

Nutrition Action

JUNE 2019 \$2.50

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CENTER FOR SCIENCE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST



What's Your Diet IQ?

Take our quiz
to find out

ADRENAL FATIGUE
Is it real?

Finding the best
nut & seed
butters

Misleading ads
THE LATEST CROP



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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.

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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: customercare@nutritionaction.com
Online: myaccount.nutritionaction.com

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M E M O

STANDING UP FOR HEALTHY KIDS



It's a little passé to quote Yogi Berra these days, but his wise words continue to ring true.

The Trump administration's effort to roll back seemingly final nutrition standards for school meals "ain't over till it's over."

In 2010, years of advocacy and organizing by activists led by Margo Wootan of the Center for Science in the Public Interest, *Nutrition Action's* publisher, led to passage of the landmark Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act.

The law, and regulations later set by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, ushered in a new era for school meals: more fruits and vegetables, less salt, more whole grains, less saturated fat.

Not so fast.

In May 2017, in his first week in office, Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue signed a proclamation that promised to weaken those standards.

This past December, the USDA delivered on its pledge. Its final rule eliminated the long-term target for cutting sodium and weakened the goal requiring all breads and other grain foods to be at least 50 percent whole grain.

Clearly, the USDA didn't take CSPI and the lawyers at Democracy Forward into account.

On April 3, we and Healthy School Food Maryland filed suit [charging](#) the USDA with violating the law when it failed to adequately respond to the 99 percent of public comments that opposed the rollbacks. The agency also violated the law by not requiring that school

meals follow the USDA's own *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

If it weren't so depressing, we could follow Yogi's admonition to "Take it with a grin of salt." But *grains* of salt are nothing to grin about.

On March 5, an expert panel convened by the prestigious National Academy of Medicine [reaffirmed](#) the scientific evidence that high-sodium intakes raise blood pressure and the risk of stroke and heart disease.

The panel [advised](#) adults to consume no more than 2,300 milligrams of sodium a day—the same level set by a 2005 panel—while lowering limits for most children. The panel

called those levels "Chronic Disease Risk Reduction Intakes" because, it said, reducing sodium intake lowers not only blood pressure but also the risk of cardiovascular disease.

So just when the USDA should be protecting children

by strengthening limits on excess sodium in school meals, the agency is weakening them.

On the upside, soon after the Academy issued its sodium report came news that the Salt Institute—for over a century a promoter of the salt industry and a vehement denier of the risks of salt—would dissolve at the end of March.

As Yogi himself might have said, "The future ain't what it used to be."

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



The USDA wants to allow too much salt and too little whole grain in school meals.

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What's Your Diet IQ?

Take our quiz to find out

BY BONNIE LIEBMAN

What can lower your risk of memory loss or breast cancer? How can you dodge endocrine disruptors or food poisoning? Can some supplements help curb arthritis pain or prevent cataracts?

There's no shortage of questions about diet and health, and no shortage of answers—in the press, on social media, or from who knows where. Here's your chance to see how much of what you've heard is true...and how much you remember from past issues of *Nutrition Action*.

Each question has only one answer. Ready, set, go.

1. Which food is most clearly linked to a higher risk of colorectal cancer?

- a. High-fat dairy
- b. Processed meats
- c. Sugary drinks
- d. Diet drinks
- e. Refined grains

2. Which of these steps is most likely to prevent memory loss?

- a. Taking antioxidants
- b. Taking DHA
- c. Taking ginkgo
- d. Taking a multivitamin
- e. Lowering high blood pressure

3. Which is NOT a sign of a heart attack?

- a. Shortness of breath
- b. Nausea
- c. Sudden dizziness
- d. Sudden arm weakness
- e. Sudden fatigue

4. Which of these is most likely to curb osteoarthritis knee pain?

- a. Vitamin D
- b. 5-Loxin supplements
- c. MSM supplements



- d. Exercise
- e. Arthroscopic surgery

5. Which of these is NOT good advice for grilling meat or poultry?

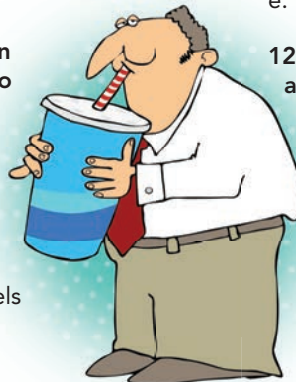
- a. Marinate before grilling
- b. Flip meat only once
- c. Avoid needle tenderized meat
- d. Trim visible fat before grilling
- e. Don't char or overcook

6. Which of these is most clearly linked to a lower risk of liver cancer?

- a. Coffee
- b. Fruits & vegetables
- c. Whole grains
- d. Nuts
- e. Low-fat dairy

7. Which has NOT been consistently linked to sugary drinks?

- a. Weight gain
- b. Type 2 diabetes
- c. Heart disease
- d. Parkinson's disease
- e. High uric acid levels



8. Which is LEAST likely to cause an outbreak of *E. coli* O157:H7?

- a. Soft cheese
- b. Ground beef
- c. Raw milk
- d. Unpasteurized juice
- e. Raw sprouts

9. Which of these WON'T help you avoid endocrine disruptors like BPA?

- a. Microwave in glass or ceramic containers instead of plastic
- b. Wash plastic by hand or on the top shelf of the dishwasher
- c. Use plastics with recycling No. 7
- d. Get rid of scratched plastic containers
- e. Use fewer canned foods

10. Which is LEAST likely to lower your risk of osteoporosis?

- a. Get enough calcium from food or supplements
- b. Get enough vitamin D
- c. Do weight-bearing exercise on most days
- d. Limit acidic foods
- e. Limit refined grains

11. Which of these steps is NOT likely to lower your risk of breast cancer?

- a. Lose (or don't gain) excess weight
- b. Exercise daily
- c. Drink alcohol only on occasion
- d. Eat more vegetables
- e. Take antioxidant vitamins

12. Which is most likely to prevent a cold?

- a. Take Airborne
- b. Take vitamin C
- c. Take zinc lozenges
- d. Don't share food
- e. Don't rub your eyes



13. Extra pounds are linked to a higher risk of all but one of these cancers. Which has NO link?

- a. Liver
- b. Colorectal
- c. Leukemia
- d. Pancreatic
- e. Uterine

14. All but one of these steps may lower the risk of kidney stones. Which one DOESN'T?

- a. Drink enough fluids
- b. Limit sugary drinks
- c. Limit calcium-rich foods
- d. Eat plenty of fruit
- e. Lose (or don't gain) excess weight

15. Taking which of these is most likely to lower your risk of cataracts?

- a. A multivitamin and mineral
- b. Bilberry
- c. AREDS supplements
- d. Antioxidant vitamins
- e. Taurine

16. Which of these is LEAST likely to help prevent urinary leakage?

- a. Lose (or don't gain) excess weight
- b. Do Kegel exercises (men, too!) to strengthen pelvic muscles
- c. Get 30 to 60 minutes of exercise on most days
- d. Take AZO bladder control supplements

17. Eating extra protein is most likely to help with which of these?

- a. Feel full
- b. Curb muscle loss if you're dieting
- c. Lose more weight if you're dieting
- d. Build muscle
- e. Curb insulin resistance

18. Which of these is most likely to prevent wrinkles?

- a. Adding collagen powder to foods
- b. Using a moisturizer with hyaluronic acid
- c. Using a moisturizer with vitamin C
- d. Taking a vitamin A (retinol) supplement
- e. Using sunscreen year round



19. Which of these has the kind of fat that's likely to lower your LDL ("bad") cholesterol?

- a. Croissant
- b. Yogurt-covered raisins
- c. Ranch salad dressing
- d. Buttered popcorn
- e. Cupcakes

20. Death rates from which cancer are rising?

- a. Breast
- b. Colorectal
- c. Liver
- d. Lung
- e. Ovarian

21. Which of these steps DOESN'T lower your risk of food poisoning?

- a. Scrub melons and cucumbers before cutting
- b. Rinse raw poultry
- c. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours
- d. Wash hands with soap and water
- e. Only eat sprouts if they're cooked

22. Which of these does NOT help prevent chronic kidney disease?

- a. Keep blood sugar under control
- b. Keep a lid on blood pressure
- c. Lose excess weight
- d. Drink less tea
- e. Avoid excess salt

23. Which low-calorie sweetener should you avoid?

- a. Acesulfame potassium
- b. Erythritol
- c. Maltitol
- d. Monk fruit extract
- e. Stevia

24. Which does NOT help you get an accurate blood pressure reading?

- a. Stay silent
- b. Keep your arm at your side and bent at the elbow
- c. Avoid caffeine for ½ to 2 hours beforehand
- d. Keep your feet on the floor
- e. Lean your back against a chair



25. Which of these fish supplies the FEWEST omega-3 fats?

- a. Farmed salmon
- b. Wild salmon
- c. Rainbow trout
- d. Catfish
- e. Albacore tuna

ANSWERS

1. **b (Processed meats).** A daily serving of bacon, ham, hot dogs, sausage, or most deli meats is [linked](#) to an 18 percent higher risk of colorectal cancer, according to the International Agency for Research on Cancer. Studies haven't found consistent links with other foods or drinks (see Apr. 2019, p. 3).

2. **e (Lowering high blood pressure).** Though it's not certain, there's substantial [evidence](#) that keeping a lid on your blood pressure—with diet or, if necessary, drugs—can help prevent memory loss. Ditto for controlling blood sugar. The evidence for supplements is weak (see May 2016, p. 3).

3. **d (Sudden arm weakness).** Arm weakness could be a sign of a stroke, though, so it still might warrant a call to 911. And arm *pain* could signal a heart attack (see Sept. 2015, p. 3).

4. **d (Exercise).** Walking plus strength training—with or without weight loss—helps curb arthritis pain. [Vitamin D](#) doesn't work. [Surgery](#) is no better than physical therapy. MSM and 5-Loxin are backed by insufficient evidence (see Oct. 2017, p. 3).

5. **b (Flip meat only once).** Flipping every minute or so cooks meat faster. That should cut heterocyclic

amines (which cause cancer in animals). So do marinating (in the fridge) and not overcooking. Tenderizing by piercing beef

with needles or blades can push bugs on the surface deep inside, boosting the risk of food poisoning (see Jul./Aug. 2017, p. 11).

6. **a (Coffee).** People who drink coffee have a lower risk of [liver](#)—and possibly [uterine](#)—cancer. Avoiding excess weight lowers your risk of both (see Apr. 2019, p. 3).

7. **d (Parkinson's disease).** Higher uric acid levels can lead to gout. Need any more reasons to cut back on sugar? (See Nov. 2015, p. 6.)

8. **a (Soft cheese).** Soft cheeses have been linked to [Listeria](#) outbreaks, which are most likely to harm pregnant women. *E. coli* O157:H7 infection is dangerous because it can lead to life-threatening hemolytic uremic syndrome (see Dec. 2017, p. 3).

9. **c (Use plastics with recycling No. 7).** No. 7 often contains BPA. Also avoid No. 3 (which can contain phthalates) and No. 6 (which contains styrene, a probable carcinogen). Plastics that are scratched or heated to a high temperature are more likely to leach chemicals into food (see Nov. 2017, p. 8).

10. **d (Limit acidic foods).** Foods that create more acid in the body—not acidic foods—may increase bone loss. The list includes grains (like bread, rice, cereal, and pasta) and protein-rich foods (see Jul./Aug. 2017, p. 3).

11. **e (Take antioxidant vitamins).** [Trials](#) that gave women vitamins E and C and/or beta-carotene found no lower risk of breast cancer. The other steps, while not tested in trials, are linked to a lower risk (see Sept. 2014, p. 3).

12. **e (Don't rub your eyes).** Sucking on zinc lozenges might shorten a cold slightly. But not touching your eyes or nose—and washing your hands—helps prevent a cold (see March 2014, p. 11).

13. **c (Leukemia).** Also linked to [excess weight](#): cancers of the kidney, ovaries, gallbladder, and thyroid; some cancers of the esophagus and stomach; and multiple myeloma (see Apr. 2019, p. 3).

14. **c (Limit calcium-rich foods).** High-dose calcium supplements (1,000 mg a day or more) may promote kidney stones, but people who eat more calcium-rich foods have a [lower risk](#) of stones (see March 2014, p. 3).

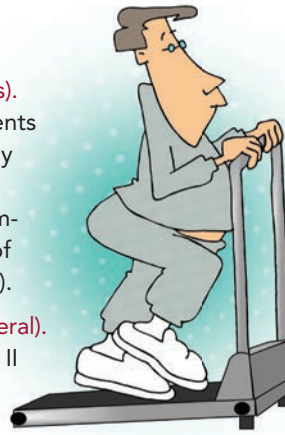
15. **a (A multivitamin and mineral).** The Physicians' Health Study II [reported](#) a 9 percent lower risk of cataracts in men who took Centrum Silver for 11 years. There's no good evidence that bilberry, taurine, antioxidants (vitamins E and C), or AREDS formula supplements work. AREDS supplements can slow macular degeneration, but only in people with intermediate or advanced disease (see Nov. 2016, p. 3).

16. **d (Take AZO bladder control supplements).** In [one study](#)—funded by a company with a stake in the outcome—women who took AZO for 12 weeks made slightly fewer trips to the bathroom (8 vs. 9½ a day) than those who took a placebo. That's not enough to go on (see Dec. 2015, p. 9).

17. **b (Curb muscle loss if you're dieting).** Getting enough protein can curb muscle loss, but extra protein doesn't do much in the best [studies](#). Even if you're dieting, extra protein only [curbs muscle loss slightly](#) (see Sept. 2018, p. 3). Want more muscle? Start strength training.

18. **e (Using sunscreen year round).** Look for a broad spectrum sunscreen (which filters both UVA and UVB rays) with at least SPF 30. Some retinoid creams (like tretinoin) can help smooth wrinkles, but taking vitamin A supplements won't help. Nor will moisturizers or collagen supplements (see Nov. 2018, p. 8).

19. **c (Ranch salad dressing).** It looks creamy, but it's mostly unsaturated oil, which can lower LDL. Cupcakes or croissants are made with shortening or butter, which raise LDL. Ditto



for the palm oil in yogurt-covered raisins (see Nov. 2017, p. 3).

20. **c (Liver).** Researchers [blame the jump](#) largely on the obesity epidemic, though hepatitis C infections may account for some of the rise (see Apr. 2019, p. 3).

21. **b (Rinse raw poultry).**

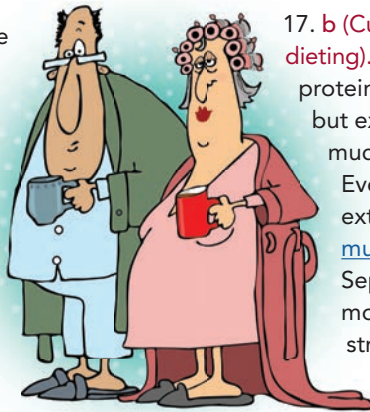
It's smart to rinse fruits and vegetables, but not raw poultry (or pre-washed packaged greens). Rinsing can spread bacteria to foods, utensils, and kitchen surfaces (see Dec. 2017, p. 3).

22. **d (Drink less tea).** Tea hasn't been linked to a higher risk of kidney disease (see Sept. 2016, p. 3).

23. **a (Acesulfame potassium).** It has been poorly tested, but it increased cancer risk in older animal studies. Monk fruit extract hasn't been well tested, but is probably safe. Stevia extract, erythritol, and (in moderate doses) maltitol are [safe](#) (see Sept. 2017, p. 7).

24. **b (Keep your arm at your side and bent at the elbow).** Your arm [should be](#) supported at heart level by the person taking your pressure or by a table (see Jan./Feb. 2018, p. 7).

25. **d (Catfish).** Salmon and trout are rich in omega-3s, whether farmed or wild. Albacore tuna beats chunk light (see Jan./Feb. 2019, p. 3). 🐟



How'd you do?

We told you it was tough.

21-25 Impressive! Even we had to double-check some answers.

14-20 Excellent. Definitely refrigerator-door material.

6-13 Keep at it. With so much misinformation out there, it's hard to keep *anything* straight these days.

0-5 Umm... Don't toss that renewal notice.

Quick Studies

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

Get Your Insulin Going



Once your cells become insensitive to insulin, your risk of type 2 diabetes climbs. Can exercise help?

Danish researchers randomly assigned 188 sedentary overweight or obese people to:

- **BIKE:** start biking to work,
- **MOD:** do aerobic exercise (walking, running, rowing, cycling, or cross-training) at a moderate pace,
- **VIG:** do the same aerobic exercise at a vigorous pace, or
- **CON:** continue their sedentary lifestyle.

Each exercise group aimed to burn 320 calories a day (women) or 420 calories a day (men) on five days each week for six months.

Compared to the CON group, insulin sensitivity improved 26 percent in the VIG and 20 percent in the BIKE group but only 17 percent in the MOD group, which fell below the 20 percent target. Bonus: All exercise groups lost belly fat.

What to do: Don't like to bike? Walk, run, row, spin, swim, whatever.

[Br. J. Sports Med. 2019. doi:10.1136/bjsports-2018-100036.](https://doi.org/10.1136/bjsports-2018-100036)

No Breakfast? No Problem.

Does skipping breakfast make you pack on pounds because you overeat at lunch?

Scientists looked at 13 trials that randomly assigned adults to either eat or skip breakfast for one day to 16 weeks. The results: breakfast skippers ate 260 fewer calories per day.

What to do: Don't worry that skipping breakfast leads to weight gain.

[BMJ 2019. doi:10.1136/bmj.i42.](https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.i42)



Scared of Omega-6s?

"Avoid vegetable oils high in omega-6," says healthline.com. (That includes soybean, corn, and some safflower oils.)

Avoid?

Researchers pooled results from 30 studies that tracked roughly 69,000 people for 3 to 32 years. Those with the highest blood levels of linoleic acid, a key omega-6 fat,

had a 23 percent lower risk of dying of cardiovascular disease than those with the lowest levels. Blood levels of arachidonic acid—an omega-6 fat that is often vilified—weren't linked to a higher risk of cardiovascular disease.

What to do: Don't fear omega-6 fats. This study (partly funded by mayo and margarine maker Unilever) isn't definitive, but other evidence backs up advice to replace saturated fats with polyunsaturated fats rich in either omega-3s or omega-6s. 🍷

[Circulation 2019. doi:10.1161/CIRCULATIONAHA.118.038908.](https://doi.org/10.1161/CIRCULATIONAHA.118.038908)

Vitamin D & Cancer



Many people with GI cancers are low in vitamin D. Could taking more help?

In the AMATERASU trial, scientists randomly assigned 417 patients with mostly colorectal, stomach, or esophageal cancer to take vitamin D (2,000 IU a day) or a placebo. Over five years, it took no longer for the vitamin D takers than the placebo takers to relapse or die.

In the SUNSHINE trial, scientists randomly assigned 139 people being treated with chemotherapy for advanced or metastatic colorectal cancer to take a high dose of vitamin D (8,000 IU a day for two weeks, then 4,000 IU a day) or a standard dose (400 IU a day). The high-dose group fared no better than the standard-dose group.

After the researchers adjusted for age, sex, race, weight, metastatic sites, and other factors that could affect cancer progression, the high-dose group did better, but that result needs to be confirmed in a larger trial.

What to do: Take vitamin D if your levels are low, but don't rely on it to help treat GI cancer.

[JAMA 321: 1354, 1361, 1370, 2019.](https://doi.org/10.1093/jama/321.13.1354)



BUTT OUT?

Supplement sellers cash in on smokers

BY DAVID SCHARDT



Two-thirds of smokers want to quit, and about half try each year. Fewer than one in 10 succeed, despite the fact that the FDA has approved both prescription and over-the-counter drugs that could help.

Enter supplement sellers trying to make a fast buck on Amazon. Some have even earned coveted “Amazon’s Choice” awards.

We asked 15 companies for evidence that smokers who take their supplements are more likely to quit. None provided anything even remotely credible. Here are a few examples.

Senior Staff Scientist David Schardt contributes occasional articles to NAH.



What Evidence?

“Quit smoking safely and naturally,” boasts **Eliminction** (6 botanicals, 1 vitamin). “No need for nicotine gum.”

The evidence? “Eliminction has helped many, many people give up smoking for good, but there are no scientific studies that show the likeliness of success,” conceded its manufacturer.

“**Nicoban** will help you break free from nicotine addiction the natural way,” promises the supplement’s website (24 botanicals, 7 oils, ox bile powder).

Got any scientific study showing that it helps? “No,” admitted the manufacturer. But “we estimate that Nicoban works about 75% of the time.” Hmm...

Amazon’s Choice?

Think you can trust claims on “Amazon’s Choice” items?

Clear Airways (9 vitamins, 2 minerals, 12 botanicals, 5 other ingredients) told us that “a Doctor” wrote “white papers” about studies showing that the supplement works, but wouldn’t tell us which studies.

“Results do vary,” said the company. “One needs to also be willing & take an initiative to cut back on smoking, exercise regularly, eat healthy & drink a lot of water with lemons.”

Quit Nutrition (13 vitamins, 9 minerals, 8 botanicals, 2 other ingredients) cited a four-day study of one of its 32 ingredients...that didn’t test quitting smoking.



Lobelia Loophole

EZ Quit (2 botanicals, 1 other ingredient) and **Vice Breaker** (4 botanicals) credited the herbal ingredient lobelia for their supplements’ effectiveness.

Lucky for them that supplement companies don’t have to honor the FDA’s ban of lobelia from over-the-counter

anti-smoking drugs, gums, and lozenges.

There’s no credible evidence that lobelia helps people quit smoking, [says the FDA](#). We asked EZ Quit’s manufacturer for studies showing otherwise, but got...EZ Zip.

Unqualified?

“Quit smoking the all natural way,” claims **NicRx** (11 botanicals).

And that’s based on? “Unfortunately, we are not qualified to advise customers about medical studies,” said NicRx’s Amazon seller. Qualified to take their cash? You bet.

“You are one click away from being SMOKE FREE!” says **Nicotine Quit** (3 botanicals, 2 other ingredients).

Why should we believe that? “It will help leveled [sic] Nicotine in your body,” was all the company (through its Amazon seller) could muster.



Watch out, Granny

Grandma’s Herbs **Kick It** (14 botanicals) advertises on Amazon that it not only helps “in overcoming Smoking Addiction” but also “aids in overcoming drug addiction.”

Oops. That illegal claim could land Grandma in hot water. The FDA has zero tolerance for supplements that make bogus claims about curing drug addiction.

Grandma didn’t respond to two inquiries via Amazon. An email sent through her website bounced back. 🍷



Photos (clockwise from top right): Alexas_Fotos/pixabay.com, EZ Quit, NicRx, Kaamilah Mitchell/CSPI, VITINITY, Kaamilah Mitchell/CSPI.

BUZZWORDS

Real remedies...or really good marketing?

BY CAITLIN DOW

Tired? Overweight? Anxious? Depressed? Health gurus and celebrity doctors are eager to diagnose—and cure!—whatever ails you. Here's what the science says about the latest ideas buzzing around the wellness world.

ADRENAL FATIGUE

Claim: "When your adrenal glands are overtaxed, a condition known as adrenal fatigue or adrenal exhaustion sets in, which in turn can set a cascade of disease processes into motion," claims Joseph Mercola on his website, mercola.com.

Evidence: "The theory of adrenal fatigue—which was coined by chiropractor James Wilson in the late '90s—is that overexertion of the adrenal glands as they continuously pump out the stress hormone cortisol eventually leads the adrenals to burn out, resulting in an inability to respond to stress," explains Rashmi Mullur, an endocrinologist and assistant professor of medicine at UCLA.

Adrenal fatigue affects up to 80 percent of American adults at some point during their lifetime, says Wilson's book, *Adrenal Fatigue: The 21st Century Stress Syndrome*. It's responsible for salty and sweet cravings, being tired for no reason, and more, he claims.

Only one problem, notes Mullur: "No matter how much stress we're under, our adrenal glands won't burn out."

The pituitary (a pea-sized gland in the brain) tells the adrenal glands to produce cortisol. In turn, "cortisol acts as a messenger from the adrenals, and tells the pituitary, 'We're good. We've made enough hormone. You don't need to stimulate us any more,'" Mullur explains. "It's a

self-regulating system."

The processes that control cortisol production can break down, for example in people who have Addison's disease (when the adrenals don't make enough cortisol) or Cushing's disease (when they make too much).

"But I can test for those diseases, and it's a very clear 'Yes, you have this' or 'No, you don't,'" says Mullur.

So why do some people feel so exhausted? Other problems—like thyroid disease, depression, sleep apnea, past trauma, ane-



Overworked adrenal glands don't cause fatigue and exhaustion.

mia, or stress—could be the culprit.

As for supplements that provide "adrenal support," don't bother, says Mullur. When researchers bought a dozen popular ones online, they found thyroid hormone in all 12 and at least one steroid hormone in seven.¹ None of the hormones—it's illegal for them to be in supplements—were listed on the labels.

Those ingredients could influence hormonal pathways in unpredictable ways, Mullur points out. What's more,

they could interfere with hormone tests, making it harder for your doctor to diagnose problems.

Bottom Line: "The term adrenal fatigue doesn't capture what people are experiencing, because it's not an adrenal issue," says Mullur. "But the burnout and exhaustion are absolutely real. If we doctors dig a little deeper to get to the root cause of those issues, we're more likely to help patients."

LEAKY GUT SYNDROME

Claim: "Leaky gut syndrome is a condition where undigested proteins like gluten, toxins and microbes can pass into the bloodstream," cautions chiropractor Josh Axe on his website, draxe.com.

"Over time, if leaky gut is not healed, it can lead to food sensitivities, arthritis, inflammatory bowel disease, skin issues like eczema, hypothyroidism, adrenal fatigue, depression, anxiety, ADHD, nutrient malabsorption and autoimmune disease."

Evidence: "Alternative medicine has embraced the concept of leaky gut syndrome, blaming it for nearly everything that can

go wrong with a person," says Alessio Fasano, director of the Center for Celiac Research and Treatment at Massachusetts General Hospital for Children.

In contrast, "modern medicine disregards leaky gut syndrome as voodoo medicine because of claims that it causes so many problems when there is no evidence," he notes.

"In my opinion, both camps are wrong." The lining of your gut is a single layer

DR. JOSH AXE

eat dirt

Why **Leaky Gut** May Be the Root Cause of Your Health Problems and 5 Surprising Steps to Cure it

Ignore promises to fix leaky gut.

of cells that sits between you and the contents of your intestines. Until recently, scientists thought that the cells were so tightly sealed together that nothing passed between them.

Then, “in the ‘90s, researchers showed that there are structures—now called tight junctions—between neighboring cells,” explains Fasano.

“They’re like doors, and most of the time we want them closed to keep the bad guys out.”

“There are billions of doors in the small intestine,” Fasano points out. “Depending on the percentage that are open and for how long they’re open, you can have an increase in gut permeability.”

Zonulin, a family of proteins that Fasano discovered in 2000, is the “key that unlocks the door,” he says.

That may explain why researchers report elevated blood levels of zonulin—and increased gut permeability—in many people with celiac disease, type 1 diabetes, Crohn’s disease, and some other autoimmune or inflammatory diseases.²

Unfortunately, “there’s no reliable test for gut permeability,” says Fasano. Most researchers use several tests to measure it.

What’s more, “some people believe that just because you have an intestine that leaks, that’s a problem,” says Fasano. “But that’s not true.”

“It depends on what you find on the other side of the door. If you have a genetic predisposition and a belligerent immune system that doesn’t know how to manage invaders, you may develop disease.”

Fasano’s “holy grail”: figuring out who those people are early in life and preventing gut permeability in an effort to ward off autoimmune disease. But we’re nowhere near being able to do that yet.

Is there any evidence that supplements, probiotics, or Josh Axe’s *Eat Dirt* diet can heal a leaky gut?

“Of course not,” says Fasano. “How can you claim that these remedies can fix a problem if you don’t even know if someone has it?”

Bottom Line: Don’t waste your time on diets or pills that claim to fix leaky gut.

BOOST METABOLISM

Claim: “The beauty of your metabolism is that it can be manipulated,” writes self-proclaimed “metabolism whisperer” Haylie Pomroy in her book *The Fast Metabolism Diet*, which claims to “set your metabolism on fire.”

Evidence: “When we talk about metabolism, we’re talking about the calories you burn when you’re not doing anything, or your resting metabolism,” says Michael Jensen, director of the Obesity Specialty Council at the Mayo Clinic.

“Unfortunately, we don’t have much control over our resting metabolism.”

For example, it slows as you age.

“If you compare a 70-year-old and a 20-year-old with the same amount of fat and lean tissue, the 70-year-old would burn fewer calories at rest than the 20-year-old,” says Jensen.

Women also have a slower metabolism than men, largely because they typically have less muscle. (You have to burn more calories to maintain muscle than fat.)

Even if men didn’t have more muscle, says Jensen, “for any given amount of fat and lean tissue, women burn slightly fewer calories at rest than men.”

Can *anything* boost your resting metabolism?

“People who gain a lot of extra muscle will burn more calories at rest than before they gained all that muscle,” says Jensen.

But the effect isn’t huge.

“For the average person, muscle accounts for about 25 percent of metabolic rate,” notes Jensen. “So you’d have to gain a lot of muscle before it would have much impact on your resting metabolism.”

Want a bigger calorie burning boost? Spend less time at rest.

“You’ll burn more calories from doing that strength training than you’ll burn from the increased muscle mass,” says Jensen. Or walk, run, bike, or do other aerobic exercise to burn more calories.

And if your resting metabolism is slow, don’t despair.

Jensen’s team tracked people with either high or low metabolic rates. Those in the “high” group burned about 500 calories more per day than those in the “low” group, despite being roughly the same age and having similar amounts of fat and muscle mass. Yet after roughly ten years, weight gain was no different.³

“A low metabolic rate doesn’t mean you’re doomed to gain weight,” says Jensen, “and a high metabolic rate doesn’t



You can’t reset your resting metabolism to burn more fat.

protect you from gaining weight.”

Bottom Line: Ignore the hype about resetting or revving your resting metabolism. Instead, get moving. 🍌

¹ *Mayo Clin. Proc.* 93: 284, 2018.

² *Clin. Rev. Allergy Immunol.* 42: 71, 2012.

³ *Am. J. Clin. Nutr.* 104: 959, 2016.

Ad Nauseam

BY LINDSAY MOYER & BONNIE LIEBMAN

What'll they think of next? Madison Avenue execs are happy to run up their billable hours dreaming up new shticks to make their clients' products look good.

And if some of those marketing ploys mislead people or encourage them to overeat? Hey! That's business!

Here's the latest crop.

Half Caked

Cut the sugar calories in *half* and keep the whole cake.

NO CONVERSION
1 Cup Sugar = 1 Cup Stevia In The Raw

Reduce sugar, calories and confusion from your recipes by swapping out half the sugar for Stevia In The Raw. Why only half? Keeping half the sugar is important for moisture, browning and rising. One cup of Stevia In The Raw has the same sweetness as one cup of sugar and pairs well with bold flavors like in this *Molasses Cake with Peanut Butter Frosting*. Get this sweet recipe and more at SteviaInTheRaw.com

"Cut the sugar calories in half and keep the whole cake," says the ad for **Stevia In The Raw**.

So if you use stevia to replace half the sugar, you can cut enough calories to eat the whole cake? Sure sounds that way.

But stevia only cuts the sugar's calories

—not the *cake's* calories—roughly in half. Made with stevia, the cake has 430 calories per slice (a twelfth of the cake), claims the company's website. Made without stevia, it would have about 510 calories per slice.

So why show that half cake?

"Reduce sugar, calories and confusion from your recipes by swapping out half the sugar for Stevia In The Raw," says the ad.

So much for reducing confusion.

Much Ado About...Not Much



"Brewed with no corn syrup," says the **Bud Light ad**, which ran during the Super Bowl.

The ad follows a medieval Bud Light brewer as he and his crew schlep a misdelivered barrel of corn syrup first to the Miller Lite castle ("We received our shipment this morning"), then to the Coors Light castle ("Looks like the corn syrup has come home to be brewed!").

Yes, Miller and Coors use corn syrup, but it gets fermented. So a 12 oz. can of Coors ends up with an insignificant 1 gram of sugar. Miller and Bud lights have none. And corn syrup is no worse than any added sweetener.

Talk about a non-issue. In March, MillerCoors sued Anheuser-Busch over the ad.

Here's the real problem: With 70 percent of U.S. adults overweight or obese, both industry giants should start labeling calories on all their beers, not just the lights.

The Center for Science in the Public Interest, *Nutrition Action's* publisher, has [written](#) to them and to the Treasury Department to press for "Alcohol Facts" labels.

Eat Up!

"Erin imagined a world with unlimited pizzabilities," says the ad for the drug **Nexium**. "Can you?"

"Just one pill a day offers all-day, all-night protection from frequent heartburn."

That's right. Overeat to your heart's content, then just pop a pill to tamp down your stomach acid.

Voilà! No heartburn!

Never mind that people with excess weight are more likely to suffer from acid reflux.

That Nexium. So concerned about the public's health.

Erin imagined a world with unlimited pizzabilities. Can you?

Just one pill a day offers all-day, all-night protection from frequent heartburn.

Nexium 24HR Imagine 24HRs without heartburn

Churn that Sugar & Oil!



“Keep calm. It’s triple churned and 2X richer than milk,” gushes the ad for **Caramel Latte Coffeemate** coffee creamer.

Triple churned? Since when do they even single-churn mixtures of water, sugar, oil, casein, natural and artificial flavor, mono- and diglycerides, dipotassium phosphate, salt, cellulose gel, cellulose gum, and carrageenan?

And yes, each tablespoon has more fat (1½ grams) than you’d get in a tablespoon of whole milk (½ gram). But so does half-and-half or just about *any* creamer.

Surely, Coffeemate isn’t trying to cash in on the cream-is-back craze? Nah.

Un-Juice



“Little choices make a big difference,” says the [ad](#) for **Naked Strawberry Banana**, as a woman parks far from a store and checks her Fitbit to see her step count.

“Like nutritious fruit smoothies,” the ad continues, as the woman takes a long swig.

Let’s hope that woman didn’t think she was burning up those smoothie calories in her 30-second parking lot trek. That wouldn’t make a dent in the 250 calories she’d get by downing the 15.2 oz. bottle.

What’s more, liquid calories don’t curb your appetite as well as solid calories. And along with the featured strawberry and banana *purée*, Naked adds apple and orange juice.

Want a naked snack? Dump the juice. Eat the fruit.

Protein Puffery

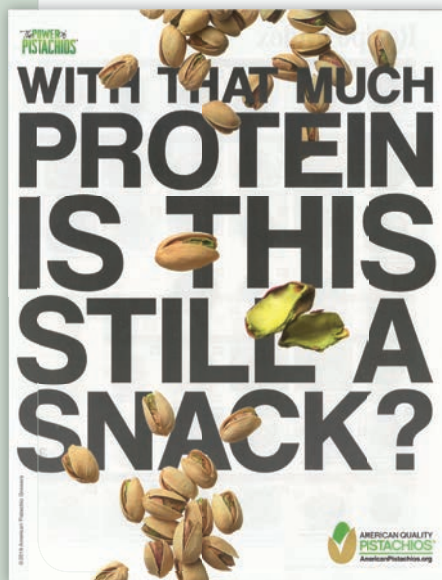
“With that much protein is this still a snack?” asks the **American Quality Pistachios** ad. Wow. Just how much protein are we talking about? You’d think the ad would say.

In fact, an ounce of pistachios has 6 grams of protein—not a trivial amount, but pretty average for nuts and seeds.

Pumpkin seeds (9 grams) and peanuts (7 grams) have more, almonds and sunflower seeds have the same amount, and walnuts (4 grams) and pecans (3 grams) have less.

Don’t get us wrong. Nuts rock. But protein-wise, they pale next to, say, plain greek yogurt or extra-firm tofu. Each has about 15 grams of protein in 5 ounces...and fewer calories.

Guess it’s easier to exaggerate when you hide the numbers.



It’s Complicated

“2 eggs made fresh in seconds,” says the ad for **Jimmy Dean Sausage Simple Scrambles**.

Jimmy blends his eggs with sausage (pork plus water, potassium lactate, caramel color, sodium phosphate and diacetate, beef fat, and a touch of MSG in the “seasoning”) and “pasteurized process colored cheddar cheese”

(cheese, water, cream, sodium phosphate, salt, vegetable color, powdered cellulose, and the preservatives sorbic acid, potassium sorbate, and natamycin).

Simple? Fresh? Not so much. 🍷



The Healthy Cook

Best Dressed



A punchy dressing turns crisp lettuce, crunchy veggies, and juicy chicken into a feast. 🍴

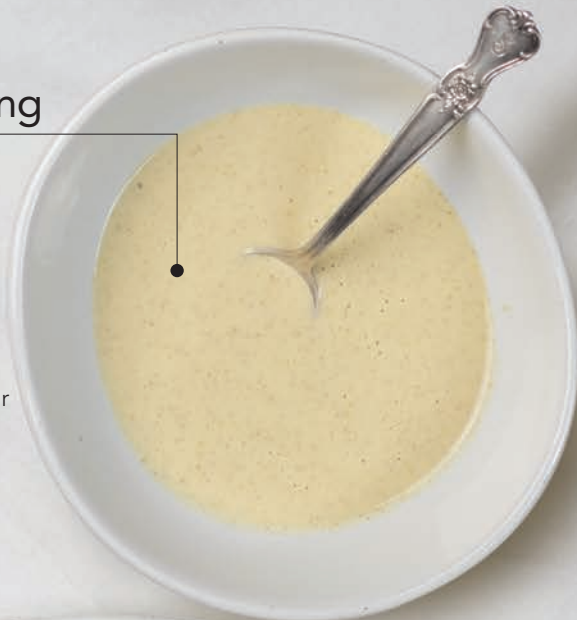
Tahini Lemon Dressing

- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup tahini
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 clove garlic, finely minced
- 1 tsp. ground coriander
- 1 tsp. kosher salt

Whisk ingredients with 2 Tbs. water until smooth and glossy.



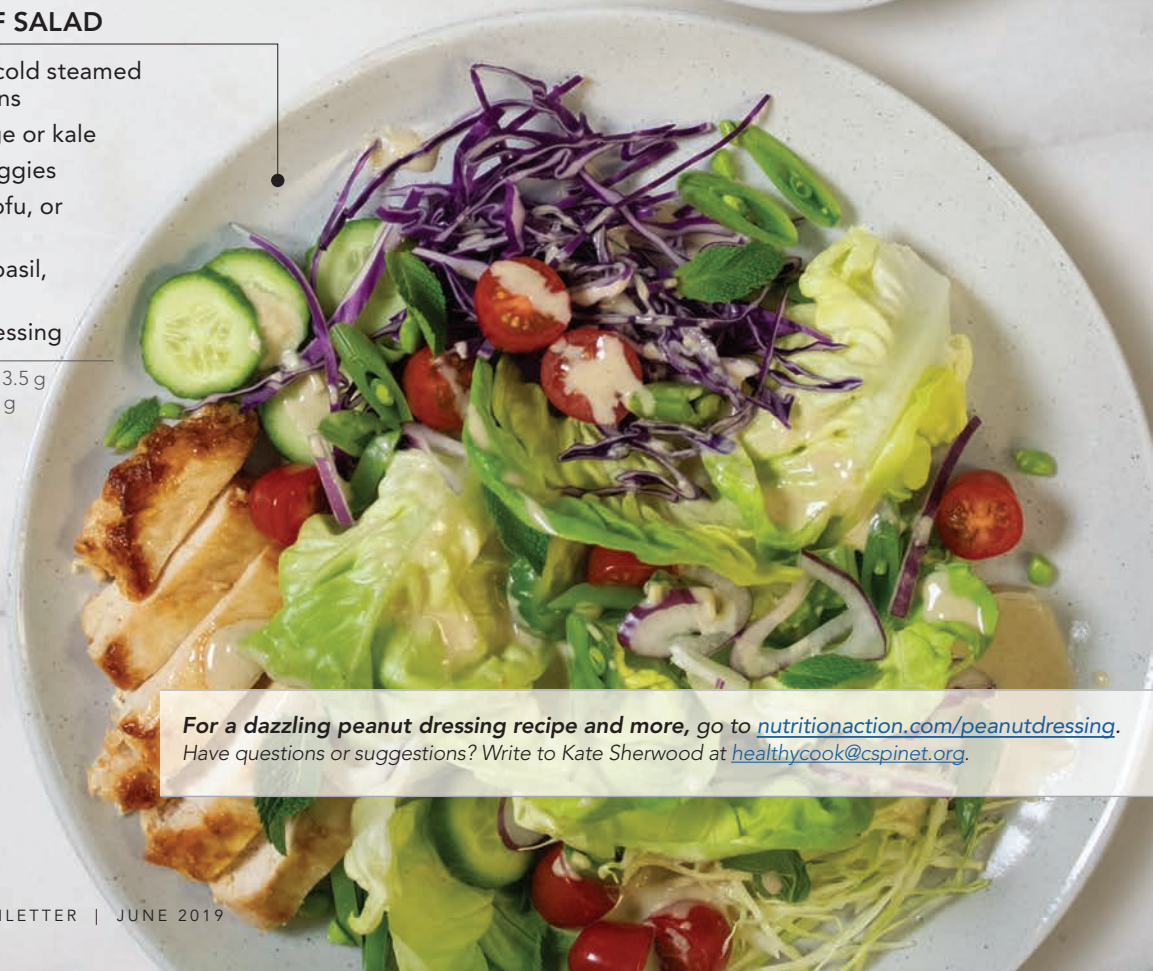
MAKES 15 TBS.



FOR ONE SERVING OF SALAD

- 2 cups salad greens or cold steamed spinach or other greens
- 1 cup shredded cabbage or kale
- 1 cup raw or cooked veggies
- 4 oz. cooked chicken, tofu, or shrimp
- a few leaves of mint, basil, and/or cilantro
- 3 Tbs. Tahini Lemon Dressing

calories 400 | total fat 21 g | sat fat 3.5 g
carbs 16 g | fiber 6 g | total sugar 4 g
added sugar 0 g | protein 41 g
sodium 490 mg



For a dazzling peanut dressing recipe and more, go to nutritionaction.com/peanutdressing. Have questions or suggestions? Write to Kate Sherwood at healthycook@cspinet.org.



IN A NUTSHELL

How to find the best nut and seed butters

BY LINDSAY MOYER & JENNIFER URBAN

Peanut butter's got competition, and not just from almonds. There's cashews, macadamias, soy, peas, and seeds.

Most nut and seed butters offer a nice dose of nutrients—some protein, magnesium, zinc, copper, and vitamin E—along with their good fats.

But do you also need added omega-3s, egg whites, collagen, or coconut? And which butters add enough sugar and oil to rival frosting? Here's our guide to the nut-butter aisle.

The information for this article was compiled by Kaamilah Mitchell.



Nut vs. Nut

Almost any nut can be turned into a butter. The three most popular:

■ **Peanut butter.** Our tasters' favorite, hands down. Bonus: It's cheap.

■ **Almond butter.** Almonds' sweet taste may not please peanut butter devotees, and a jar usually costs twice as much. But you do get slightly more fiber, magnesium, and vitamin E, plus 8 percent of a day's calcium (PB has 2 percent).

Whole Foods' almond butter is one of the best.

■ **Cashew butter.** Pricey cashews have less polyunsaturated—and more saturated—fat than most other nuts. Another downside: cashew butter has roughly half the protein (4 grams in 2 Tbs.) of almond or peanut butter.

What to Look For



Just nuts and salt.

Spreads run the gamut from nothin' but nuts to dessert. Here's what to look for in a serving (two level tablespoons):

■ **Added sugars: No more than 3 grams.** That's the limit for our Honorable Mentions. Our Best Bites have no added sugar. Roasted nuts plus a pinch of salt equals great taste.

■ **Saturated fat: No more than 3 grams.** That much (or less) is all you get in most butters made only of nuts, seeds, peas, or soy. A 3-gram limit also lets in some "no stir" types that add a touch of solid (more saturated) fat—often palm oil—to stop their natural oils from separating.

Sadly, palm oil plantations often destroy rainforests and wildlife. And although many labels tout "sustainable" palm oil, those standards may not go far enough, say some environmental groups. Solution: look for no palm oil.

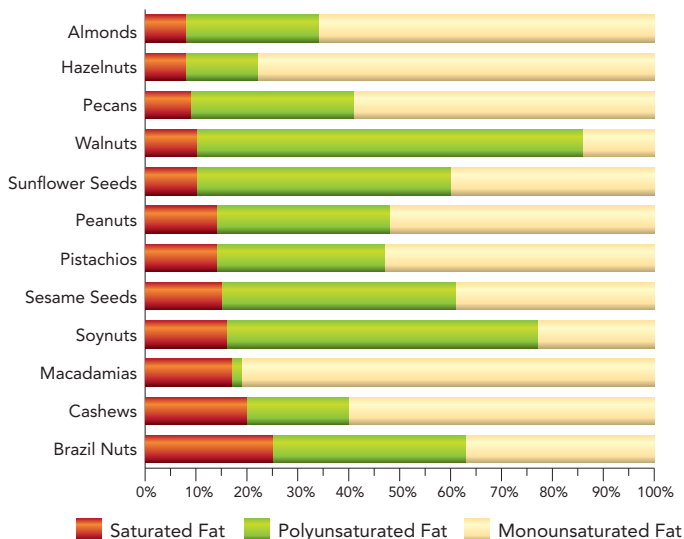
■ **Protein: At least 6 grams.** You get roughly 6 to 8 grams in most almond and peanut butters. But some spreads add enough sugar and oil to displace some of their nuts, which cuts the protein to 5 to 7 grams. (Macadamia and cashew butters typically start with just 2 to 4 grams. If you want some plant protein from your schmear, they're not the best.)

We didn't set criteria for:

■ **Calories.** Nut butters get their roughly 200 calories largely from healthy fats. (Tip: Butters may not be as filling as crunching on whole nuts.)

■ **Sodium.** Few top 150 mg. Watching every milligram? Many nut butters have less...or none.

Have a Heart



While most nuts and seeds have about the same amount of fat, the percentage that's saturated, polyunsaturated, and monounsaturated varies. Most varieties (and their butters) should help lower LDL ("bad") cholesterol, especially if they have more poly than sat fat. Walnuts, sunflower seeds, and soy have the most poly vs. sat. Brazil nuts, cashews, and macadamias have the least.



Extra protein or oil?
Just marketing ploys.

A Better Butter?

Nut butter should be simple. But brands add (or subtract) whatever sells. Some claims—which can appear on better or worse butters—that you can ignore:

■ **Protein.** Two tablespoons of plain, unadulterated peanut butter have 8 grams of protein.

So why bother with more expensive **RX** “nut & protein spread” (9 grams of protein), with its one egg white per serving? But kudos to RX for adding dates instead of sugar.

■ **Collagen.** **Wild Friends** calls its nut butter “the yummiest way to get your collagen.” But \$10 for a jar of peanut butter—or \$14 for a jar of almond butter—when there’s no good evidence that eating collagen will improve your skin? (See Nov. 2018, p. 8.) You gotta be nuts!

■ **Omega-3.** **Jif Omega-3** adds just 32 milligrams of EPA+DHA omega-3s from fish oil—what you’d get in roughly 1/20 ounce of salmon.

■ **Keto.** “Keto friendly” **FBOMB** (think “fat bomb”) **Nut Butters** feature macadamias, so they wind up lower in protein and higher in saturated fat.

■ **Reduced fat.** Most powders are fine, but spreads didn’t get Best Bites or Honorable Mentions if sugars or starches like corn syrup solids replaced some healthy nut fat.

■ **Natural.** Many regular nut butters use *fully* hydrogenated oils (which are saturated—not trans—fats) and (safe) mono- & diglycerides to keep their natural oils from separating. But some “natural” nut butters simply replace those ingredients with sat fat from palm oil.

No Nuts

Can’t eat nuts? Your options:

■ **Sunflower.** Of all the no-nut butters, Honorable Mentions **SunButter Natural** and **Trader Joe’s sunflower seed butters** won over our tasters. The only ingredients: sunflower seeds, sugar, and salt.

SunButter Natural Sunflower Butter is “processed in a facility free from the top 8 allergens.” That means no peanuts or tree nuts. Trader Joe’s is also processed in a facility free of nuts, the company told us.

Bonus: Sunflower seed butter delivers more folate, magnesium, zinc, and vitamin E than peanut butter.

■ **Soy and Pea.** **Wowbutter** blends its toasted soybeans with oil, sugar, and salt. The **Sneaky Chef** uses golden peas. But flavor-wise, we weren’t, um, nuts about them.



Nut-free, nutritious,
and delicious.

Impostors

Some sweet spreads look like nut butter, yet they have more sugar than nuts...or no nuts, period.

■ **Nutella, etc.** “Nutella hazelnut spread is a happy start to your day!” proclaims the jar. “Enjoy it with whole grain toast, pancakes, strawberries, bananas, and many other foods.”

Not so fast. Nutella calls itself a “hazelnut spread with cocoa.” But a “sugar spread with palm oil” would be more honest. Nutella—which, we estimate, has just 4 or 5 nuts in each serving—squeezes in more calories, saturated fat, and sugar than Betty Crocker Rich & Creamy Milk Chocolate Frosting. Cupcakes for breakfast, anyone?

Trader Joe’s Cocoa Almond Spread isn’t much better. There’s more sugar (about a third of a day’s max) and oil than almonds or cocoa.

■ **Cookie butter.** **Lotus Biscoff Cookie Butter** is crushed refined-flour cookies plus sugar and oil. Despite Biscoff’s peanut-butter hue, it has no nuts—and little to none of their protein, fiber, magnesium, or other nutrients.

And the sneaky one-tablespoon serving listed on **Trader Joe’s Speculoos Cookie Butter** makes it look like it has half the calories of real nut butter (90 vs. 190). In fact, tablespoon for tablespoon, calories are no lower.

Want a sweet nut butter? Some better bets:

■ **Chocolate.** Most went beyond our 3-gram added-sugar limit. The two best tasting: **Justin’s Chocolate Hazelnut & Almond Butter** (8 grams of added sugar) delivers Nutella-like taste with more nuts than sugar and oil. **Yummy Peanut Butter & Co Dark Chocolatey Dreams** (6 grams) is less than half the price of Justin’s.

■ **Vanilla.** Look for Honorable Mention **Simply Balanced Creamy Vanilla Almond Butter** (2 grams) at Target.



Sweet and creamy,
with a hint of vanilla.

Spreading Out



Tahini: your new salad
dressing ingredient.

Tahini isn’t for spreading on your sandwich. But the paste—made of just toasted sesame seeds and (sometimes) salt—is the perfect base for salad dressings, sauces, and more.

Most brands taste similar.

We liked **Whole Foods 365 Organic** because it’s easy to shake up and unlikely to separate. Store it in the fridge.

For a great tahini-based salad dressing, see p. 12. And while you’re at it, try peanut butter in peanut curry, sesame noodles, or peanut dressing. 🥜

That's Nuts!

Best Bites (✓✓) have no added sugars, no more than 3 grams of saturated fat, and at least 6 grams of protein in two tablespoons. They also don't replace nuts or seeds with starches or sugars. **Honorable Mentions** (✓) have the same criteria, but can have up to 3 grams of added sugars. **Unflavored butters** are ranked from least to most saturated fat, then added sugars, then most to least protein. **Flavored butters** are ranked from least to most added sugars, then sat fat, then most to least protein.

Peanut Butter (2 Tbs.)

	Calories	Sat Fat (g)	Added Sugars (g)*	Protein (g)
✓✓ MaraNatha Organic—Creamy or Crunchy ¹	200	2	0	8
✓✓ Smucker's Organic—Creamy or Chunky ¹	190	2	0	8
✓✓ Trader Joe's Organic Salted Valencia	200	2	0	8
✓✓ Wild Friends Classic Creamy	190	2	0	8
✓✓ Trader Joe's Stir, Creamy Salted	190	2	0	7
✓✓ 365 (Whole Foods)—Creamy or Crunchy ¹	200	2.5	0	8
✓✓ Any brand, unsalted and unsweetened ¹	190	2.5	0	8
✓✓ Peanut Butter & Co Old Fashioned	190	2.5	0	8
✓ Earth Balance Crunchy	190	2.5	1	7
✓✓ Smucker's Natural—Creamy or Chunky	190	3	0	8
✓ 365 (Whole Foods) Organic Crunchy	200	3	1	7
✓ Earth Balance Creamy	190	3	1	7
✓ MaraNatha or Trader Joe's—No Stir ¹	190	3	1	7
✓ Peter Pan—Creamy or Crunchy ¹	210	3	2	8
✓ Peanut Butter & Co Crunch Time	180	3	2	7
✓ Peanut Butter & Co Smooth Operator	190	3	2	7
✓ Smart Balance Peanut Butter & Oil Blend ¹	190	3	2	7
✓ Skippy—Creamy ⁵ or Super Chunk	190	3	3	7
RX	180	3.5	0	9
Justin's Classic	210	3.5	0	7
365 (Whole Foods) Organic Creamy	200	3.5	1	7
Earth Balance Peanut & Coconut	190	3.5	1	7
Simply Jif	200	3.5	1	7
Peter Pan Natural—Creamy or Crunchy	210	3.5	2	8
Jif—Creamy, Natural, or Omega-3	190	3.5	2	7
Skippy Natural Creamy ⁵	190	3.5	3	7
Skippy Natural 1/3 Less Sodium & Sugar	210	4	2	7

Powdered or Reduced-Fat Peanut Butter (2 Tbs.)

✓✓ Crazy Richard's 100% Pure! Powder	50	0	0	6
✓✓ Peanut Butter & Co Pure Peanut Powder	50	0	0	6
PB2 Powdered	50	0	1	5
Peanut Butter & Co Original Powder	50	0	1	5
Better'n Peanut Butter Original ⁵	100	0	2	4
✓ Peter Pan Whipped	150	2.5	2	6
Jif Reduced Fat ⁵	190	2.5	3	7

Almond Butter (2 Tbs.)

✓✓ Any brand, unsalted and unsweetened ¹	190	1.5	0	7
✓✓ Trader Joe's Salted—Creamy or Crunchy	190	1.5	0	7
✓✓ Wild Friends Classic Creamy	190	1.5	0	7
✓✓ RX	190	2	0	9
✓ MaraNatha No Stir—Creamy or Crunchy ¹	190	2.5	1	7
Jif Natural Creamy	200	3	2	5

Cashew or Macadamia Butter (2 Tbs.)

	Calories	Sat Fat (g)	Added Sugars (g)*	Protein (g)
365 (Whole Foods) Creamy Cashew	190	3	0	4
Trader Joe's Creamy Salted Cashew	190	3	0	4
Justin's Classic Cashew	210	4	0	5
FBOMB Macadamia with Coconut	210	10	0	2

Soy, Pea, & Seed Butters (2 Tbs.)

Sneaky Chef No-Nut Creamy	180	1	3	3
✓✓ SunButter No Sugar Added	210	1.5	0	7
✓✓ SunButter Organic	210	1.5	0	7
✓ Wild Friends Organic Honey Sunflower	190	1.5	1	7
✓ SunButter—Creamy or Natural ¹	200	1.5	3	7
✓ Trader Joe's Sunflower Seed	200	2	2	7
✓✓ Tahini, any brand ¹	190	2.5	0	6
✓ Wowbutter—Creamy or Crunchy	200	3	2	7

Flavored Peanut Butter (2 Tbs.)

✓✓ RX Honey Cinnamon	180	3	0	9
✓ Earth Balance Cran Seed Crunch	160	2.5	1	6
✓ MaraNatha Banana	180	3	1	7
✓ Earth Balance Coffee Chocolate Crunch	160	2.5	2	6
✓ Skippy Roasted Honey Nut	200	3	3	7
✓ Smucker's Natural with Honey	190	3	3	7
Jif Natural Honey—Creamy or Crunchy	190	3	4	7
Peanut Butter & Co Dark Chocolatey Dreams	170	2.5	6	6
Reese's Spreads Chocolate	190	2	18	3

Flavored Almond, Hazelnut, & Other Butters (2 Tbs.)

✓✓ RX Vanilla Almond	180	2	0	9
✓ RX Maple Almond	180	2	1	9
✓ Wild Friends Collagen—Almond or Peanut ¹	180	2	1	9
FBOMB Salted Chocolate Macadamia	210	4	1	2
✓ MaraNatha Raw Maple Almond	180	1.5	2	6
✓ Simply Balanced (Target) Creamy Vanilla Almond	190	2	2	6
✓ Justin's Cinnamon Almond	200	2	3	6
✓ Justin's Honey Almond	200	3	3	6
Wild Friends Chocolate Almond	180	1.5	4	6
Justin's Chocolate Hazelnut & Almond	200	3	8	4
Soom Chocolate Sweet Tahini	170	2	10	5
Trader Joe's Cocoa Almond Spread	210	1.5	17	2
Nutella	200	4	19	2

Cookie Butters (2 Tbs.)

Trader Joe's Speculoos ¹	180	2.5	10	2
Lotus Biscoff ¹	170	2.5	11	1

✓✓ Best Bite. ✓ Honorable Mention. ¹ Average of the entire line or of the varieties listed. ⁵ Contains at least 150 milligrams of sodium. *Some added-sugars numbers are estimates.

Daily Values (DVs): Saturated Fat: 20 grams. **Added Sugars:** 50 grams. **Sodium:** 2,300 mg. **Protein Daily Target:** 85 grams.

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



RIGHT STUFF

Summer Fling



Nothing says summer like stone fruits—named for their hard pit—like peaches, plums, and nectarines.

But one member of the group—**fresh apricots**—often gets lost in the crowd.

And that's a shame, because it's

hard to beat their delicate flavor, slightly tart skin, and sweet interior. If the apricots at your supermarket don't wow you, look for some perfectly ripe, sweet samples at your local farmers' market through July.

Treat apricots like avocados: buy them when they yield slightly to the touch, let them soften in a brown paper bag on the counter, and, when ripe, store them in the fridge for three to five days.

These juicy little orbs supply more than pleasure. Expect a good dose of fiber, potassium, and vitamins A, C, and E...all for just 70 calories in an official four-apricot serving.

Not content to just slice or nibble your fruit straight off the pit? Try adding slices to yogurt, cereal, or oatmeal. Or stir them into a hearty Moroccan chicken stew.

Apricots also add a delightful surprise to grain or green salads, like this one from our Healthy Cook, Kate Sherwood:

Top 4 cups salad greens with 2 sliced apricots, half a sliced avocado, and 2 Tbs. sunflower seeds. Whisk together 1 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil, 1 tsp. balsamic vinegar, and ½ tsp. salt with a grind of black pepper. Drizzle over the salad. Serves 2.

Bonus: Keep your eyes peeled for dazzling apricot-plum hybrids—**pluots**, **plumcots**, and **apriums**—all summer long.

Photos: Anna Kucherova/stock.adobe.com (top left), Jennifer Urban/CSPi (all others).

FOOD PORN



P'Zone Defense

"The ultimate comeback: 17 years after its debut, the cult-favorite **P'ZONE** is back, returning to **Pizza Hut** menus



nationwide!" announced the chain just in time for this year's NCAA basketball tournament.

Just what we've been waiting for.

For the few poor souls who somehow missed the P'Zone's earlier fame, here's how the company describes it: "Sealed inside a toasted parmesan pizza crust, the beloved P'ZONE is filled with savory pizza toppings and melted cheese, baked calzone style and served with marinara dipping sauce." Beloved? Umm...

The TV ads get right to the point: "It's meaty, cheesy, melty, and you know it's big."

Because if there's one thing Americans need right now, it's big, cheap pockets of white flour stuffed with cheese and processed meats like sausage and pepperoni.

Each **Meaty P'Zone** has 1,150 calories and close to a day's worth of saturated fat (21 grams) and sodium (2,270 milligrams). It's like eating *two* Pizza Hut pepperoni personal pan pizzas.

The **Pepperoni** (970 calories) and **Supremo** (980) P'Zones aren't much better.

"There is a whole generation of people who have never had the P'Zone," Pizza Hut's chief brand officer told *Forbes*. "We thought it would be fun to introduce it to them during March Madness."

Madness, indeed.

pizzahut.com—(800) 948-8488



DISH of the month

Miso Broccoli

In a large non-stick pan, sauté 1 minced garlic clove in 2 Tbs. olive oil for 1 minute. Stir in 1 Tbs. miso paste and 2 Tbs. water. Add 4 cups broccoli florets and stir-fry until tender-crisp, 1-2 minutes. Serves 4.

quick tip

Need honey, peanut butter, or molasses for a recipe but can't get it out of the measuring spoon or cup? Lightly coat the spoon or cup with oil first. The sticky stuff will slide right off.

