugar Added ¹	140	3	0 ⁵	4
✓ Breyers Extra Creamy ¹	140	3	3	2
✓ Breyers Lactose Free ¹	150	3	3	3
✓ Breyers—Butter Pecan, Creamsicle, Oreo Cookies & Cream, Salted Caramel, or Vanilla Fudge Twirl ¹	160	3	3	2
✓ Dreyer's or Edy's Slow Churned—except Caramel Delight ¹	140	3	3.5	4
Dreyer's or Edy's Slow Churned Caramel Delight	160	3	4.5	4
✓ Ben & Jerry's Moo-phoria Chocolate Milk & Cookies	190	3.5	4	4
✓ Ben & Jerry's Moo-phoria Caramel Cookie Fix	200	3.5	4*	4
Breyers CarbSmart ¹	120	4	0 ⁵	2
✓ Fairlife—Chocolate, Cookies & Cream, Double Fudge Brownie, or Vanilla ¹	160	4	2.5	9
✓ Breyers—Cookies & Cream, New York Style Cheesecake, or Oreo Chips Ahoy 2 in 1 ¹	170	4	2.5	2
Dreyer's or Edy's Slow Churned Triple-Filled Rich Caramel Cores	200	4	4.5	3
Breyers Natural Strawberry	150	4.5	3.5	2
Fairlife Chocolate Peanut Butter	190	5	2.5	9
Fairlife Java Chip	170	5	3	9
Häagen-Dazs Heaven ¹	220	5	4	9
Fairlife Mint Chip	170	6	3	9
Dreyer's or Edy's ¹	190	6	3	3
Breyers Natural Vanilla	170	6	3.5	3
Halo Top Keto Series ¹	160	7	0	6
Rebel ¹	200	12	0	3
Ben & Jerry's ¹	380	12	6.5*	6
Enlightened Keto Collection ¹	250	13	0*	4
Häagen-Dazs ¹	350	14	5.5	5
Frozen Yogurt (2/3 cup)				
Ben & Jerry's FroYo ¹	230	2.5	5.5	6
Stonyfield Organic Whole Milk ¹	190	3	5	6

Gelato (2/3 cup)

	Calories	Sat Fat (g)	Added Sugars (tsp.)	Protein (g)
Breyers Gelato Indulgences ¹	210	6	4.5	4
Ciao Bella ¹	240	7	4	5
Talenti ¹	290	8	6.5	5
Talenti Layers ¹	300	9	6.5	5

Sorbet & Sherbet (2/3 cup, sorbet, unless noted)

Talenti Alphonso Mango	160	0	6	1
Talenti Roman Raspberry	150	0	7	1
Talenti Strawberry Hibiscus	150	0	7.5	0
Ciao Bella—except Chocolate Coconut or Coconut ¹	170	0	8	0
Häagen-Dazs ¹	180	0	8.5	0
Dreyer's or Edy's Berry Rainbow Sherbet	180	1	6	2
Talenti Cold Brew Coffee	280	9	7.5	5
Ciao Bella Coconut	300	11	10.5	1
Ciao Bella Chocolate Coconut	300	13	7	2

Dairy-Free (2/3 cup)

✓ Arctic Zero—except Brownie Blast, Cherry Chocolate Chunk, or Cookie Dough Chunk ¹	50	0	1.5*	1
✓ So Delicious Organic Soymilk Creamy Vanilla	160	0.5	3.5	2
✓ Enlightened ¹	120	1	2*	4
✓ Arctic Zero—Brownie Blast, Cherry Chocolate Chunk, or Cookie Dough Chunk ¹	100	1	3*	1
Cado Avocado Frozen Dessert ¹	230	2	4*	1
✓ So Delicious Frozen Mousse ¹	110	3	2	1
✓ Halo Top ¹	110	3.5	1.5	4
Häagen-Dazs—except Coconut Caramel ¹	350	4	7.5	4
Breyers ¹	190	6	4	2
So Delicious Cashewmilk—Salted Caramel Cluster, Snickerdoodle, or Very Vanilla ¹	230	6	5	3
Oatly ¹	230	8	4.5	1
Planet Oat ¹	240	9	4	2
So Delicious Oatmilk ¹	230	9	5	2
So Delicious Cashewmilk—Bananas Foster, Chocolate Cookies 'N' Cream, Creamy Chocolate, or Dark Chocolate Truffle ¹	240	10	5.5	3
Ben & Jerry's ¹	350	10	7*	3
O'My! 2g Sugars Gelato ¹	130	11	0	2
So Delicious Coconutmilk ¹	240	11	5	2
O'My! Gelato ¹	220	13	4.5*	2
Häagen-Dazs Coconut Caramel	330	15	5.5	1

✓ **Better Bite.** (Better Bites refer to nutrition, not taste.)

¹ Average of the line or of the varieties listed.

* Number is an estimate or the line average includes estimates.

⁵ Contains acesulfame potassium, aspartame, or sucralose.

Daily Limits (for a 2,000-calorie diet): **Saturated Fat:** 20 grams.

Added Sugars: 50 grams (12 teaspoons). Note: To convert teaspoons of added sugars to grams, multiply by 4.2.

Daily Protein Target: 85 grams.

Source: company information. The use of information from this article for commercial purposes is strictly prohibited without written permission from CSPI.



FOOD FIND

Eggstravaganza



Garden-variety globe (aka American) eggplants are at home in ratatouille or baba gannoush year round.

But summer's when smaller breeds shine. The payoff: thin

skin, creamy texture, and sweet flesh.

■ **Italian eggplants** (*top left*), which look like small globe eggplants, are less bitter than their American kin.

■ Long, skinny **Chinese** and **Japanese eggplants** (*top right*) range from purple to nearly black. With more skin and less flesh, they stay intact while cooking—perfect for stir-frying.

■ **Striped fairy tale eggplants** (*bottom right*) fit in the palm of your hand. Just halve lengthwise and grill or sauté.

■ Think of **graffiti eggplants** (*bottom left*) as larger fairy tales. Use them in any recipe that calls for globes or Italians.

The best eggplants have taut skin and are heavy for their size, like a full-to-bursting water balloon.

Vitamin-wise, eggplants aren't kale-class overachievers. But any vegetable's a good vegetable. Like other non-starchy veggies, water-rich eggplant supplies fiber (2 grams per cup) and flavor for hardly any calories (just 35).

One taste, and you'll put eggplants on repeat from now through October.

Photos: (Eggplants: stock.adobe.com: clockwise from top left) Svetlana Kolpakova, yuriygolub, EwaStudio, Rosemarie, Lindsay Moyer/CSPI (right), Kate Sherwood/CSPI (bottom)

FOOD FAIL



Palm-oil-izza

"DiGiorno **Croissant Crust Pizza** combines the buttery, light, flakiness of a croissant with our famous DiGiorno tomato sauce and 100% real cheese," says the box.

"Our pizza is made from the best ingredients and baked in the freshest place—your oven," adds DiGiorno's [website](#).

Yes, indeed. The new **Three Meat** pizza is a veritable stockpile of "best ingredients," from white flour and palm oil to mechanically separated chicken, sodium nitrite, dehydrated potatoes, corn syrup solids, modified cornstarch, hydrolyzed corn protein, pork fat, gelatin, BHT, BHA, and more.

Just like homemade!

It's the palm-oil-rich margarine that makes the butter-free pizza so "buttery" and that may explain why it's got nearly twice the saturated fat of DiGiorno's Three Meat Rising Crust Pizza. Each Croissant serving has 410 calories plus 840 milligrams of sodium and 10 grams of saturated fat (half a day's worth). And that's for just a *fifth* of a 12-inch pizza.

"We've been actively working to improve the nutrition profile of our pizzas while ensuring they always taste great, including reducing sodium and calories from saturated fat," [says](#) the company's website. Not actively enough.



DISH of the month

Salsa Verde

Blend 1 cup herbs (parsley, cilantro, basil, and/or mint), ½ seeded serrano pepper, 1 clove garlic, ¼ cup olive oil, 2 Tbs. lemon juice, and ¼ tsp. salt. Spoon over grilled vegetables, chicken, or fish.

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