

NUTRITION ACTION

HEALTH LETTER™

Living

THE SCOOP ON ICE CREAM SHOPS

By Jayne Hurley
& Bonnie Liebman

In 1904, at the St. Louis World's Fair, an ice cream vendor ran out of dishes. Ernest Hamwi, a Syrian concessionaire next door, rolled one of his wafer-like waffles into a cone shape and offered it to his neighbor.

A century later, you don't have to wait for a World's Fair to buy ice cream cones. Every shopping mall, amusement park, airport terminal, and neighborhood features at least one "scoop shop." And the dazzling larger-than-life-size dishes displayed on menus, countertops, and posters make a single-scoop cone look puny.

What used to be a 150-calorie treat has mutated into a 500-to-1,200-calorie indulgence. Saturated fat? Don't ask.

(Continued on page 10)



Photo: Renée Comet.

FDA: THE GUTLESS TIGER

Enron, Jack in the Box, Arthur Andersen, Martha Stewart. In today's world, greed and carelessness often trump decency, caution, and safety. That's why we need strong regulatory agencies to prevent the excesses of a free market-place. And why the Center for Science in the Public Interest (publisher of *Nutrition Action Healthletter*) is trying to increase the budget of the foods division of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA)... and why we pepper the agency with complaints about dangerous foods and deceptive food labels.



Memo from MFJ

Unfortunately, the FDA isn't living up to its responsibilities:

- Hundreds of foods bear phony "whole grain," "all fruit," "natural," and other claims. And thousands of products' ingredients aren't listed "prominently and conspicuously," as the law requires.

- The FDA doesn't consider it "harm" when a food ingredient like olestra or Quorn causes vomiting, dehydration, and other reactions in some consumers. And its efforts to prevent food poisoning have been anemic.

- The FDA doesn't take the initiative to propose clearer labels or other ways to encourage people to eat more healthful foods. Instead, it recently weakened the

law against making unsubstantiated health claims on package labels.

- The FDA lets the dietary supplement industry hawk many products that are backed by flimsy—or no—science (although Congress clipped the agency's wings in 1994 when it last took an aggressive stance).

Clearly, some of the FDA's slowness and inactivity is due to inadequate staffing. Despite the growth of the food industry, the increasing complexity of the food supply, and new laws that need to be enforced, the staff of the FDA's food labeling and nutrition division is about half its size of 10 years ago. The FDA needs more muscle.

But it also needs more guts. The agency simply doesn't have what it takes to challenge unsafe and deceptively labeled products. Congressional investigations into whether the FDA is truly living up to its responsibilities would help, but they're unlikely any time soon.

So it's up to you, your friends, neighbors, relatives, and co-workers to speak up and say "I've had enough of the FDA's failure to enforce the law."

I urge you to send a copy of this editorial, along with a personal note, to your Congressperson, Senators, and the editor of your local newspaper.



Michael F. Jacobson, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Center for Science in the Public Interest

NUTRITIONIST WANTED

Nutrition Action Healthletter is seeking an experienced nutritionist or dietitian to design food studies and supervise staffers who evaluate supermarket and restaurant foods. Applicant must have an RD or advanced degree in nutrition, five or more years of non-clinical experience, and an interest in improving the American diet. Please send letter and resume to: CSPI, P:SNU, Suite 300, 1875 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

The contents of NAH are not intended to provide medical advice, which should be obtained from a qualified health professional.

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Corrections

- On p. 3 of the April cover story ("Gut Check"), we incorrectly referred to a form of esophageal cancer called "adenocarcinoma" as "adenoma."
- On p. 8 of the May issue ("A DASHing Pyramid"), we stated that a serving of dried fruit is 1/2 cup. In fact, a serving is 1/4 cup.

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THE Skin Game

By David Schardt

What causes wrinkles? Genes play a role. So does the loss of skin tone that comes with age. Then there's the toll from years of squinting, frowning, and smiling, as well as exposure to the sun.

"We can't control our genes or the natural course of aging, at least not yet," says Sheldon Pinnell, a professor emeritus at the Duke University Medical Center in Durham, North Carolina, where he served 15 years as chair of the division of dermatology. "But we do have some control over our exposure to sunlight, which can damage and age our skin prematurely."

"Photo-aging" is the term for the long-term thinning, sagging, and wrinkling of the skin that's caused by sunlight.

"The difference between skin that's photo-aged and skin that's just plain aged is the difference between the skin on the face or hands and the skin on the buttocks," says Pinnell.

The way photo-aging harms the skin suggests a way to help stave off the damage.

"Sunlight shining on skin creates what we call 'reactive oxygen species,'" explains Pinnell. If they're not neutralized, these high-energy rogue molecules, which include free radicals, can damage the protein structure, cell membranes, and DNA of the skin.

Much of what happens in photo-aging is a result of this oxidative stress,

"Your skin looks great."

Some people would do—or spend—anything to hear those words. It's no surprise that one of the top fund-raising attractions for public television stations across the country last year was an infomercial by the author of "The Wrinkle Cure."

What may be a surprise is that the "cure" turns out to be an untested regimen of diet, expensive supplements, and even more expensive cosmetics (see p. 6).

Is there any food you can eat, supplement you can take, or nutrient-rich lotion you can rub on that will keep your skin from sagging and wrinkling as you age?

says Pinnell. "People, as well as animals and plants, protect themselves from oxidative stress with antioxidants."

The major antioxidants in skin are vitamins C and E, which we get from our diet. Others, like coenzyme Q10, glutathione, and lipoic acid, are made by our bodies, though we can also get them from food. And plants synthesize thousands of antioxidants called polyphenols, which we can absorb from the fruits and vegetables we eat.

"There are multiple antioxidant systems in skin that are working to reduce oxidative stress within cells," explains Barbara Gilchrest, chair of the department of dermatology at Boston University School of Medicine and Boston Medical Center. But that doesn't mean that taking antioxidants will protect your skin.

"Nobody knows whether these systems get overwhelmed during sun exposure, or with the passage of time, or when you smoke a cigarette, or when you eat too much," says Gilchrest. "There's a thought that if you simply had more antioxidants it would be better. That may be true, but it may not."

So far, the research hasn't been

promising.

"It's possible to replenish the skin's natural reservoir of antioxidants somewhat with antioxidant supplements," says Pinnell, "but you need very large amounts and you get only a modest effect. The problem is that there are mechanisms in the body that control how much of the antioxidants are absorbed and how much can eventually be delivered to the skin. You can't overcome those mechanisms."

For example, taking daily megadoses of vitamin C (3,000 mg) *plus* vitamin E (4,400 IU) can boost the skin's defenses modestly, says Pinnell. "But you can't get any more into the skin even if you swallow a carload of the vitamins."

That much vitamin C will give some people diarrhea, and that's twice as much vitamin E as the National Academy of Sciences says is safe to take every day. Too much vitamin E can cause internal bleeding and can hinder blood clotting, at least in animals.

High doses of beta-carotene (at least 40,000 IU a day) also can provide some protection. "But the large amounts necessary may provoke lung cancer in

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smokers,” Pinnell points out.

Researchers haven’t looked closely at whether lipoic acid, plant polyphenols, and most other antioxidants found in food can protect human skin.

As for coenzyme Q10: “Taking Co-

Q10 to supplement the skin has not been particularly successful,” says Valerian Kagan, professor of Environmental and Occupational Health at the University of Pittsburgh. “You can enrich the blood with CoQ10, but the

Here Comes the Sun

“I am completely convinced that sunscreens are helpful in preventing skin cancers and aging of the skin caused by too much sun exposure,” says Barbara Gilchrest, chair of the department of dermatology at the Boston University School of Medicine.

“Photons [light particles] are the problem. They’re ultimately what causes cancer and damages the skin. And sunscreens absorb or reflect photons. So just on a purely logical basis, they have to help.”

Proving that in humans would be difficult, she adds, because skin cancer and photo-aging take decades to develop. “But it’s been shown in animal studies that the long-term use of sunscreen definitely reduces cancer and photo-aging.”

Sunlight contains two kinds of ultraviolet (UV) light—longer UVA rays and shorter UVB rays.

- UVB is the main cause of sunburns and most skin cancers. It tends to be more intense during the summer, at higher altitudes, and at locations closer to the equator.
- UVA, while not as powerful as UVB, penetrates more deeply into the skin. It’s the chief culprit behind wrinkling, leathering, and other forms of photo-aging. It doesn’t vary based on season, altitude, or distance from the equator.

New evidence shows that UVA may be more dangerous than researchers thought. According to the Skin Cancer Foundation, “the latest studies show that UVA not only exacerbates UVB’s carcinogenic effects, but may directly induce some skin cancers, including melanomas.”

A SIMPLE GUIDE TO SUN LOTIONS

■ **Sunscreens & Sunblocks.** *Sunscreens* chemically absorb harmful ultraviolet rays, while *sunblocks* physically deflect them. Almost all shield against sunburn-causing UVB (how much protection you get depends on the SPF number). Many also provide some protection against UVA, though there’s no way to tell how much (there’s no SPF rating for UVA rays). But neither sunscreen nor sunblock is 100 percent effective, so it’s important to also protect your skin with hats, sunglasses, clothing, and umbrellas.

■ **SPF (Sun Protection Factor).** It measures how much protection a product provides against sunburn-causing

UVB (but not damaging UVA). If you normally get a sunburn after five minutes under the noonday sun, a product with an SPF of 15 would let you stay outside 15 times longer (75 minutes, in this case) before you started to burn. That assumes you’ve put enough of it on.

■ **UVA/UVB.** Look for a lotion with an SPF of at least 15, which means that it will block or deflect 93 percent of the sun’s UVB rays (you can increase the protection to 97 percent with an SPF of 30). Then check the ingredient list to see whether it contains UVA-blockers like avobenzone (also known as Parsol 1789), octylcrylene, benzophenone, zinc oxide (the white paste that lifeguards paint on their noses), or micronized titanium dioxide or clear zinc oxide (which don’t leave a greasy white mess). Unfortunately, there’s no way to tell how much UVA protection you’ll be getting.

■ **PABA.** Some people are sensitive to PABA (para-aminobenzoic acid), a common ingredient in sunscreens. If you break out with an itchy rash, find a sun lotion that’s PABA-free (most will say so on the label).

■ **Applying Sunscreen or Sunblock.** Most experts recommend applying a sunscreen or sunblock with an SPF of at least 15 about a half-hour before you go outside, even if it’s cloudy (clouds block less than 20 percent of UV radiation). They also say to reapply the lotion every two hours. The American Academy of Dermatology recommends an SPF of at least 30 if you’ll be in the sun for more than an hour. If you’ll be sweating heavily, you should use an SPF of at least 30 on your face, even if you’re going to be outside for less than an hour, since the sweat will rapidly thin it down to a 15 (a waterproof formula will stay on longer when you sweat). If you’re at the beach, keep in mind that it takes one ounce—the amount in a shot glass—to adequately cover an average adult’s body.

“Unfortunately, most people apply too little sunscreen or sunblock too infrequently to get its full protection,” says Duke University’s Sheldon Pinnell.

For more information on sunscreen or sunblock, visit www.besunsensible.org, which is maintained by The Sabra Dalby Rightmire Foundation for Melanoma Education and Research as a memorial to a 27-year-old woman who died of melanoma skin cancer in 1999.

peripheral tissues like skin get almost nothing.”

Only one small study has tested a food for its ability to protect the skin. Nine German volunteers were given about 2½ tablespoons of tomato paste every day. After 10 weeks they had 40 percent less reddening of the skin when exposed to ultraviolet (UV) light than ten volunteers who ate no tomato paste.¹ (Eating tomato paste for four weeks provided no protection.) The tomato paste naturally contained 16 milligrams of the carotenoid lycopene.

“This is a significant finding, even though the protection isn’t comparable to that of a sunscreen with a high sun protection factor [SPF],” says Judy D. Ribaya-Mercado of the Jean Mayer U.S. Department of Agriculture Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging at Tufts University in Boston.

“People don’t use sunscreen all the time, so substances with sun-protecting properties—presumably lycopene in tomato paste—could provide some degree of protection,” she explains. “But the study showed that a person would have to eat lycopene-rich foods for several months before they saw a benefit.”

What’s more, the trial was too small and short-term to say whether lycopene can protect the skin against *long-term* skin damage.

“No one has scientifically demonstrated a significant protection or reversal of wrinkling or photo-aging from foods or supplements that contain antioxidants,” says Jeffrey Blumberg, Chief of the Antioxidants Research Laboratory at the Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging.

Gimme Some Skin

If you can’t eat or take enough antioxidants to protect your skin, how about rubbing them on?

“Applying them directly is one way to solve the problem of getting additional antioxidants into the skin,” says Duke University’s Sheldon Pinnell. But for that to work, several obstacles have to be overcome.

“Antioxidants are inherently unstable compounds and many of them are deeply colored,” Pinnell points out. “That makes them difficult to formulate in an acceptable, stable product for cosmetic use.” (Pinnell consults for a

Texas “cosmeceuticals” company that markets a vitamin C cream he helped develop.)

What’s more, the concentrations of antioxidants need to be substantial, and they have to protect against sunburn, photo-aging, and skin cancer.

“With a combination of topical vitamin C and vitamin E, you can get about a four-fold protection against UV-induced reddening and DNA damage in the skin of pigs,” says Pinnell. (Pig skin is virtually identical to human skin.) That’s comparable to a weak sunscreen.

“The same protection may occur in humans,” he adds. “But, so far, there is very little research to show that.”

The bottom line: Research on cosmeceuticals is in its infancy. “I haven’t seen any data that establishes the efficacy of topically applied antioxidant preparations, either to reduce oxidative stress or to prevent aging,” says Boston University’s Barbara Gilchrest.

“Frankly, I don’t think anybody really knows to what degree antioxidants get into the skin in an effective form, to what degree the skin’s ability to handle oxidative stress is already maxed out, or even which antioxidants would be helpful if delivered in an effective form.”

¹ *Journal of Nutrition* 131: 1449, 2001.



Ironing Out Wrinkles

Here are three of the most popular wrinkle-fighters:

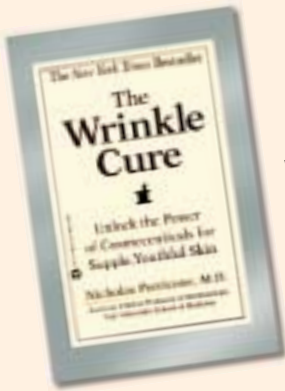
■ **BOTOX.** Last year, the Food and Drug Administration approved injections of Botox, the toxin that causes botulism food poisoning, “to temporarily improve the appearance of moderate to severe frown lines between the eyebrows.” It quickly became the fastest-growing cosmetic procedure in the U.S. Injecting Botox into the skin temporarily paralyzes the underlying muscles, which prevents them from contracting and forming frowns. The effect wears off in four to six months.

Some physicians are using Botox to treat facial wrinkles that aren’t caused by frowning. “The safety and effectiveness of Botox injections into other regions of the face and neck, alone or in combination with the frown-lines region, have not been clinically evaluated,” says the FDA.

■ **RETINOIC ACID.** Retinoic acid, a form of vitamin A that is sold under the brand names Renova, Avita, and Retin-A, can improve fine wrinkles, discoloration, and rough skin from overexposure to sunlight. But it doesn’t work for everyone. After applying retinoic acid every day for six months, only a third of users will notice moderate improvement in wrinkles or spotty discoloration. Some over-the-counter anti-wrinkle creams contain the “retinol” form of vitamin A. It’s not clear if the skin can convert retinol into enough retinoic acid to have the same benefits as the prescription drug.

■ **ALPHA HYDROXY ACIDS (AHAs).** When rubbed on, they cause the skin to shed its outer layer. According to the FDA, that “supposedly” can reduce wrinkles, spots, and other signs of aging and sun damage (the FDA has never approved AHAs as a drug). Over-the-counter cosmetics typically contain less than one-fifth the concentration of AHAs that are found in the preparations doctors can use. The FDA has proposed an alert for labels of cosmetics that contain AHA. It would warn consumers that the product could increase the skin’s sensitivity to sunlight, and would recommend that they use sunscreen and limit sun exposure until at least a week after they stop using the cosmetic.

A New Wrinkle



Wrinkle-free for life?

Nicholas Perricone claims that his diet, supplement, and cosmetics

regimen prevents—and even reverses—wrinkles, sagging skin, and other signs of aging.

The Connecticut dermatologist seems to be popping up everywhere. His “The Wrinkle Cure” and “The Perricone Prescription” have spent time on the best-seller lists. His expensive line of supplements and even-pricier cosmetics have done well (sales for the cosmetics are expected to top \$80 million this year). And his infomercial was one of the top fund-raising attractions for public television stations last year.

One place you won’t see him any more is at Yale University. Although the jacket of “The Wrinkle Cure” identifies Perricone as “Yale University’s dermatological and anti-aging expert,” it turns out that he wasn’t exactly teaching or researching up a storm there.

“Dr. Perricone held an unpaid appointment as assistant clinical professor of dermatology at Yale School of Medicine,” said a university statement. “In that capacity, he provided oversight to medical students in a clinical setting several times per year. His appointment expired in June 2002.”

Perricone quickly landed another academic title, at his alma mater, Michigan State University. Two months after appointing him an adjunct professor, MSU announced that Perricone had given the school \$5 million. (The university denies that there was any connection between the appointment and the gift.)

What’s so appealing about Perricone’s message?

“The smooth skin that contributes so much to your youthful appearance does not have to be lost during mid-life and

beyond....” he says in “The Perricone Prescription.” “You can reverse and certainly prevent visible skin damage....Being wrinkle free for life is achievable....”

But not everyone buys into Perricone’s pitch.

“He proclaims these ideas, but he hasn’t studied them at all, at least anything that’s been published,” says Sheldon Pinnell, former chair of the division of dermatology at the Duke University Medical Center. “You can say without any argument at all that Perricone has never done a credible experiment that proves his program does what he says it does.”

“There’s a retreat from hard data,” says Barbara Gilchrest, chair of the department of dermatology at Boston University School of Medicine and Boston Medical Center. “There’s lots of testimonials and hand-waving. Nick Perricone has made a fortune talking about this. I’m happy for him, but I’m not sure how much of a service it is to the consuming public.”

So why was Perricone’s untested program used to raise money by so many public broadcasting stations during the past year? “He had good credentials, we didn’t hear any criticism of his books, and our producers who watched the program thought it was good,” says PBS vice president of programming Gustavo Sagastume. PBS never asked outside experts to review Perricone’s claims.

Among those claims (Perricone never responded to our request for an interview):

■ **PROTEIN.** “The contemporary American diet rarely contains protein in sufficient quantity to maintain and repair cell and skin health,” says Perricone. That’s why he recommends 10 to 14 ounces per day of high-quality

animal protein like fish, egg whites, or skinless chicken and turkey breast.

***The truth:** Most Americans already eat about twice as much protein as they need, much of it high-quality animal protein. And no one has tested a high-protein diet on skin wrinkling.*

■ **GLYCEMIC HORRORS.** “Think twice before you reach for a carrot,” says Perricone. Why? “When foods rapidly convert to sugar in the bloodstream...they cause browning, or glycation of the protein in your tissues. ...Glycation can occur in skin as well, creating detrimental age-related changes to collagen—and that means deep wrinkles.” Among Perricone’s “Foods to Avoid”: bananas, bread, cereals (except non-instant oatmeal), dried fruit, fruit juice, mango, oranges, papaya, popcorn, rice, and watermelon. Vegetables to shun include beets, corn, cooked carrots, and sweet potatoes.

***The truth:** “There are several missing links of scientific data that would be required to substantiate this claim,” says blood sugar (glucose) expert Cyril Kendall of the University of Toronto. “As far as I am aware, no studies have looked at glucose in the diet and skin wrinkling. The claim just isn’t supported by the scientific literature.”*

■ **SALMON.** “Of all the foods that can keep you young,” says Perricone, “fish tops the list.” He singles out salmon, because of its protein, anti-inflammatory fatty acids, and (he claims) DMAE (dimethylaminoethanol). He calls the fish “your magic bullet for great skin tone, keeping your face firm and contoured.”

***The truth:** While salmon and other fish may reduce your risk of heart disease, there is no evidence that they prevent wrinkles. What’s more, there is no credible*



Fiber & Colon Cancer...Again

Can a high-fiber diet cut the risk of colon cancer? After several disappointing studies, two new reports suggest that fiber may indeed be protective.

In one, which looked at nearly 38,000 people, those who consumed the most fiber (more than 30 grams a day) were 27 percent less likely to have colon polyps than those who ate the least fiber (less than 15 grams a day).

In the second, researchers asked more than 500,000 people from ten European countries to complete diet questionnaires between 1992 and 1998. Those who reported the highest fiber intakes (at least 32 grams a day) had a 42 percent lower risk of being diagnosed with colon cancer by 2002 than those who consumed the least fiber (less than 13 grams a day).

What to do: It's not clear why fiber appeared to protect the colon in these studies, but not in earlier (equally good) research. It's possible that people didn't eat enough fiber for enough time in some of the earlier studies. But it's also possible that something else about the fiber-eaters in the new studies reduced their risk.

Either way, it makes sense to eat fiber-rich foods like whole grains, beans, fruits, and vegetables. If nothing else, they should help reduce the risk of heart disease, diverticulosis, and constipation.

Lancet 361: 1491, 1496, 2003.

HOW HIGH IS HIGH?

For years, experts defined hypertension, or high blood pressure, as 140 over 90 or higher, even though the risk of heart disease and stroke starts to climb at lower levels, which were mistakenly called "normal." No longer.

Normal blood pressure is *less than* 120 over *less than* 80, according to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. Systolic pressure of 120 to 139 or diastolic pressure of 80 to 89 is now called "prehypertension."

What to do: Don't assume that your blood pressure is normal just because it used to be. Get it checked, and do what you can to lower it. That means lose excess weight, exercise for at least three hours a week, consume no more than 2,400 mg of sodium per day, limit alcoholic drinks to one (for women) or two (for men) per day, and eat a diet that's low in saturated fat and high in fruits and vegetables (eight to ten servings a day) and low-fat dairy foods (two or three servings a day). (See "Curtains for Heart Disease?" May 2003, p. 6.)

J. Amer. Med. Assoc. 289: 2560, 2003 and 289: 2083, 2131, 2003.

POTATO NO MORE

Been a couch potato all your life? Here's a reason to get cookin'.

In a 13-year trial of more than 9,500 women aged 65 or older, researchers compared those who stayed sedentary to those who started exercising sometime during the first six years of the study. Sedentary women who started walking about a mile a day had a 40 to 50 percent lower risk of dying—largely of heart disease or cancer—than women who stayed sedentary over the 13 years.

What to do: Walk, run, bike, dance. It doesn't matter, as long as you move.

J. Amer. Med. Assoc. 289: 2379, 2003.

evidence that DMAE in food or supplements can smooth the skin. And none of the scientists we contacted (at the National Marine Fisheries Service, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the School of Aquatic and Fishery Science at the University of Washington) could even confirm that DMAE is found in salmon.

■ **ALPHA LIPOIC ACID.** It's "one of the most powerful antiaging, antioxidant, anti-inflammatories available," says Perricone. "It blocks the production of enzymes that damage the collagen fibers, preserving a smooth skin surface. It is equally effective in preventing glycation, the harmful effects of sugar molecules on collagen fibers."

The truth: "Lipoic acid is an antioxidant and does have antioxidant powers," says Pinnell. "But there's no evidence that having extra lipoic acid in the skin is effective. It's not a bad idea. It just doesn't seem to work."

Then there's Perricone's daily vitamin regimen—a multivitamin and at least a dozen other supplements with breakfast and half a dozen more with lunch. You can conveniently order them from Perricone's Web site. Total cost for the "antioxidants, B-complex energy enhancers, macrominerals, lipotropic factors, enzymes, and herbal extracts" in Perricone's Skin & Total Body Nutritional Supplements: \$120 a month. (You can also order a month's worth of Perricone's Weight Management Program supplements for \$195, but that's another story.)

And don't forget the liquid cleansers, moisturizers, and morning and bedtime wrinkle-free skin care products you'll need. Perricone offers four "recommended" collections of "cosmeceuticals." Recommendation #3, for example, consists of "8 products designed to reduce the appearance of loss of tone, sagging skin, and fine lines." At \$438, it's the least costly of the four.

Being wrinkle-free for life isn't cheap. 🍷

NINE STUPID SERVINGS

By Bonnie

Millions of the Nutrition Facts labels that are on just a package. But what do they look at? Calories? Fat? Sodium? If the numbers on the serving size matter.

Despite—and because of—the FDA's Administration's upping serving-size counts, you still get snookered by more calories, saturated fat, and sodium than you think. Here are some examples of some

A PIECE OF THE PIE. Or glance at their Nutrition Facts labels and you'd think that a piece of Mrs. Smith's Boston Cream Pie had 80 fewer calories than a piece of her Meringue Pie (210 vs 290) closer. A serving of Lemo is listed as 1/8 of a pie (120 calories) is listed as 1/10 of a pie (77 calories). The FDA assigns a smaller serving size for items like éclairs, cream puffs, and Lemon meringue falls into a 125-gram serving. Got that? Once you adjust for the difference in calories all but



1

SPLIT A BOX? If you think you're getting the 320 calories, seven grams of saturated fat, and 970 mg of sodium listed as one serving on the label, think again. Those numbers are for only *two-thirds* of each petite box.

Stouffer's is using the FDA's one-cup serving for "mixed dishes measurable with a cup"—things like spaghetti with sauce, chili, stir-frys, and casseroles. Expecting people to eat only one cup of a 1 1/2-cup box is a joke. But Stouffer's customers—who are getting 480 calories, 11 grams of sat fat, and 1,460 mg of sodium in each box—shouldn't be laughing.



3

SWISS IMPRECISION. "For Two Servings," says the small print on the front of the 14-ounce box. But the Nutrition Facts label on the back says that a serving is two tablespoons (one ounce), because that's the FDA's serving size for dips. So instead of 60 calories and three grams of sat fat in two tablespoons, eating half the box will give you 420 calories and 21 grams of sat fat (an entire day's worth). Oops.

4

GET PERSONAL. Boboli packs "2 personal size crusts" for pizza into each of these packages. But according to the Nutrition Facts label, a serving is half an eight-inch crust. Eat an entire crust and you get 400 calories, not the 200 calories listed on the label. (You also get 800 mg of sodium instead of 400 mg.) In Boboli's defense, half a crust (71 grams) is closest to the FDA's ridiculously small serving size for pizza crust (55 grams). In the FDA's defense...we'll have to get back to you on that.



2

COUNT YOUR COOKIES. According to the Nutrition Facts labels, you get 160 calories in a serving of regular Chips Ahoy! but only 80 calories in a serving of Peanut Butter Chips Ahoy! That's because the serving size for the regular is three cookies (32 grams) while the serving size for the peanut butter is one cookie (15 grams). Why?

The FDA's serving for cookies is 30 grams, but cookies come in discrete units. If a "unit food" weighs at least half of the FDA's serving size—only the Peanut Butter Chips Ahoy! do—its label can use one unit as a serving. There you have it.



5

Photos: Nick Waring

SERVING-SIZE TRICKS

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 Food and Drug
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 Here are a few
 ne typical traps.



6

CUP WISE, OUNCE FOOLISH. The FDA's serving size for cooked pasta is one cup. (It takes two ounces of dry pasta to make that cup.) You might eat only one cup as a side order, but as a main dish? At a typical Italian restaurant, a serving of spaghetti with sauce is 3½ cups, not one.

What's worse, few boxes mention how much cooked spaghetti you get from each two-ounce serving of dry pasta. So most people have no way of figuring out how many calories they're eating. If the 210 calories on the label jump to 420 (because you eat two cups) or 630 (because you eat three), you oughta know.



8

RAMEN FOR TWO? Like most soups, Maruchan Ramen Noodle uses the FDA's one-cup serving size, which is half a package. Are they kidding? If, like most people, you eat the entire package, you end up with 380 calories, eight grams of saturated fat (thanks to the hydrogenated oils in the noodles), and 1,780 mg of sodium. It's like eating a Quarter Pounder with half a teaspoon of salt sprinkled on top. Yum.



7

SODA PLOT. It doesn't matter if you're drinking a soft drink, an iced tea, a fruit "drink," a lemonade, or a fruit juice. If you buy a standard, 20-ounce bottle, you're probably going to drink it by yourself. So what if the label says that a bottle contains 2½ (eight-ounce) servings? You're still not going to share it with 1½ other people. So instead of the 100 calories listed on the label, this Coke really has 250. Wonder how many people that's fooled.

9

DIVIDE BY PIE. It sure looks like a single serving, but according to the FDA (and the box), a serving of pot pie is one cup. So this baby serves two. Surely it would spoil a few appetites if the Nutrition Facts label had to list the 1,140 calories and 32 grams of saturated fat (1½ days' worth) that's in each pie.



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 on Meringue is
) grams), while a serving of Boston Cream
 77 grams). What gives?
 ller serving to Boston cream pie because—
 and cupcakes—it's a "medium weight cake."
 o the general "pie" category, which has a



Adjust the servings to, say, 1/10 of each pie, the
 but disappears.



If your freezer is like those in 90 percent of American households, it's got ice cream or another frozen dessert wedged between the OJ concentrate and the frozen vegetables.

But more than six out of every ten dollars spent on ice cream are spent away from home, much of it at chains like Baskin-Robbins and Häagen-Dazs or at vestiges of 1950s ice cream parlors like Friendly's or Swensen's. And as cones, shakes, and sundaes grow, so do the people who eat them.

In the race to outdo their competitors, ice-cream-sellers can't resist the temptation to build bigger belly traps. It's not just regular ice cream, but super-premium, not just one scoop, but two or three. It's not just a cone, but a chocolate-dipped waffle cone. It's not just hot fudge, nuts, and whipped cream, but every imaginable variety of cookie, candy, and chocolate, from gummy bears to Reese's Pieces to M&M's, Heath Bars, and Oreos.

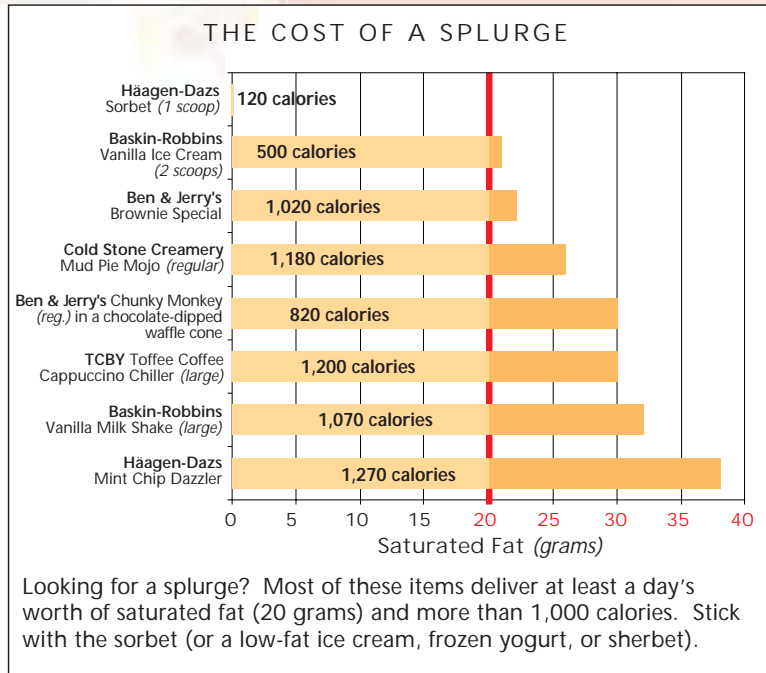
It's a horserace that will leave many customers limping under the stress of excess flab. The catch: With no in-store nutrition labels, customers have no idea what they're getting. Do they think it's diet food? No. But they sure aren't expecting the equivalent of two or three Quarter Pounders.

"With ice cream portions like these, it's no wonder that two out of three Americans are overweight, diabetes rates are rising, and heart disease is our leading cause of death," says Marion Nestle, chair of the nutrition and food studies department at New York University.

Most of our numbers come from the companies, but we analyzed 13 items that the chains didn't tell us about. We also estimated added sugar—which companies didn't divulge—at about four teaspoons per half cup (4 fl. oz.) of most flavors and about six teaspoons per half cup of sundaes, shakes, etc.

With or without sugar numbers, the results will knock your sprinkles off.

The information for this article was compiled by Tamar Genger, Heather Jones, and Sarah Wade. Composites of equal portions of dishes purchased at six ice cream shops in Atlanta, Chicago, Los Angeles, and/or Washington, D.C., were sent to an independent lab. The use of information from this article for commercial purposes is strictly prohibited without written permission from CSPI.



With 4,600 units across the country, Baskin-Robbins is the second largest ice cream chain (we didn't look at ice cream sold at No. 1 Dairy Queen or other fast-food chains). Stick with a *low-fat* single scoop in a cup and you can get away with roughly 100 to 200 calories and no more than three grams of saturated fat. (Add 60 calories for a sugar cone.) Low-fat means sorbet, ices, frozen yogurt, sherbet, or low-fat ice cream.

A scoop of Baskin-Robbins' *regular* ice cream goes from about 250 to 300 calories and eight to 12 grams of sat fat—about half a day's worth. That's bad enough. But double or triple scoops, toppings, and beverages make it much worse.

A large Chocolate Blast, for example, hits 780 calories and 15 grams of sat fat (thanks to its chocolate ice cream, chocolate syrup, and whipped cream). That's as bad as an overstuffed corned beef sandwich. But it's small potatoes compared to the milk shakes, which aren't diluted with coffee and ice. A large Vanilla Shake, for example, packs 1,070 calories and 32 grams of sat fat. It's worse for your heart than drinking three Quarter Pounders.

Photos: Renee Comet (top), Nick Waring (center).

You won't feel deprived with a scoop of Häagen-Dazs sorbet, frozen yogurt, or low-fat ice cream. But just about anything else means "the usual"—250 to 300 calories and eight to 12 grams of saturated fat. (The Gelato has just four grams.)

And that's just the beginning. Posters push the Bailey's Irish Cream Shake (Bailey's Irish Cream ice cream, whole milk, chocolate crunchies, and whipped cream). They don't mention the 960 calories and 32 grams of sat fat we found—not unlike a Burger King Double Whopper with Cheese.

Similar numbers belong on glossy posters of the Banana Split. Each comes with three scoops of ice cream (we chose chocolate, vanilla, and strawberry), three syrups (we picked hot fudge, caramel, and strawberry), and two toppings (we went with peanuts and chocolate crunchies). Would it taste as good if you knew it had 1,100 calories?

At most Häagen-Dazs outlets, the Banana Splits are overshadowed by the Dazzlers ("portable versions of classic sundaes"), which are made with three scoops of ice cream, syrup, whipped cream, and at least one other topping, all packed into a shake-like cup.

And the Dazzlers' numbers are indeed dazzling. A Dulce Split (dulce de leche ice cream, bananas, caramel, and whipped cream) weighs in at nearly 1,200 calories and 22 grams of saturated fat. A Mint Chip (mint chip ice cream, hot fudge, Oreos, chocolate sprinkles, and whipped cream) approaches 1,300 calories and 38 grams of sat fat.

Razzle Dazzle 'em. A Häagen-Dazs Mint Chip Dazzler (three scoops of ice cream, hot fudge, Oreos, chocolate sprinkles, and whipped cream) has 1,270 calories and 38 grams of saturated fat. Think of it as a portable T-bone steak with Caesar salad, baked potato, and sour cream.



Best Bites have no more than 250 calories and 3 grams of saturated fat. Worst Bites have at least 10 grams of sat fat. (The company didn't provide numbers for cones or toppings.)

Ice Cream, Frozen Yogurt, & Sorbet

(1 scoop—4 oz.—unless noted)

	Calories	Total Fat (grams)	Sat Fat (grams)
✓ Soft Serve Non Fat Frozen Yogurt ¹ or Sorbet ¹	120	0	0
✓ Low Fat Ice Cream ¹	170	3	2
✓ Soft Serve Coffee Frozen Yogurt	140	4	3
Gelato ¹	250	9	4
✗ Bailey's Irish Cream Ice Cream	270	17	10
✗ Dulce de Leche Ice Cream	290	17	10
✗ Cookies & Cream Ice Cream	270	17	11
✗ Chocolate or Vanilla Ice Cream	270	18	11
✗ Mint Chip Ice Cream	290	19	12
✗ Vanilla Ice Cream (2 scoops, 8 oz.)	540	36	22
✗ Vanilla Ice Cream (3 scoops, 12 oz.)	810	54	33

Dazzlers, etc.

✗ <i>Dulce Split Dazzler (16 oz.)</i>	1,180	35	22
✗ <i>Banana Split (16 oz.)</i>	1,110	50	29
✗ <i>Bailey's Irish Cream Shake (16 fl. oz.)</i>	960	53	32
✗ <i>Mint Chip Dazzler (14 oz.)</i>	1,270	62	38

✓ Best Bite. ✗ Worst Bite. ¹ Average of all flavors. Numbers for items in *italics* are from CSPI's independent laboratory analyses.

Daily Values (daily limits for a 2,000-calorie diet): **Total Fat:** 65 grams. **Saturated Fat:** 20 grams.

Best Bites have no more than 250 calories and 3 grams of saturated fat. Worst Bites have at least 10 grams of sat fat. (The company didn't provide numbers for toppings.)

Ice Cream, Frozen Yogurt, Sherbet, & Sorbet

(1 scoop—4 oz.—unless noted)

	Calories	Total Fat (grams)	Sat Fat (grams)
✓ Chocolate Soft Serve Frozen Yogurt (small, 5 oz.)	110	0	0
✓ Daiquiri Ice	130	0	0
✓ Sorbet ¹	140	0	0
✓ Rainbow Sherbet	160	2	1
✓ Maui Brownie Madness Yogurt Gone Crazy	200	4	2
✓ Lowfat Ice Cream ¹	210	4	2
✓ Lowfat Ice Cream, No Sugar Added ^{1,2}	150	3	3
Vanilla Ice Cream (kid's scoop, 2.5 oz.)	150	10	7
Pralines 'n Cream Ice Cream	270	13	8
Mint Chocolate Chip or Chocolate Chip Ice Cream	260	14	9
Old Fashioned Butter Pecan Ice Cream	260	18	9
✗ Chocolate or Vanilla Ice Cream ³	280	17	12
✗ Vanilla Ice Cream (2 scoops, 8 oz.)	500	32	21
✗ Vanilla Ice Cream (3 scoops, 12 oz.)	740	48	32

Frozen Drinks

	Calories	Total Fat (grams)	Sat Fat (grams)
Cappuccino Blast (regular, 16 fl. oz.)	310	12	7
✗ Chocolate Blast (regular, 16 fl. oz.)	520	17	10
✗ Cappuccino Blast (large, 24 fl. oz.)	470	18	11
✗ Chocolate Blast (large, 24 fl. oz.)	780	26	15
✗ Chocolate Milk Shake (regular, 16 fl. oz.)	650	33	21
✗ Vanilla Milk Shake (regular, 16 fl. oz.)	710	33	21
✗ Chocolate Milk Shake (large, 24 fl. oz.)	980	50	32
✗ Vanilla Milk Shake (large, 24 fl. oz.)	1,070	50	32

Cones

Sugar Cone	60	0	0
Waffle Cone	120	2	0

✓ Best Bite. ✗ Worst Bite. ¹ Average of all flavors. ² Contains the artificial sweetener aspartame (NutraSweet). ³ Average of the flavors listed.

Daily Values (daily limits for a 2,000-calorie diet): **Total Fat:** 65 grams. **Saturated Fat:** 20 grams.





This up-and-coming West Coast chain, with more than 300 outlets, is headed east. Its claim to fame: “When you choose your size and flavor, it is placed on our frozen granite stone...and the fun begins! We add your tasty Mix-Ins and toppings by hand, to make your very own ‘one-in-a-million’ custom creation.” Translation: Watch out.

A small (six-ounce) sweet cream ice cream (the base of all the non-chocolate flavors) will cost you 380 calories and 15 grams of saturated fat. For another 50 cents you can get a regular (ten ounces) with 640 calories and 25 grams of sat fat. And two more quarters buy you a 14-ounce large. That’s 890 calories and 35 grams of sat fat (more than 1½ days’ worth). Would you like your porterhouse steak in a cone or a cup?

Of course, few people visit Cold Stone Creamery for plain ice cream. They’re there to watch the servers use their paddles to mix in some combination of the 40+ candies, cookies, syrups, and nuts. Except for fruit, you can pretty much count on 100 to 150 calories for each Mix-In (200 for the cookie dough and the peanut butter). Then there’s the 160-calorie waffle bowl or cone, which leaps to 330 calories—and 12 grams of saturated fat—if it’s dipped in chocolate.

That brings, say, a regular sweet cream ice cream with a Reese’s Peanut Butter Cup, roasted almonds, and hot fudge in a chocolate-dipped waffle cone to 1,400 calories and two days’ sat fat. Is Cold Stone *trying* to boost obesity rates?

Of course not. Just giving people a chance to indulge.

To make indulging even easier, Cold Stone offers a selection of “Creations” that mix-and-match for you. We analyzed a handful in regular sizes. The Strawberry Shortcake Serenade (sweet cream ice cream, strawberries, sponge cake, and whipped topping) registered 740 calories and 23 grams of sat fat. (Think a one-pound order of BBQ baby back ribs.) The Founder’s Favorite (sweet cream ice cream, caramel, fudge, pecans, and brownies) brought the calories up to 970 and the sat fat down to just ¾ of a day’s worth (16 grams)—about what you’d get in two Quarter Pounders.

If you’re looking to put on weight, you might want to con-

sider the Germanchokolätekäke (chocolate ice cream, brownies, caramel, coconut, and pecans). Its 1,110 calories come with 21 grams of sat fat. Tough to beat...unless you get the Mud Pie Mojo (coffee ice cream, roasted almonds, fudge, Oreos, peanut butter, and whipped topping). How do 1,180 calories and 26 grams of sat fat grab you? About the same way two Pizza Hut Personal Pan Pepperoni Pizzas would.

Cold Stone does have one item for people who know what happens when they eat a small tub of ice cream, candy, and fudge: a small Italian Sorbet, with 170 fat-free calories. According to the company, a small sweet cream yogurt has 220 calories and no fat, so it also seems like a good deal. But our lab analysis showed otherwise.

We ordered a small Berry Berry Berry Good (sweet cream ice cream plus strawberries, blueberries, and raspberries) off the “Creations” menu. But instead of ice cream, we asked for (supposedly fat-free) sweet cream frozen yogurt. Yet the dish registered 340 calories and 11 grams of fat—seven of them saturated. That’s half the fat of the sweet cream ice cream, but it’s worse than a scoop of nearly any ice cream at any other chain.

What...No Brownie?

At Cold Stone Creamery, a regular Mud Pie Mojo packs 1,180 calories and 26 grams of sat fat. Add a chocolate-dipped cone and you’re up to 1,500 calories and 38 grams of sat fat.



Photo: Renee Comet

Best Bites have no more than 250 calories and 3 grams of saturated fat (the only topping worth a Best Bite is fruit). Worst Bites have at least 10 grams of sat fat.

	Calories	Total Fat (grams)	Sat Fat (grams)
Ice Cream & Sorbet			
✓ Italian Sorbet (small, 6 oz.) ¹	170	0	0
Italian Sorbet (regular, 10 oz.) ¹	280	0	0
✗ Sweet Cream Ice Cream (small, 6 oz.)	380	24	15
✗ Chocolate Ice Cream (regular, 10 oz.)	610	40	25
✗ Sweet Cream Ice Cream (regular, 10 oz.)	640	40	25
✗ Sweet Cream Ice Cream (large, 14 oz.)	890	56	35

Creations

Berry Berry Berry Good, made with Sweet Cream Frozen Yogurt (small, 9 oz.)	340	11	7
✗ Founder’s Favorite (regular, 11 oz.)	970	37	16
✗ Germanchokolätekäke (regular, 12 oz.)	1,110	43	21
✗ Strawberry Shortcake Serenade (reg., 11 oz.)	740	37	23
✗ Mud Pie Mojo (regular, 12 oz.)	1,180	60	26

Mix-Ins²

	Calories	Total Fat (grams)	Sat Fat (grams)
✓ Berries (3 Tbs.) ¹	20	0	0
Fat-Free Caramel or Fudge (2 Tbs.) ³	100	0	0
Oreos (2 cookies)	110	5	1
Caramel or Fudge (2 Tbs.) ³	140	4	1
Nuts (3 Tbs.) ¹	150	15	2
Brownie (2" square, 1 oz.)	160	5	2
Rainbow Sprinkles (3 Tbs.)	170	5	2
Candy Bars (½ bar or 2 Tbs. pieces) ¹	120	6	3
Peanut Butter (2 Tbs.)	190	15	3
Whipped Topping (4 Tbs.)	50	4	4
Coconut (2 Tbs.)	70	5	4
Cookie Dough (1 cookie)	200	10	4
Chips, Chocolate or White (3 Tbs.) ³	170	8	6

Cones

Waffle Cone or Bowl, undipped	160	4	1
✗ Waffle Cone or Bowl, chocolate-dipped ²	330	16	12

✓ Best Bite. ✗ Worst Bite. ¹ Average of all flavors. ² Numbers are CSPI estimates. ³ Average of the items listed. Numbers for items in *italics* are from CSPI’s independent laboratory analyses.

Daily Values (daily limits for a 2,000-calorie diet): **Total Fat:** 65 grams. **Saturated Fat:** 20 grams.



Friendly's

If there are no Friendly's in your neighborhood, you probably have some place similar. The New England-based ice cream parlor chain offers the same kinds of sundaes, shakes, and banana splits that you'll see at Swensen's—which wouldn't give us nutrition information. Friendly's, on the other hand, offered numbers for much of its menu (guess it's not called "friendly" for nothing).

Like most chains, Friendly's does offer at least one low-fat ice cream, frozen yogurt, or sherbet, though the chain's generous portions put their calories in the 220 to 280 range. And while you can order your shake, sundae, split, or frozen drink with low-fat ice cream or frozen yogurt, it's still a splurge.

An Orange Sherbet Slammer (sherbet blended with

sparkling seltzer), for example, has only three grams of saturated fat. But it will weigh you down with 510 calories. A Reduced Fat Vanilla Milk Shake has eight grams of sat fat and 620 calories. While that's not great, it's better than any of the Fribbles ("the shakes that made Friendly's famous"), with 680 calories and 12 grams of sat fat. And the Fribbles look good next to the Double Thick Milk Shakes. A Double Thick Chocolate will set you back 800 calories and 21 grams of sat fat. Not exactly spa food.

Thinking about a sundae? Don't. You'll blow 1,000 calories on the Caramel Fudge Brownie or any of the other Oven Fresh Sundaes. And you'll need a prescription for cholesterol-lowering statin drugs to cope with their saturated fat (20 to 30 grams).

For the seriously underweight (or self-destructive), Friendly's offers Super (five-scoop) versions of its Original (three-scoop) Classic, Double Deluxe, and Candy Shop Sundaes. Take a Super Candy Shop Reese's Pieces (creamy peanut butter sauce, hot fudge, marshmallows, whipped topping, sprinkles, and Reese's Pieces candy on top of vanilla ice cream). You're talking 1,300 calories and 39 grams of sat fat. That's *two* 12-ounce New York strip steaks. But who's counting?

Best Bites have no more than 250 calories and 3 grams of saturated fat. Worst Bites have at least 10 grams of sat fat. (The company didn't provide numbers for toppings.)

Ice Cream, Frozen Yogurt, & Sherbet

	Calories	Total Fat (grams)	Sat Fat (grams)
✓ Vanilla Fat-Free Frozen Yogurt (single, 8 oz.)	220	0	0
Vanilla Fat-Free Frozen Yogurt (double, 10 oz.)	280	0	0
Sherbet (single, 8 oz.) ¹	280	4	2
✓ Vanilla Low-Fat Ice Cream (single, 8 oz.)	240	5	3
Vanilla Low-Fat Ice Cream (double, 10 oz.)	300	6	4
Soft Serve (single, 6 oz.) ¹	280	9	6
✗ Vanilla Ice Cream (single, 8 oz.)	300	16	10
✗ Vanilla Ice Cream (double, 10 oz.)	380	20	13

Shakes, etc.

Orange Sherbet Slammer (11 oz.)	510	5	3
Watermelon Sherbet Slammer (11 oz.)	590	6	4
Strawberry Banana Cyclone (small, 12 oz.)	440	12	7
Reduced Fat Vanilla Milk Shake (15 oz.)	620	12	8
✗ Classic Root Beer Float (20 oz.)	440	17	10
✗ M&M's or Oreo Cyclone (small, 12 oz.) ²	750	23	10
✗ Orange Crème (18 oz.)	710	18	11
✗ Fribble Shake (18 oz.) ¹	680	18	12
✗ Fudge Brownie Cyclone (small, 12 oz.)	790	25	14
✗ Oreo Freeze (20 oz.)	850	28	15
✗ Double Thick Strawberry Milk Shake (15 oz.)	660	26	17
✗ M&M's or Oreo Cyclone (large, 20 oz.) ²	1,250	38	17
✗ Iced Cappuccino (12 oz.)	620	22	18
✗ Strawberry Ice Cream Soda (15 oz.)	540	30	19
✗ Double Thick Vanilla Milk Shake (15 oz.)	720	31	19

	Calories	Total Fat (grams)	Sat Fat (grams)
✗ Double Thick Coffee Milk Shake (15 oz.)	690	31	20
✗ Coffee Ice Cream Soda (15 oz.)	550	32	21
✗ Chocolate Ice Cream Soda (15 oz.)	730	35	21
✗ Double Thick Chocolate Milk Shake (15 oz.)	800	33	21
✗ Fudge Brownie Cyclone (large, 20 oz.)	1,320	42	23
✗ Reese's Peanut Butter Cup Cyclone (large, 20 oz.)	1,470	72	28

Sundaes, etc. (3 scoops unless noted)

✗ Double Deluxe Swiss Chocolate Almond	660	29	14
✗ Double Deluxe Caramel Fudge Blast	700	30	18
✗ Fabulous Royal Banana Split	940	37	19
✗ Candy Shop Satisfaction Snickers	810	35	20
✗ Oven Fresh Strawberry Shortcake	980	46	20
✗ Double Deluxe Beyond Chocolate	650	31	21
✗ Oven Fresh Apple or Triple Berry Pie (2 scoops) ²	1,060	61	21
✗ Candy Shop Reese's Peanut Butter Cup	930	54	23
✗ Oven Fresh Caramel Fudge Brownie	1,060	46	23
✗ Classic Hot Fudge Vanilla	650	34	24
✗ Fabulous Jim Dandy Banana Split (5 scoops)	1,130	48	25
✗ Candy Shop Reese's Pieces	930	52	27
✗ Oven Fresh Mud Pie Madness (2 scoops)	1,180	52	30
✗ Classic Hot Fudge Vanilla (5 scoops)	1,130	55	38
✗ Candy Shop Reese's Pieces (5 scoops)	1,310	71	39

✓ Best Bite. ✗ Worst Bite. ¹ Average of all flavors. ² Average of the items listed.

Daily Values (daily limits for a 2,000-calorie diet): **Total Fat:** 65 grams. **Saturated Fat:** 20 grams.





It's hard not to love the two guys who started this big-hearted, environmentally friendly company (which is now owned by corporate giant Unilever). But if you're not careful, those big hearts can lead you to a big belly and a bypassed heart.

Like most other chains, Ben & Jerry's offers a limited selection of sorbets and frozen yogurts with 150 to 200 calories and no more than two grams of saturated fat in a small (four ounces). But don't expect more than a few flavors on any given day.

In contrast, you'll find fatty ice creams galore. Now you're talking anywhere from 230 calories and eight grams of saturated fat (Strawberry) to 340 calories and 14 grams of sat fat (Coconut Almond Fudge Chip).

But not everyone gets a small at Ben & Jerry's. A regular (six ounces) will run you 350 to 530 calories. For around a dollar more, you can jump to a large (nine ounces) with its 540 to 800 calories and at least a day's worth of sat fat. Thanks for the incentive, guys.

And why stop with a 60-calorie sugar cone when you can get a fresh-baked 160-calorie waffle cone? If you don't mind 320 calories (and

your arteries don't mind 12 grams of sat fat) you can get your waffle cone dipped in chocolate. That brings a regular ice cream up to 650 to 800 calories. Are we having fun yet?

B&J offers ready-made concoctions for those who don't want to make their own creations. The company had no numbers, so we analyzed a few.

The Cappachillo Cooler (ice cream, milk, coffee, and whipped cream) will chill your efforts to look good in a swimsuit. With 720 calories and 19 grams of sat fat, it's about equal to the Waffle Cone Sundae (vanilla ice cream, peanuts, hot fudge, and whipped cream). Replace the waffle cone with a brownie and you've got yourself a Brownie Special, complete with its special 1,020 calories and 22 grams of sat fat. It's a Philly cheese steak sub plus an order of french fries that you can conveniently drink between meals.

Dippity Don't. You needn't worry about the 60 calories in an ordinary sugar cone. But a plain Ben & Jerry's waffle cone adds 160 calories. Dipped in chocolate, it comes to 320 calories and 12 grams of sat fat. Top it with a small Chunky Monkey ice cream, say, and your total is 650 calories and 24 grams of sat fat—more than a day's worth.

Best Bites have no more than 250 calories and 3 grams of saturated fat. Worst Bites have at least 10 grams of sat fat. (The company didn't provide numbers for toppings.)

Ice Cream, Frozen Yogurt, & Sorbet
(small—4 oz.—unless noted)

	Calories	Total Fat (grams)	Sat Fat (grams)
✓ Sorbet ¹	130	0	0
✓ Low Fat Frozen Yogurt ¹	180	2	2
Vanilla For A Change Ice Cream (<i>kid's</i> , 2 oz.)	130	8	6
Strawberry Ice Cream	230	12	8
Chocolate Fudge Brownie Ice Cream	300	14	9
✗ Phish Food Ice Cream	300	16	10
✗ Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough Ice Cream	310	17	10
✗ Vanilla For A Change Ice Cream	260	17	12
✗ Cherry Garcia Ice Cream	270	16	12
✗ Chunky Monkey Ice Cream	330	21	12
✗ New York Super Fudge Chunk Ice Cream	340	22	12
✗ Peanut Butter Cup Ice Cream	350	23	13
✗ Coffee Coffee BuzzBuzzBuzz Ice Cream	300	20	14
✗ Mint Chocolate Chunk Ice Cream	310	21	14
✗ Coconut Almond Fudge Chip Ice Cream	340	23	14

	Calories	Total Fat (grams)	Sat Fat (grams)
✗ Vanilla For A Change Ice Cream (<i>regular</i> , 6 oz.)	390	25	18
✗ Vanilla For A Change Ice Cream (<i>large</i> , 9 oz.)	580	38	26

Sundaes, etc.

✗ Cappachillo Cooler (16 fl. oz.)	720	31	19
✗ Waffle Cone Sundae, undipped cone (8 oz.)	740	32	20
✗ Brownie Special (10 oz.)	1,020	40	22

Cones

Sugar Cone	60	0	0
Waffle Cone, undipped	160	4	1
✗ Waffle Cone, chocolate-dipped ²	320	16	12

✓ Best Bite. ✗ Worst Bite. ¹ Average of all flavors. ² Numbers are CSPI estimates. Numbers for items in *italics* are from CSPI's independent laboratory analyses.

Daily Values (daily limits for a 2,000-calorie diet): **Total Fat:** 65 grams. **Saturated Fat:** 20 grams.

Photo: Renee Comet

“TCBY”



TCBY—The Country’s Best Yogurt—is an oasis for arteries that want to stay young and vibrant...but only if the arteries are attached to clear-headed brains.

TCBY’s Nonfat Frozen Yogurt is a freebie for blood vessels, but not for hips and thighs. A small registers 220 calories, a regular 290, and a large 350. But get the 96% Fat Free Frozen Yogurt and the freebie vanishes. Depending on the size, you end up with 270 to 420 calories and four to six grams of sat fat. Calling a food “96% Fat Free” when it’s not even low-fat is deceptive (and would be illegal on a food label). Even regular ice cream is about 90% fat-free. Premium is 85% fat-free.

And TCBY is happy to sell you premium ice cream—made by Mrs. Fields. A small dispatches 390 to 570 calories and 13 to 20 grams of sat fat to your hips and heart. It’s worse than Häagen-Dazs or Ben & Jerry’s, because a small has four ounces at those chains but seven at TCBY. A regular Mrs. Fields means 500 to 730 calories, while a large ranges from 610 to 900...for about

50 cents more than the regular.

The frozen-yogurt concoctions are no better. The Supreme Hot Fudge Sundae (non-fat frozen yogurt, hot fudge, mixed nuts, and whipped topping) that we analyzed clocked in at 580 calories and eight grams of sat fat. It’s not a Häagen-Dazs Dazzler, but it’s not a cup of non-fat frozen yogurt, either.

TCBY ratchets up the stakes with its Shivers—frozen yogurt blended with topping. A small Fruit Shiver will cost you 470 calories and seven grams of sat fat. A regular ups the ante to 580 calories and nine grams of sat fat. That’s close to a Big Mac. A large Heath Shiver has 1,070 calories, 26 grams of sat fat, and 35 teaspoons of added sugar.

TCBY’s Cappuccino Chillers (frozen yogurt, milk, coffee flavoring, and whipped topping) should be called “Fillers,” given their potential to fill out your figure. Even a small ranges from 410 calories (no extra topping) to 780 calories (for Oreo Joe). The large Toffee Coffee Cappuccino packs 1,200 calories and 30 grams of saturated fat. It may look like a milk shake, but it’s closer to two pork chops plus a Caesar salad and a buttered baked potato.

Low-Fat Finds. Most chains sell frozen yogurt, low-fat ice cream, sorbet, or sherbet with only 100 to 200 calories and little or no sat fat. Exception: a small TCBY 96% Fat Free Frozen Yogurt has 270 calories (a large has 420). Why? It isn’t low-fat.

Photo: Nick Waring.

Best Bites have no more than 250 calories and 3 grams of saturated fat (the only topping worth a Best Bite is fruit). Worst Bites have at least 10 grams of sat fat.

Frozen Yogurt & Sorbet

	Calories	Total Fat (grams)	Sat Fat (grams)
✓ Nonfat Frozen Yogurt, no sugar added (small, 7 oz.) ^{1,2}	170	0	0
✓ Sorbet (small, 7 oz.) ¹	200	0	0
✓ Nonfat Frozen Yogurt, no sugar added (regular, 9 oz.) ^{1,2}	210	0	0
✓ Nonfat Frozen Yogurt (small, 7 oz.) ¹	220	0	0
Sorbet (regular, 9 oz.) ¹	260	0	0
Nonfat Frozen Yogurt (regular, 9 oz.) ¹	290	0	0
Nonfat Frozen Yogurt (large, 11 oz.) ¹	350	0	0
96% Fat Free Frozen Yogurt (small, 7 oz.) ¹	270	6	4
96% Fat Free Frozen Yogurt (regular, 9 oz.) ¹	340	8	5
96% Fat Free Frozen Yogurt (large, 11 oz.) ¹	420	10	6

Mrs. Fields Ice Cream (small—7 oz.—unless noted)

✗ Cotton Candy or Rainbow Cream	390	23	13
✗ Cookies & Cream	490	26	15
✗ Vanilla Bean	460	28	18
✗ Butter Pecan	570	44	18
✗ Mint Chocolate	500	33	20
✗ Vanilla Bean (regular, 9 oz.)	590	36	22
✗ Vanilla Bean (large, 11 oz.)	720	45	28

Shivers, Sundaes, & Chillers (made with frozen yogurt)

Fruit Shiver (small, 16 fl. oz.)	470	11	7
Supreme Hot Fudge Sundae (10 oz.)	580	18	8
Fruit Shiver (regular, 20 fl. oz.)	580	14	9
Oreo Shiver (small, 16 fl. oz.)	660	20	9

	Calories	Total Fat (grams)	Sat Fat (grams)
✗ Cappuccino Chiller (small, 16 fl. oz.)	410	17	11
✗ Oreo Shiver (regular, 20 fl. oz.)	840	26	11
✗ Cappuccino Chiller (regular, 20 fl. oz.)	590	23	14
✗ Oreo Joe Cappuccino Chiller (small, 16 fl. oz.)	780	29	15
✗ Heath Shiver (regular, 20 fl. oz.)	880	33	21
✗ Heath Shiver (large, 24 fl. oz.)	1,070	41	26
✗ Toffee Coffee Cappuccino Chiller (lg., 24 fl. oz.)	1,200	47	30

Toppings (1 scoop, unless noted)

✓ Fruit ¹	10	0	0
Hot Caramel	90	0	0
Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough or Sprinkles ³	70	3	1
Heath or Snickers pieces ³	70	4	1
Almonds, Mixed Nuts, or Pecans ³	80	6	1
Walnuts in Syrup	160	10	1
Whipped Topping (4 Tbs.)	30	3	3
Butterfingers, M&M’s, or Reese’s Pieces ³	110	5	3
Hot Fudge	140	7	3
Coconut	60	5	4
Peanut Butter Topping	210	19	4

Cones

Cake Cone	20	0	0
Sugar Cone or Junior Waffle Cone	70	1	0
Waffle Cone	110	2	1

✓ Best Bite. ✗ Worst Bite. ¹ Average of all flavors. ² Contains the artificial sweetener aspartame (NutraSweet). ³ Average of items listed. Numbers for items in *italics* are from CSPI’s independent laboratory analyses.

Daily Values (daily limits for a 2,000-calorie diet): **Total Fat:** 65 grams. **Saturated Fat:** 20 grams.

READY, SET, COOK



It washes. It dices. It slices. It chops. Some new, high-tech Vegamatic? Nope. Just **Ready Pac**, the California company that's trying to corner the market in no-fuss vegetables. What a brilliant idea: Wash and package fresh-picked vegetables, and get them

to market quick enough to stay fresh and appealing for days.

You've probably seen the company's bagged lettuces and salads (some of them organic) in the produce section of your supermarket. And you may have tried its microwave-right-in-the-bag leafy greens blend and spinach.

Now come resealable plastic tubs and bags of **Diced Celery and Onion, Diced Peppers, Diced Red Onion, Sliced White Onion, Salad Confetti, Shredded Carrots, Soup and Stew Mix, and Stir Fry**.

Ready Pac calls them "convenience vegetables." They ain't kiddin'.

Breakfast: Scramble the peppers and onions with egg substitute or use them to stuff an egg-white omelette. *Lunch:* Mix the Salad Confetti with bottled dressing or light flavored mayo for instant homemade coleslaw. Toss some with a bowl of mixed greens for a not-your-everyday salad. Or use some red onions to liven up your tuna or chicken salad sandwich. *Dinner:* Sauté the Stir Fry with some sesame oil, garlic, and ginger.

Prepwork panic? Not in your house.

Ready Pac: (800) 800-7822.

FRUIT FRAUD

There's nothing more refreshing than a bowl of strawberries on a hot summer afternoon. And Dole sells some great strawberries, pineapple, and other fresh and canned fruit. But when the company teams up with chocolate-maker Nestlé, you know you're in trouble.



The strawberry part of **Dole Strawberry Fruit Dips** isn't so bad (strawberry pieces mixed with sugared strawberry purée). It's the Nestlé chocolate-flavored coating that leads to the X rating. The coating (sugar, chocolate, coconut oil, partially hydrogenated soybean oil, cocoa butter, milkfat, soy lecithin, and natural and artificial flavors) will coat a lot more than just the bar.

The main culprit: the coconut oil, which makes lard look like a health food. It's there to keep the coating from melting. It also gives each (190-calorie) bar most of its six grams of artery-clogging saturated fat—nearly a third of your limit for the whole day and a heckuva lot for a "fruit" snack.

Then there's the partially hydrogenated soybean oil, which could add some heart-damaging trans fat (the label doesn't say how much).

If you want fruit flavor on a stick, try Dole's (undipped) Strawberry Fruit 'N Juice Bar. It's got the fruit, less than half the calories, and none of the saturated fat.

Of course, if you're feeling really wild, you could actually eat a bowl of strawberries.

Dole: (800) 441-2525.

TIP
OF THE MONTH

For the fresh-from-the-field flavor of corn steamed in its own husk, hold an unshucked ear of corn upright under cold running water until the water soaks well down inside the husk. Then lay it on a plate, microwave for 2 to 4 minutes, shuck, and dig in.

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Photos: Nick Waring

About CSPI,
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