

# Nutrition Action

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2020 \$2.50

HEALTH LETTER®  
CENTER FOR SCIENCE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

## Sharp as a Tack?

What may sustain your brain

SUPPLEMENTS FOR  
FERTILITY?

10 Food Safety  
Myths

Calories in  
BOOZE



M E M O

# STANDING UP FOR SCIENCE



**Q**uick: What do CVS, an ex-Trump aide, and fertility-supplement manufacturers have in common? Answer: They're all poster children for why the dietary supplement industry isn't capable of policing itself.

■ **CVS.** In 2016, attorneys at the Center for Science in the Public Interest, *Nutrition Action's* publisher, [sued CVS](#) on behalf of consumers over the misleading marketing of its Algal-900 DHA dietary supplement. Relying on a single industry-conducted study, the company's ads and labels claimed that the product was "clinically shown" to improve memory.

Not according to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), which concluded that the study did "not reveal any improvement in working memory." Apparently not getting the memo, CVS continued its claims for Algal-900 DHA.

The gears of the law, it is well known, grind slowly. But finally, this past September, the case was [settled](#). CVS agreed to provide refunds to consumers and to refrain from making similar memory claims for two years.

■ **Ex-Trump aide.** Two years after exiting the White House in August 2017, Sebastian Gorka started touting Relief Factor, a supplement that claims to help you "break free from everyday aches and pains." TV ads for the pills identified Gorka, who holds a PhD in political science from Corvinus University in Budapest, Hungary, as "Dr. Sebastian Gorka."

Not so fast. According to the FTC's rules,

when ads represent, directly or by implication, that a commercial endorser is an expert, the endorser must have actual expertise in a relevant field. A doctor featured in an ad for a hearing aid, for example, would need substantial experience in audiology for the ad to avoid being deceptive.

Being a political scientist—and one whose credentials have been challenged at that—Gorka doesn't make the cut.

After [CSPI](#) pointed out this flagrant violation to the FTC, Gorka's "doctor" moniker was scrubbed from the ads within weeks.

■ **Fertility supplements.** In this issue of *Nutrition Action*, David Scharadt identifies

39 supplements sold on Amazon and other online platforms that made unproven claims about their ability to promote fertility in women.

Some companies went so far as to denigrate FDA-approved fertility drugs, encouraging

vulnerable patients to opt for snake oil instead of proven treatments.

When CSPI asked, not one of the companies was able to provide satisfactory evidence to support its claims.

At CSPI, we stand for truth: truth in labeling, truth in advertising, truth in science. With all three evidently in short supply, one is left instead with an industry in desperate need of stronger government action, rules, or laws to protect consumers. Stay tuned.



Sore back? Don't call "Dr." Gorka.

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

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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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# Sharp as a Tack?

## What may sustain your brain

BY BONNIE LIEBMAN

### Brain ABCs

Your brain faces two major threats: the tiny strokes of cerebrovascular disease and the plaques and tangles of Alzheimer's. And both can start long before you know it.

"Thirty percent of people in their 70s and 40 percent of those in their 80s have elevated amyloid plaques but no symptoms," says David Knopman, professor of neurology at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.<sup>1</sup>

Ditto for tiny infarcts—brain cells that have died from lack of oxygen after tiny blood vessels ruptured or became blocked. "Brain scans show vascular disease in 15 percent of people by age 70 and in 70 percent of people by age 90," says Knopman.<sup>2</sup>

That's in people with no memory loss. Roughly half of people with memory loss have *both* types of damage.

And one threat can alter the impact of the other.

"Vascular factors do not affect plaques and tangles, the primary pathologies of Alzheimer's disease," says Knopman. "But the less vascular burden you have, the more Alzheimer's burden you can tolerate."

"That means that the onset of cognitive impairment due purely to plaques and tangles can be delayed. That's a really important point."

Luckily, you can protect the blood vessels in your brain and elsewhere at the same time. And the earlier you start, the better.

Can't think of the right word? Can't find your glasses? Can't remember your nephew's wife's name? Relax. Memory declines with age. But the risk of dementia snowballs as you get older. Here's what new studies are testing and what we already know about how to keep your brain in shape.

"Beginning in early adulthood, freedom from cardiovascular risk factors—diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol, obesity, lack of exercise, smoking, eating an unhealthy diet—should have benefits later in life," says Knopman.

"The American Heart Association calls them Life's Simple 7, and it's a scientifically validated story."<sup>3</sup>

That's the take-home message. Here's

style might in fact be medicine," says Laura Baker, associate professor of gerontology and geriatric medicine at the Wake Forest School of Medicine.

Medicine to protect the brain, that is. "FINGER looked at roughly 1,200 people aged 60 to 77 who had no cognitive problems but were at increased risk for cognitive decline," says Baker. All scored average or slightly below average on memory tests and had risk factors

like high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or obesity.

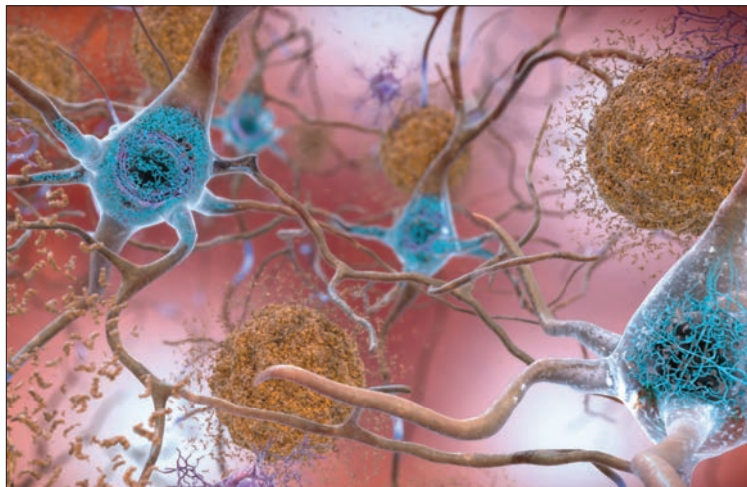
"The researchers wanted to test a combination of a healthier diet, exercise, getting people engaged with their community, cognitive stimulation, and watching their medical numbers—their blood pressure, lipids, blood sugar," explains Baker.

The participants were randomly assigned to receive either standard health advice or a lifestyle intervention including

diet and exercise sessions with nutritionists and physiotherapists, cognitive training with psychologists and computer programs, medical checkups, and social activities.

"People who are lonely and isolated don't do well," notes Baker.

The results: "After two years, the people who received this hefty lifestyle



Amyloid plaques (brown) and tangles of abnormal tau proteins (blue) inside nerve cells in the brain are the hallmarks of Alzheimer's disease.

the latest from recent or ongoing studies.

### The FINGER Trial

In 2015, FINGER (the Finnish Geriatric Intervention Study to Prevent Cognitive Impairment and Disability) made a splash.<sup>4</sup>

"The trial was conducted to test whether moving people toward a healthier life-



intervention had better cognitive function than the people who got just the basic health information.” (Their overall score on a battery of tests was 25 percent higher.)

“It’s phenomenal that you can improve the health of your brain by repairing the health of your body,” says Baker.

## The POINTER Trial

FINGER was just the beginning.

“The Alzheimer’s Association, working with the Finnish FINGER group, decided to see if other countries could replicate the results and adapt them to their own culture,” says Baker.

In 2017, they announced World Wide FINGERS, a global network of similar trials. Baker is one of four lead investigators in the U.S. trial, called POINTER.

“We’re not just trying to replicate FINGER, but to make it one step better,” she points out.

POINTER is enrolling 2,000 people aged 60 to 79 at five sites—in Chicago, Houston, North Carolina, Northern California, and Rhode Island.

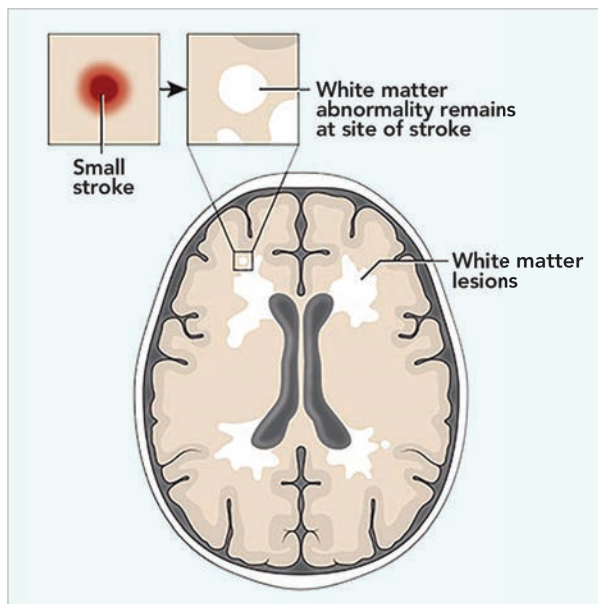
“The participants are all at risk because they have a first-degree family member—a mom, dad, brother, or sister—with a history of a memory problem,” says Baker. “They’re not regular exercisers. And they eat the standard American diet, not a super healthy diet.”

What’s more, “nearly all have a mild medical issue like borderline high blood pressure, LDL cholesterol, or blood sugar.”

Folks like that aren’t hard to find, adds Baker. “Over two-thirds of people in our age range have abnormalities in at least one of those measurements.”

POINTER is different from FINGER in one important way.

“These people all have first-degree family history, and they’re worried,” explains Baker. “So it would be unfair and unethical for us to put some of them in a do-nothing control group when we know



Lesions in white matter could be caused by tiny strokes that no longer show up on brain scans.

that a healthy lifestyle is going to benefit them in some way.”

Instead, POINTER will assign everyone to the same intervention, but one group will be “self-guided” and the other will be “structured.”

“Everybody is assigned to a team of 15 people, and once they’re randomized, they’ll go through the intervention with those 14 other people and a facilitator,” notes Baker.

“We recruit in one neighborhood at a time, so participants can meet in their own neighborhood,” she adds. Then the researchers move on to a new neighborhood to fill a new team.

“We’ll provide the self-guided group with help to design their own lifestyle-change program that best suits their personal needs and schedule,” says Baker.



Staying mentally active—by tutoring, taking classes, doing crossword puzzles, or whatever—may help keep you sharp.

“We’ll give the structured group programs for exercise and diet, and homework for intellectual challenge and social engagement.”

Both groups will also keep an electronic log of their efforts.

“If we see that Sam hasn’t had an entry for a week and a half, the staff member finds Sam—no matter which group he’s in—and figures out how to help Sam get back on track again,” says Baker.

And unlike FINGER, POINTER will ask participants to do “homework.”

“We want them to get out there,” says Baker. “Get connected to people, volunteer, go to film festivals, do things that challenge their mind.”

Once people retire, that takes effort.

“It’s post-retirement when all of a sudden the challenges come to an abrupt halt,” says Baker. “Passive entertainment like sitting in front of a TV, hour after hour, isn’t going to challenge you in an intellectual way.”

The answer, she says, is to get out of your comfort zone. “You know something is challenging if it’s hard to do.”

When it comes to exercise, the POINTER trial covers the map— aerobic exercise, resistance training, and stretching.

“It’s the whole-body anti-atrophy plan for our aging bodies,” says Baker.

Results are expected in 2024.

## The MIND Trial

What’s the best diet to keep you sharp? The MIND (Mediterranean-DASH Diet Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay) trial is trying to find out.

“In observational studies that follow large cohorts of people, a DASH-type diet [see p. 6] or a Mediterranean diet predicted less cognitive decline with aging and less dementia over time,” says Frank Sacks, professor of cardiovascular disease prevention at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

Could something else about people who eat those healthy diets explain why their brains are

# WANT TO HELP?



Want to help scientists learn more about how the brain ages? Consider joining the Brain Health Registry, an observational study by researchers at the University of California, San Francisco.

They're looking for anyone aged 18 or older who is willing to play online brain games every three to six months. The goal is to track the performance of thousands of people over time.

To learn more, go to [brainhealthregistry.org](http://brainhealthregistry.org). And go to [clinicaltrials.gov](http://clinicaltrials.gov) to join other studies.

less likely to go downhill?

"Absolutely," says Sacks.

"No matter how well you control for other factors in those studies, you can't be totally sure. You still need to do clinical trials, if possible."

Enter the MIND trial, which enrolled about 600 people living in Boston or Chicago. All were overweight or obese and were eating not-so-healthy diets.

"In Boston, we excluded about 60 percent of the people who responded to our ads because their diets were too good," says Sacks, one of the trial's investigators.

The participants were randomly assigned to eat either their usual diet or the MIND diet. Both had 250 fewer calories than the participants had been eating.

The MIND diet is essentially a Mediterranean or DASH diet that has been tweaked to include more of some foods—like berries, nuts, extra-virgin olive oil, fish, and leafy greens—that were often consumed by people with less memory loss in observational studies.<sup>5</sup>

"We're teaching calorie control to both groups, and they like being in the study because they learn so much about diet," says Sacks.

A Mediterranean or DASH diet may help maintain your brain the same way that it can protect your heart.

"In vascular dementia, you have blockages in the tiny arteries in the brain that are similar to the blockages in the cardiac arteries that give you angina," says Sacks. "Alzheimer's is different, but it can co-exist with vascular dementia."

So stay tuned. "We've been doing the study for about two years," says Sacks. "We've got a year and a half or so to go."

## SPRINT MIND

It's no surprise that high blood pressure can shrink brain power as you age.

"Almost every study has shown that midlife hypertension is associ-

ated with worse cognitive outcomes in later life," says the Mayo Clinic's David Knopman.

The latest: When he and colleagues tracked roughly 4,760 participants in the Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities (ARIC) study for 24 years, those with high blood pressure both in midlife and late life had a 49 percent higher risk of dementia than those whose blood pressure stayed normal.<sup>6</sup>

In contrast, the risk of dementia wasn't elevated for those whose blood pressure rose only later in life. (Of course, high blood pressure at *any* age is a danger because it can boost the risk of a stroke or heart attack.)



The MIND trial is testing a diet rich in berries, greens, nuts, fish, and extra-virgin olive oil.

"Hypertension in midlife may simply be more potent because it implies a longer duration of exposure to whatever is deleterious to the brain or its blood vessels," says Knopman.

More evidence that high blood pressure harms the brain: the SPRINT MIND study.

The SPRINT trial randomly assigned roughly 9,360 people with hypertension to take drugs to get their systolic blood pressure—that's the higher number—below either 140 or 120.<sup>7</sup> (The trial was cut short after three years as soon as the researchers saw that the 120 group had a lower risk of strokes, heart attacks, and death.)

The SPRINT MIND study did brain scans on 449 of the SPRINT participants. Those aiming for 120 had fewer white matter lesions than those

aiming for 140.<sup>8</sup> (The brain's white matter contains bundles of nerve fibers.)

"I find the results compelling," says Knopman. "There's no question that hypertension is the strongest risk factor for white matter lesions. So those changes in white matter are consistent with what you'd expect."

However, the 120 group also lost slightly more brain volume.

"Those results conceivably could indicate a problem," says Knopman. "But it's possible that less brain volume is a reflection of less swelling due to fewer lesions," he speculates. "That would be favorable."

In an earlier SPRINT MIND analysis, researchers reported that the 120 group had a 19 percent lower risk of mild cognitive impairment, which can lead to dementia.<sup>9</sup> (The risk of dementia was not significantly lower, possibly because the researchers only tracked people for two years after the trial ended.)

Knopman's bottom line: "The results are really positive news that controlling blood pressure has a benefit for cognitive outcomes."



## The ACHIEVE Trial

“Two-thirds of adults older than 70 have a clinically significant hearing loss,” says Jennifer Deal, assistant professor of epidemiology at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

And people with hearing loss are twice as likely to be diagnosed with dementia.<sup>10</sup>

How might hearing loss harm memory? Scientists have suggested three possibilities:

■ **Cognitive load.** “When sound comes in, it’s encoded into a neural signal in the inner ear,” explains Deal. “That signal is sent to the brain, where it’s decoded.”



Bose, Nuheara, and Sound World Solutions sell PSAPs that may help people who don’t need a hearing aid.

But if the inner ear is damaged, it doesn’t encode the signal as well.

“So instead of being a clear signal, it’s a garbled signal,” says Deal. “It’s not an audibility issue so much as a clarity issue.” It sounds like people are mumbling.

“When that garbled signal goes to the brain,” adds Deal, “the brain has to work harder to decode it. And that comes at the expense of doing other things, like encoding a signal into a memory.”

■ **Brain atrophy.** “People with hearing loss have faster rates of atrophy, particularly in the temporal lobe of the brain, than people without it,” explains Deal. If hearing loss causes that withering, treating it could protect the brain.

■ **Social isolation.** “When people have difficulty hearing in noisy situations, they may avoid those situations,” says Deal. “So they may go out less, be less involved in the community and in other areas.” And isolated people have a higher risk of memory loss.

But whatever causes hearing loss may *also* cause memory loss.

So the question, says Deal, is “can we prevent cognitive decline by treating hearing loss?” That’s what the ACHIEVE (Aging and Cognitive Health Evaluation in Elders) trial aims to find out.<sup>11</sup>

“We’ve enrolled nearly 1,000 people,” says Deal. All are aged 70 to 84 and have mild-to-moderate hearing loss. They’ll be randomly assigned to one-on-one sessions to get

a hearing aid or to learn about lowering their risk of disease.

Results are due in 2022. Until then, if you have trouble hearing, try a hearing aid or a personal sound amplification product, or PSAP (see Dec. 2016, p. 3).

“Many people consider hearing loss to be part of normal aging, but it’s not,” says Deal. Even if treating hearing loss doesn’t protect the brain, “it has the potential to have a huge impact on somebody’s life.” 🍌

- 1 *JAMA Neurol.* 75: 970. 2018.
- 2 *Biochim. Biophys. Acta* 1862: 952. 2016.
- 3 *Stroke* 48: e284. 2017.
- 4 *Lancet* 385: 2255. 2015.
- 5 *Alzheimers Dement.* 11: 1015. 2015.
- 6 *JAMA* 322: 535. 2019.
- 7 *N. Engl. J. Med.* 373: 2103. 2015.
- 8 *JAMA* 322: 524. 2019.
- 9 *JAMA* 321: 553. 2019.
- 10 *Lancet* 390: 2673. 2017.
- 11 *Alzheimers Dement.* 4: 499. 2018.

## DASH Diet

A DASH diet keeps a lid on blood pressure, which may protect your brain’s blood vessels. Here’s a 2,100-calorie version. A Mediterranean diet is similar, but you’d use the “Wild Card” for olive oil. (Note: Some serving sizes are quite small.)

	Daily Servings
 <b>Vegetables &amp; Fruit</b> 1 SERVING: ½ cup (or 1 cup greens) or 1 piece fruit	11
 <b>Grains</b> 1 SERVING: ½ cup pasta or rice or cereal or 1 slice bread	4
 <b>Low-fat Dairy</b> 1 SERVING: 1 cup milk or yogurt or 1½ oz. cheese	2
 <b>Legumes &amp; Nuts</b> 1 SERVING: ½ cup beans or ¼ cup nuts or 4 oz. tofu	2
 <b>Poultry, Fish, Lean Meat</b> 1 SERVING: ¼ lb. cooked	1
 <b>Oils &amp; Fats</b> 1 SERVING: 1 Tbs.	2
 <b>Desserts &amp; Sweets</b> 1 SERVING: 1 tsp. sugar or 1 small cookie	2
 <b>Wild Card</b> Poultry, Fish, Lean Meat or Oils & Fats or Grains or Desserts & Sweets	1

### TO PROTECT YOUR BRAIN

There’s a good chance that these steps will protect your brain...and your health.

- Control your blood pressure
- Keep a lid on blood sugar
- Don’t smoke
- Control your LDL cholesterol
- Lose (or don’t gain) excess weight
- Exercise 30 minutes a day
- Eat a healthy diet (see “DASH Diet”)
- Stay mentally and socially active
- Get enough sleep
- Get your hearing checked

### DON’T EXPECT MUCH FROM

These supplements have failed to help or haven’t been well tested.

- Multivitamins
- Vitamins C and E and beta-carotene
- DHA
- Ginkgo
- Prevacan
- Vinpocetine

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Alzheimer’s Association ([alz.org](http://alz.org))
- National Institute on Aging ([nia.nih.gov](http://nia.nih.gov))

# Quick Studies

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

## Sugary Drinks & Diabetes



**B**oth sugary drinks and fruit juice may raise your risk of type 2 diabetes, and not just by leading to weight gain.

Researchers tracked roughly 192,000 men and women for up to 26 years. Those who consumed at least one daily 8 oz. serving of drinks that are high in either added or fruit sugars—which included soda, energy drinks, sports drinks, fruit drinks, and fruit juice—over four years had a 23 percent higher risk of type 2 diabetes than those who consumed less than one serving a week.

Weight gain explained roughly a quarter of the increased risk.

Although the scientists took many other factors into account, it's possible that something else about sugary-beverage drinkers explains their higher risk.

**What to do:** Replace sugary drinks with water, unsweetened coffee or tea, or low-fat milk. Replace fruit juice with whole fruit.

[Diabetes Care 42: 2181, 2019.](#)

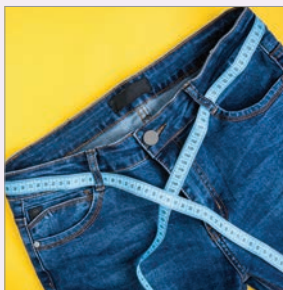
## Waist Size & Liver Cancer

**Y**our waist, not just your weight, may affect your risk of liver cancer.

After pooling data on more than 1.1 million people, scientists reported that every 2 inch increase in waist size was linked to an 11 percent higher risk of liver cancer, even in people with a healthy weight. Hip size didn't matter.

**What to do:** Try to lose or not gain excess weight...or excess waist.

[Int. J. Cancer 2019. doi:10.1002/ijc.32760.](#)



## Exercise & Heart Fat



**E**xcess fat around the heart is linked to a higher risk of heart disease. Could exercise trim that fat?

Danish researchers randomly assigned 39 sedentary people with abdominal obesity to aerobic training (high-intensity interval training on a stationary bike), strength training (3 to 5 sets of 10 medium-load exercises), or no exercise. Both exercise groups had supervised workouts for 45 minutes three times a week.

After 12 weeks, epicardial heart fat (which is next to the heart muscle) was reduced by 32 percent in the aerobic group and by 24 percent in the strength group. But only strength training reduced pericardial heart fat (which is in and on the membrane enclosing the heart).

**What to do:** This study can't prove that exercise trims heart fat because it was designed to find out *how* exercise curbs deep belly fat. But how many reasons do you need to get moving?

[JAMA Cardiol. 4: 778, 2019.](#)

## What's a Normal Serving?

**D**o large servings of food skew your sense of what's normal?

Dutch researchers served 132 women either a small portion of lasagna (with about 290 calories) or a large portion (with 875 calories) for lunch.

The next day, the participants were told to eat as much as they wanted from a family-sized lasagna

(with 1,585 calories) for lunch. Those who had been served the smaller portion of lasagna on the first day ate 620 calories' worth of lasagna on the second day. Those who had been served the larger portion on the first day ate 765 calories' worth.

**What to do:** Don't let huge restaurant servings taint your sense of what's "normal." Take home the excess. 🍴

[Nutrients 11:2845, 2019.](#)





# FERTILITY FRAUDS

## THE LATEST SUPPLEMENT SCAM

BY DAVID SCHARDT

Dozens of supplement makers are targeting women who are trying to become pregnant. [We asked](#) 27 companies for the evidence behind their claims.

Many never responded or cited no evidence on their websites. Among them: Conflam-Forte (“improve your pregnancy chances”), Fertility Health (“specifically formulated to aid conception”), and FertilMax for Women (“the most complete and advanced fertility support”).

Others responded, but had no good evidence. So *Nutrition Action’s* publisher, the Center for Science in the Public Interest, has asked the FDA and the Federal Trade Commission to take action.

Here’s a sampling of what the companies told us.

*Senior Staff Scientist David Schardt contributes occasional articles to NAH.*

### Ready. Set. Go!

**Claim:** “Taking charge of your fertility is easy with our supplement.”

**Contents:** 11 vitamins, 6 minerals, choline, 5 botanicals (red clover blossom extract, chaste berry extract, ginkgo biloba leaf extract, ashwagandha powder, shatavari root powder).

**Evidence:** None offered on the company’s website. “Our natural formula provides you with the benefits of herbs used for centuries to assist with conception,” the company told us. But what’s the evidence that the 23 ingredients in Ready. Set. Go! actually boost the chances of becoming pregnant? Customer reviews, said the company. “You can actually go through all the reviews to validate,” it suggested.

So we did. Of 64 reviews on its website, only 7 customers said they had become pregnant. Most were still trying. (The company’s Amazon reviews received a failing grade from fakespot.com, which uses algorithms to predict if customer reviews are reliable.)



### PregPrep FertilPrep

**Claims:** “Ready to have a baby? Supporting Conception Has Never Been Simpler.” “We hope you conceive with PregPrep on your first try. But sometimes it may take a bit longer than expected, so stick with PregPrep for at least 3 months!”

**Contents:** N-acetyl-cysteine (NAC), para-aminobenzoic acid (PABA), coenzyme Q10, evening primrose oil, 4 botanicals (chaste berry extract, kale leaf, spinach leaf, red beet root).

**Evidence:** “We’d like to stress that PregPrep is NOT intended for patients with infertility,” emailed a company representative. Yet the studies they sent us were done in women with polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS) and infertility, including some women who were being treated with fertility drugs.

Are there studies in women who are *not* infertile showing that PregPrep’s ingredients up the chances of pregnancy? (PregPrep’s website doesn’t cite any.) No response. We inquired again. Still no response.

Our final attempt: “Do you have studies showing that the amount of NAC”—the main ingredient—“found in PregPrep increases the chances of pregnancy in women who are not infertile?”

The company’s reply: “May I ask why you are asking so many questions?”





**HOW TO INCREASE FERTILITY: IT ALL STARTS WITH EGG QUALITY**



## Premama Fertility Support for Her

**Claim:** “Provides natural reproductive support for women trying to conceive.”

**Contents:** Myo-inositol, folate, vitamin B-12.

**Evidence:** Myo-inositol (a B-vitamin-like substance) and folate are used by some fertility specialists to treat the infertility caused by PCOS. But in most good studies, the two ingredients don’t help women with PCOS get pregnant.

What did the manufacturer tell us? “I think you’ll be hard pressed to find any supplement company that can definitively say that their product increases the [chances] of becoming pregnant. If you do, I’d be very curious to see.”



## Pink Stork

**Claim:** “The natural, non-invasive fertility support you’ve been waiting for.”

**Contents:** 10 vitamins, 6 minerals, myo-inositol, D-chiro inositol, coenzyme Q10, choline, para-aminobenzoic acid (PABA), 5 botanicals (chaste tree berry extract, black pepper fruit extract, shatavari root extract, stinging nettle leaf, ashwagandha root extract).

**Evidence:** None. The company doesn’t offer any on its website and didn’t respond to repeated email requests.

**Evidence:** None. The company doesn’t offer any on its website and didn’t respond to repeated email requests.



## Fertil Pro Women

**Claims:** “Proven to help increase female fertility.” “Health Canada approved.”

**Contents:** 5 vitamins, 4 minerals, 1 botanical (reishi).

**Evidence:** Fertil Pro’s website cites five studies. None show that the supplement helps women become pregnant. So we asked the Canadian company if it has any other evidence. “At the moment the studies which are on our website are the ones we have,” said a representative. “Our fertility products are recommended by 90% of fertility clinics across Canada.” Does that mean Health Canada approved a fertility claim for Fertil Pro? Nope. (Health Canada requires credible evidence.)

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## Planning a Pregnancy?

- Get a pre-pregnancy checkup to address diabetes, hypertension, or other problems.
- Take a prenatal multivitamin-and-mineral supplement with 400 to 800 micrograms of folic acid to prevent neural tube birth defects.
- Go to [womenshealth.gov/pregnancy](http://womenshealth.gov/pregnancy) for info on getting pregnant, prenatal care, and more.
- Fertility declines more rapidly after age 35. Get an evaluation if you aren’t pregnant after trying for a year (or after six months if you’re over 35; sooner if you’re over 40).
- To learn more, go to [acog.org/patients](http://acog.org/patients) and look for “evaluating infertility.”

## Tips to Avoid Scams

- Drugs can’t be sold unless the Food and Drug Administration concludes that they are safe and effective. But the FDA doesn’t evaluate whether supplements are effective.
- Claims like “supports,” “enhances,” and “maintains” on supplements (or foods) are often backed by little or no good evidence.
- Check [fakespot.com](http://fakespot.com) to see if reviews on Amazon, TripAdvisor, Yelp, or other websites are trustworthy. 🍌

## OvaVite

**Claim:** “Contains highly bioavailable CoQ10, to promote egg quality in women in their mid-30s and beyond.”

**Contents:** Coenzyme Q10, vitamin E, a prenatal multivitamin.

**Evidence:** “CoQ10 is a nutrient that supports mitochondrial energy production for improved egg quality,” explains TheraNatal’s website. “Egg quality declines with age, women in their mid-30s and beyond may want to consider TheraNatal OvaVite.”

So there’s evidence that CoQ10 helps women in their mid-30s and up get pregnant? “I do not know of any CoQ10 studies that looked at the outcome of increasing pregnancy rate,” said a TheraNatal representative.



# FOOD SAFETY FAUX PAS

## 10 Myths about Food Poisoning

BY CAITLIN DOW

Do you throw out milk the day it hits its expiration date? Or assume it's unsafe to refreeze thawed meat? And when was the last time you sanitized your sponge? Here are 10 food safety myths that may surprise you.

### Myth #1: The sniff test works.

Got food that's slimy or smelly?

"That's due to spoilage bacteria," explains Maribel Alonso, a technical information specialist at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"Those bacteria can grow at refrigerator temperatures, but typically they won't make you sick."

What will? "You can get really sick from pathogenic bacteria like *E. coli* O157:H7, *Salmonella*, and *Clostridium perfringens*," says Alonso. "They grow best at room temperature, but they won't cause your food to smell or taste bad."

One notable exception: "*Listeria monocytogenes* grows at refrigerator temperatures," says Alonso.

*Listeria* typically grows on deli meats, smoked fish, and prepared foods. It's responsible for listeriosis, the hard-to-diagnose infection that can cause miscarriage in pregnant women and symptoms like fever, diarrhea, headache, and stiff neck.

**Bottom Line:** Don't rely on your nose (or eyes) to detect harmful bacteria.

### Myth #2: If it's past the "best by" date, toss it.

Food packages often list a "sell by," "best by," "enjoy by," or "expiration" date.

But if you don't "enjoy by" that date, does it mean you'll get "sick after"? Nope.

Dates on food labels are the manufacturers' best guess about how long a food will taste freshest. After that date, the quality gradually declines.

"Most foods would become quite unpalatable before they would be unsafe to eat," says Roni Neff, director of the food system sustainability & public health program at the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future.

It's not time that makes most foods unsafe, notes Neff. It's that they become contaminated with bacteria from raw meat or poultry and aren't kept cold enough or cooked thoroughly.

Part of the confusion is that many people think that the government regulates expiration dates. (Other than for infant formula, it doesn't.)

That can also lead to waste.

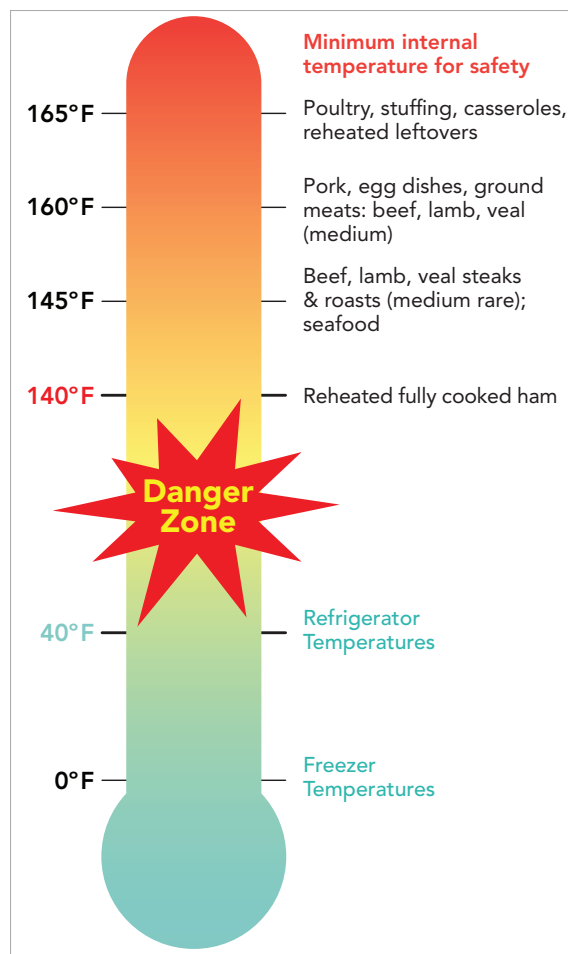
"People who believe that date labels are federally regulated are more likely to throw out food on a precautionary basis," says Neff. Ditto for those who think that "outdated" foods are unsafe.<sup>1</sup>

In 2017, the food industry urged companies to use only one of two terms on packages: "BEST if used by" and "USE by."

(Congress is considering the Food Date Labeling Act, which would require one of those two terms on foods that carry expiration dates. Many companies are already using them.)

"The 'BEST if used by' label is meant to be about quality," explains Neff. "The 'USE by' label is meant to be about whether the food is safe."

Which foods would get which label?

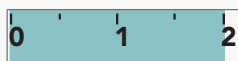


How can you tell a food's internal temperature? Only with a food thermometer.



# Rules for Leftovers

## 2 Hours — 2 Inches — 4 Days



JANUARY 2020

		1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10
12	13	14	15	16	17
19	20	21	22	23	24
26	27	28	29	30	31

### 2 Hours from oven to refrigerator.

Refrigerate or freeze leftovers within 2 hours of cooking. Otherwise throw them away.

### 2 Inches thick to cool it quick.

Store food at a shallow depth—about 2 inches—to speed chilling.

### 4 Days in the refrigerator—otherwise freeze it.

Use leftovers from the refrigerator within 4 days. Reheat solid leftovers to 165°F and liquid leftovers to a rolling boil.

“Most foods will not need a label at all, or they would get the ‘BEST if used by’ label,” says Neff.

“The few foods that become unsafe because of time would get a ‘USE by’ label. It’s mainly for foods where *Listeria* is a concern, because it can grow under normal storage conditions.”

**Bottom Line:** Be more wary of pathogens if a food is past its “USE by” date.

### Myth #3: Reheating leftovers kills bacterial toxins.

“When we leave leftovers out, it’s a perfect environment for bacteria to thrive,” says the USDA’s Maribel Alonso.

“Bacteria can double in as little as 20 minutes at temperatures between 40 and 140 degrees—what we call the food safety ‘danger zone,’” she adds.

“If you don’t put leftovers away within two hours after cooking, toss them. And if you’re outside and it’s warmer than 90 degrees, food needs to be refrigerated within one hour.”

Doesn’t reheating kill off those pesky bacteria? “Yes,” says Alonso. “But some bacteria, like *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Clostridium perfringens*, produce toxins that are heat resistant.”

**Bottom Line:** Leftovers left out too long? Toss them.

### Myth #4: Sanitize sponges when they start to smell.

“A moist sponge that is not sanitized daily or replaced often can harbor bacteria and germs that can make you sick,” says Mindy Costello, an environmental health expert and registered sanitarian at NSF International, a nonprofit organization that certifies appliances, food

equipment, water filters, and more.

“In our survey of Michigan households, 86 percent of sponges and dishcloths had yeast and mold, 77 percent had coliform bacteria, and 18 percent had *Staph* bacteria.”<sup>2</sup> Yikes.

Costello’s advice: “As long as it doesn’t contain any metal, microwave your damp sponge for two minutes every day.”

But no matter how you slice it, sponges have a short lifespan. “We recommend throwing them out every two weeks,” says Costello. (Tip: Cut ordinary sponges in half to use fewer over time.)

A less wasteful option: Use a dish brush. Just soak it for a minute every night in diluted bleach (one tablespoon of bleach in one gallon of water), then rinse and air dry. (NSF International hasn’t tested the bleach method on sponges.)

To clean kitchen surfaces, use a fresh dishcloth every day. “They can be easily washed with bleach in a washing machine,” Costello notes.

**Bottom Line:** Whether you use a sponge, dish brush, or dishcloth, sanitize it daily.

### Myth #5: You can slow-cook frozen food.

“Food should be completely thawed before you put it in a slow cooker,” says the USDA’s Maribel Alonso. “If you put in a block of frozen food, it may take too long for the food to reach a safe temperature.”

In other words, the food may spend more than two hours in the “danger

zone” (see illustration, p. 10).

And if your slow cooker has a “delayed start” feature, think twice before you use it. If the food sits in the cooker at room temperature for more than two hours, you’re smack in the danger zone.

Instead, get a slow cooker that automatically switches to “warm” after the food is cooked.

**Bottom Line:** Never let food spend more than two hours in the “danger zone.”

### Myth #6: You can’t refreeze thawed raw meat.

Dinner plans changed? “As long as you’ve thawed raw meat, poultry, or seafood in the refrigerator, you can refreeze it,” explains Alonso.

(If you’re short on time, you can put frozen meat in a leak-proof plastic bag and submerge it in cold water on your counter, replacing the water every 30 minutes. But unlike meat thawed in the fridge, you’ll need to cook it immediately.)

And any cooked meat can be refrozen.

The catch: Raw meat that has been refrozen won’t taste as good.

“When the meat is thawed, you lose moisture,” says Alonso. “Add another freeze-thaw cycle, and the consistency and tenderness of the meat will change.”

**Bottom Line:** It’s safe to refreeze raw meat that was thawed in the fridge.

### Myth #7: Unsafe food only affects your GI tract.

Bacteria in food may be a culprit in urinary tract infections, or UTIs.

“We think some of the bacteria that cause UTIs are coming from animal foods,” says Lee Riley, chair of the division of infectious diseases and vaccinology at

the University of California, Berkeley.

For nearly two decades, Riley and others have found links between bacterial strains in animal foods—mostly poultry—and those that cause UTIs.<sup>3-5</sup>

How do bacteria from animals reach your urinary tract? First, people may touch kitchen counters, utensils, or their hands after touching raw poultry or meat, and the bacteria end up on salad or other raw foods.

When people ingest those bugs, “the bacteria transiently colonize the intestine,” says Riley. “In some people, they make their way out and cause a UTI.”

Some of his evidence: “We looked at the genetic fingerprints of *E. coli* in urine samples from Berkeley students with a UTI.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, we collected meat and poultry samples from the supermarkets around Berkeley. Twelve of the 61 distinct genetic fingerprints of *E. coli* from the UTI cases were also found in the meat or poultry samples.”

Those studies don’t prove that bacteria from meat is causing the UTIs, but the evidence is troubling.

“Based on our data, 20 percent of UTIs in Berkeley may have an animal food origin,” says Riley. “If that’s true, it’s a major public health issue.”

But the government doesn’t keep tabs on UTIs or the bacteria that cause them.

“The CDC already tracks other foodborne pathogens,” Riley notes. “Why not include UTIs? Then we could learn more about the disease, and if it’s truly associated with food.”

Unfortunately, UTIs are not always easy to treat with a round of antibiotics.

“We’re seeing progressive increases in drug-resistant UTIs,” says Riley.

And, again, food may be a source. A 2018 study identified a strain of antibiotic-resistant *E. coli* both in urine samples from people with UTIs and in meat samples from nearby grocery stores.<sup>2</sup>

**Bottom Line:** Keep a separate cutting board for raw meat, poultry, and seafood. After you handle them, wash your hands and utensils thoroughly. “And

look for meat raised without antibiotics, which may minimize your exposure to drug-resistant bacteria,” says Riley.

### Myth #8: All eggs need to be refrigerated.

Store-bought eggs must be refrigerated from farm to table. But if they’re fresh off the farm, it’s a different story.

“Commercial eggs are washed at a processing plant,” says the USDA’s Maribel Alonso. Washing removes dirt and bacteria from the eggs’ shells, she adds, “but it also eliminates the ‘bloom.’”

That’s the natural coating that helps keep water in and bacteria like *Salmonella* out.



It’s safe to refreeze raw meat, seafood, or poultry that was thawed in the refrigerator.

“The washed shell is porous, so anything on the outside can contaminate the inside,” explains Alonso. Once the bloom is gone, refrigeration keeps *Salmonella* from growing.

And once eggs have been refrigerated, they need to stay there. A cold egg left at room temperature can “sweat,” which opens the shell’s pores.

But bloom or no bloom, eggs last longer in the fridge.

(To kill *Salmonella*, cook eggs until both the white and yolk are firm. Like a runny yolk? Try pasteurized eggs, which have been treated to kill *Salmonella*.)

**Bottom Line:** Refrigerate store-bought eggs.

### Myth #9: Hand sanitizer kills all germs.

“Kills 99.99% of germs,” boasts the label of Germ-X hand sanitizer. But are most of those germs harmless? The FDA has asked companies for more evidence.

Alcohol-based hand sanitizers like Germ-X won’t kill bugs like the parasite *Cryptosporidium*, or the hard-to-treat bacteria *Clostridium difficile*, which can cause life-threatening diarrhea.

Nor will they kill norovirus, which is highly contagious and causes vomiting, diarrhea, and nausea.

Norovirus is the leading cause of foodborne illness in the United States. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that each year, 19 to 21 million Americans get sick from norovirus (though not all of them from eating contaminated food).

**Bottom Line:** Hand-washing is a safer bet than hand sanitizer.

### Myth #10: Eating raw dough is fine if you make it with pasteurized eggs.

Raw batter or dough made with raw eggs can harbor *Salmonella*. But it’s not just the eggs that can get you.

In two recent outbreaks, contaminated raw flour sickened 84 people with Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli*, which can cause bloody diarrhea.

The bacteria most likely got into the flour in the field or during processing.

“Make sure that you wash your hands, work surfaces, and utensils with warm water and soap after handling raw flour,” says Alonso.

**Bottom Line:** Don’t taste raw dough or let kids play with homemade play-dough. 🍌

<sup>1</sup> *Waste Manag.* 86: 123, 2019.

<sup>2</sup> [nsf.gov/newsroom/pdf/2011\\_NSF\\_Household\\_Germ\\_Study\\_exec-summary.pdf](https://www.nsf.gov/newsroom/pdf/2011_NSF_Household_Germ_Study_exec-summary.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> *Clin. Infect. Dis.* 40: 251, 2005.

<sup>4</sup> *Clin. Infect. Dis.* 61: 892, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> *MBio.* 9: e00470-18, 2018.

<sup>6</sup> *mSphere* 3: e00179-18, 2018.




# The Healthy Cook

## Stir it Up



Two of my stir-fry secrets: For easy slicing, freeze the chicken for 15-20 minutes. And prepare all the ingredients before you start cooking. 🍴

### Lemon-Ginger Chicken & Broccoli

 SERVES 4

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 Tbs. reduced-sodium soy sauce</li><li>1 Tbs. + 1 Tbs. + 1 Tbs. sunflower or peanut oil</li><li>1 Tbs. + 1 tsp. cornstarch</li><li>½ tsp. dark brown sugar</li><li>1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breast, sliced into bite-sized pieces</li><li>3 cloves garlic, minced</li><li>1 Tbs. grated ginger</li><li>1 scallion, minced</li><li>4 cups broccoli spears</li><li>¾ cup homemade chicken stock (see <a href="https://www.nutritionaction.com/stirfry">nutritionaction.com/stirfry</a>)</li><li>1½ Tbs. fresh lemon juice</li><li>½ tsp. kosher salt</li><li>1 Tbs. ½-inch matchsticks ginger</li><li>1 scallion, thinly sliced</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. In a medium bowl, whisk together the soy sauce, 1 Tbs. oil, 1 Tbs. cornstarch, and sugar. Toss the chicken with the soy sauce mixture.</li><li>2. In a small bowl, mix together the garlic, grated ginger, minced scallion, and 1 Tbs. oil.</li><li>3. In a large non-stick pan over high heat, heat the remaining 1 Tbs. oil until very hot. Stir-fry the broccoli until bright green. Remove from the pan.</li><li>4. Stir-fry the chicken until no longer pink, 3-5 minutes. Remove from the pan.</li><li>5. Stir-fry the garlic-ginger mixture until fragrant, 30-60 seconds. Whisk in the stock, lemon juice, salt, and 1 tsp. cornstarch. Bring to a boil and allow to thicken, 2-3 minutes.</li><li>6. Return the chicken and the broccoli to the pan. Toss with the sauce. Sprinkle with the ginger matchsticks and sliced scallion.</li></ul> |
|--|---|

PER SERVING (1½ cups): calories 270 | total fat 13 g | sat fat 2 g | carbs 9 g | fiber 2 g | total sugar 2 g  
added sugar 1 g | protein 29 g | sodium 460 mg



Want more recipes?

Go to  
[nutritionaction.com/stirfry](https://www.nutritionaction.com/stirfry)  
for

**Vegetable Fried Rice**

**Ginger Sesame Tofu & Snow Peas**

Plus: **Easiest Homemade Chicken Stock**

Need cooking advice?

Write to Chef Kate at  
[healthycook@cspinet.org](mailto:healthycook@cspinet.org).



# CHEERS?

## Counting calories in booze

BY LINDSAY MOYER & KAAMILAH MITCHELL



A typical 6 oz. glass of wine or 12 oz. beer has as many calories as a can of Coke (140). Some beers have twice that much. But you'd never know it from many labels and non-chain-restaurant menus. (Chain restaurants must disclose calories.)

Alcohol is responsible for 88,000 deaths each year in this country, mostly from car crashes, suicides, violence, falls, and liver disease. But booze can also leave its mark on your midsection.

### Beer

A beer's calories depend mostly on alcohol and, to a lesser extent, on carbs.

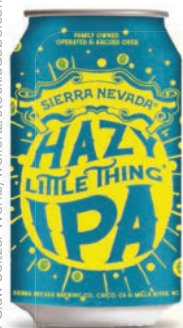
■ **Light.** Very-low-alcohol beers (2% to 3% alcohol) like Miller 64 start at around 60 calories in 12 oz. Most lights (4% alcohol) have about 100 calories.

■ **Regular.** An average 5% alcohol brew like Budweiser hovers around 150 calories.

■ **IPAs.** Heavy hitters (6% to 9% alcohol) like IPAs, double IPAs, and Belgian-style Trippels pack 200 to 300 calories. Gulp! A lower-alcohol "session" IPA cuts that to 140 or so.

■ **Draft pours.** Do the math. Even an average beer hits 200 or 250 calories when you're served a 16 or 20 oz. glass.

For a longer list, including carbs, see [nutritionaction.com/alcohol](http://nutritionaction.com/alcohol).



### Mixed Drinks

The examples in our chart are typical for chain restaurants. But drinks vary from one bartender to another. The usual ranges:

■ **Martini or Manhattan.** Classic cocktails with little added sugar (Manhattan) or no added sugar (martini) typically fall in the 150-to-200-calorie range.

■ **Moscow mule or mojito.** Expect about 200 to 300 calories.

■ **Margarita.** A classic margarita—tequila, lime, triple sec—in a small glass limits the calories to 200. But sugary (often frozen) margs jump to 350...and oversized ones reach 500.

■ **Blended frozen drinks.** Large frozen mudslides or other boozy ice cream shakes hit 500 to 800-plus calories. That's like slurping up a (540-calorie) Big Mac...or more. May-day!



### Wine

Our chart shows the calories (150) for 6 ounces, the amount in a restaurant pour. A 9 oz. glass reaches 220 calories.

Even many higher-sugar whites (like Moscato or Riesling) are in the same ballpark.

Count on 200 to 300 calories in a glass of sangria, thanks to fruit, juice, sugar, etc.

To see how wines from some big brands vary, go to [nutritionaction.com/alcohol](http://nutritionaction.com/alcohol).



### Liquor

Rule of thumb: any gin, rum, tequila, vodka, or whiskey has

100 to 120 calories per 1.5 oz. shot, before you add any mixers. That's because all of liquor's calories come from its alcohol (40% to 50%).

Exceptions: "Cask strength" or "barrel proof" liquor can reach 150-or-so calories. *Liqueurs* (like Baileys or Cointreau) vary, depending on their alcohol, sugar, or other extras.



### Seltzer, Cider, etc.

Most **hard seltzers** match the calories of a light beer (100-ish). And sugar ranges from zero (Bon & Viv, Henry's, Smirnoff) to half a teaspoon (Nauti, Truly, White Claw) in 12 oz. Sure beats other sweet sips:

■ **Hard cider.** Expect up to 200 calories and 3 to 5 teaspoons of sugar—some from juice—in 12 oz. Dry ciders are lower (150 calories).

■ **Ritas.** This brand of canned sparkling margaritas—made with high fructose corn syrup and, in some flavors, food dyes and sucralose—crams 190 to 220 calories into just 8 oz. How many of the 21 to 29 grams of carbs are added sugar? The company won't say. 🍹





# The Bar Tab

The percent alcohol by volume, when available, is in parentheses. Within each category, products are ranked from least to most calories, then (if shown) teaspoons of total sugars. We didn't list sugars for beers, seltzers, and liquor because most have little or none.

	Calories
<b>Beer</b> (12 oz.)	
Budweiser Select 55 (2.4%)	55
Miller 64 (2.8%)	64
Coors Light (4.2%)	100
Corona Light (4%)	100
Dogfish Head Slightly Mighty Lo-Cal IPA (4%)	100
Michelob Ultra or Miller Lite (4.2%)	100
Bud Light (4.2%)	110
Pabst Blue Ribbon Easy (3.8%)	110
Guinness Draught Stout (4.2%)	130
Allagash Saison (6.1%)	140
Bud Light Platinum (6%)	140
Dogfish Head SeaQuench Ale Session Sour (4.9%)	140
Founders All Day IPA Session Ale (4.7%)	140
Miller High Life (4.6%)	140
New Belgium Dayblazer Easygoing Ale (4.8%)	140
New Belgium Slow Ride Session IPA (4.5%)	140
Pabst Blue Ribbon Original (4.8%)	140
Allagash White (5.2%)	150
Budweiser (5%)	150
Corona Extra (4.6%)	150
New Belgium Fat Tire Amber Ale (5.2%)	160
Blue Moon Belgian White (5.4%)	170
Samuel Adams Boston Lager (5%)	180
Sierra Nevada Pale Ale (5.6%)	180
Bell's Two Hearted Ale (7%)	210
Sierra Nevada Hazy Little Thing IPA (6.7%)	210
New Belgium Trippel (8.5%)	240
Sierra Nevada Torpedo Extra IPA (7.2%)	240
Victory Golden Monkey (9.5%)	260
Dogfish Head 90 Minute IPA (9%)	290
Sierra Nevada Hoptimum Triple IPA (9.6%)	310
<b>Hard Seltzer</b> (12 oz., unless noted)	
Bon & Viv (4.5%)	90
Henry's (4.2%)	90
Smirnoff (4.5%)	90
Nauti (4.5%)	100
Truly (5%) or White Claw (5%)	100
Natural Light (6%)	130
Pabst Blue Ribbon Stronger Seltzer (8%), 16 oz.	230
<b>Liquor</b> (1.5 oz.)	
Gin, rum, tequila, vodka, or whiskey, any brand (40%)	100
Bombay Sapphire Gin (47%)	110
Bulleit Bourbon or Rye (45%)	110
Gin, rum, tequila, vodka, or whiskey, any brand (50%)	120
Booker's Bourbon (62.5%)	150

	Calories	Total Sugars (tsp.)
<b>Liqueur</b> (1.5 oz.)		
Baileys Almande Almondmilk Liqueur (13%)	70	1.5
DeKuyper Peachtree Peach Schnapps (15%)	80	2.5
Kahlúa (20%)	130	4.5
Baileys Original Irish Cream (17%)	140	2
Cointreau (40%)	140	2.5

<b>Wine</b> (6 oz.)		
Barefoot Riesling (8%) or Moscato (9%) <sup>1</sup>	130	2.5
Red wine, most varietals (13-14%)	150	0.5
White wine, most varietals (12-13%)	150	0.5

<b>Hard Cider</b> (12 oz.)		
Stella Artois Spritzer (3.5%)	120	NA
Angry Orchard Stone Dry (5.5%)	150	1.5
Stella Artois Cidre (4.5%)	180	4
Angry Orchard Crisp Apple (5%)	190	5

<b>Flavored Malt Beverages</b> (10-12 oz., unless noted)		
Redd's Apple Ale (5%)	170	3
Henry's Hard Soda (4.2%) <sup>1</sup>	200	6.5
Ritas Straw-Ber-Rita (8%), 8 oz.	200	NA
Ritas Rosé Spritz White Peach (6%)	210	NA
Ritas Lime-A-Rita (8%), 8 oz.	220	NA
Redd's Wicked Apple Ale (8%)	230	5
Pabst Blue Ribbon Hard Coffee (5%)	250	7.5

<b>Mixers</b> (6.5 oz.)		
Club soda, any brand	0	0
Fever-Tree Refreshingly Light Ginger Beer	40	2
Canada Dry Tonic Water	70	4.5
Fever-Tree Ginger Beer	90	4

<b>Restaurant Mixed Drinks</b> (1 drink)		
Red Lobster Martini	160	0
Red Lobster Manhattan	160	1
Olive Garden Old Fashioned	170	2.5
The Cheesecake Factory Red Sangria	170	5
California Pizza Kitchen Moscow Mule	190	5
The Cheesecake Factory Cosmopolitan	210	3.5
Yard House House Margarita	220	5.5
Yard House Classic Mojito	230	7.5
California Pizza Kitchen Orchard Sangria	280	8
Chili's Premium Long Island Iced Tea	290	6.5
Olive Garden Piña Colada	330	11
Chili's Mango Patrón Margarita	360	12.5
Red Lobster Strawberry Lobsterita	500	16.5
Olive Garden Chocolate Almond Amore	540	29.5
Red Robin Baileys Irish Cream Shake	590	15
Applebee's Shark Bowl	660	28.5
Red Robin Blue Moon Beer Shake	840	18.5

<sup>1</sup> Average of the entire line or the varieties listed. NA Number not available.

**Note:** Most calories have been rounded to the nearest 10. Total sugars are rounded to the nearest ½ teaspoon. To convert teaspoons of sugars to grams, multiply by 4.2.

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



## FOOD FIND

### Sweet Freezes



Apples. Oranges. Grapefruits. Apples. Oranges. Grapefruits.

Where can you find top-notch fruit when you're bored with winter's usual in-season selection? The freezer.

Dipping into the frozen-fruit case has perks galore, especially if you love berries. For starters, the fruit is usually frozen at its peak of ripeness.

And talk about cheap. Why

drop \$5 on a small container of ho-hum raspberries when you can snag a frozen bagful for half the price per ounce?

Face it. You can't beat bite-size pieces of already-washed fruit waiting patiently until you're ready for it. Food waste? Minimal.

Yes, they lose some of that fresh-fruit texture. Ice forms as fruit freezes, and that breaks down its cell structure. So the morsels get softer and more liquidy as they thaw. Solution: Toss them into some yogurt, a smoothie, or your next bowl of oatmeal or cold cereal.

Our fave: **Wyman's Wild Blueberries**. While wild berries are often pricier, their flavor is intense. And with smaller berries, less pulp, and more skin, wild blues stay a bit firmer as they thaw.

Bonus: The six grams of fiber (more than 20 percent of a day's worth) in every 80-calorie cup makes the payoff even sweeter.

**Trader Joe's** is another good frozen-fruit bet. Try Joe's **Fancy Berry Medley** or **Very Cherry Berry Blend**.

"Frozen is fresher," says Wyman's. Sometimes, it is.

[wymans.com](http://wymans.com)

Photos: Wyman's (left), Red Robin International (right), Kate Sherwood/CSPI (middle).

## FOOD FAIL



### Bottomless Feeder

"Swiss cheese, crispy onion straws, French Onion spread and tomatoes on a melted Provolone-capped onion bun, topped off with three golden-fried onion rings."

Why did it take so long for **Red Robin** to come up with its limited-time **French Onion Ringer Burger**? After all, the onion rings, onion straws, and cheeses were there in the kitchen anyway. And it wasn't a big stretch to think of piling them on the fluffy white-flour buns.

Speaking of piling on, 1,180 calories, 22 grams of saturated fat, and 1,640 milligrams of sodium is quite impressive. It's like two Big Macs in one!

But why stop there? The burger comes with **Bottomless Steak Fries** as a free side. So you can add 350 calories' worth of starch-plus-oil to your 1,530-calorie burger-plus-fries again and again. What fun!

To its credit, Red Robin also offers bottomless broccoli or salad as a side. But—just a wild guess—odds are, they're not as big a draw with the burger crowd.

Come to think of it, it's hard to imagine a better draw for Americans these days than bottomless fries...unless it's also bottomless drinks!

So if the **Bottomless Root Beer Float** or **Poppin' Purple Lemonade** doesn't sound like it would quench your bottomless thirst, you can order a **Bottomless Cream Soda** mixed with Sprite and topped with whipped cream.

"So keep chugging," says Red Robin. "We're stocked and ready."

And *we're* speechless.

[redrobin.com](http://redrobin.com)—(877) 733-6543



### DISH of the month

#### Sesame Miso Bok Choy

Steam 1 lb. bok choy, 1-2 minutes. Whisk together 1 Tbs. miso, 1 Tbs. water, 1 tsp. rice vinegar, ½ tsp. toasted sesame oil, and ½ tsp. honey. Spoon over the bok choy. Top with 1 Tbs. sesame seeds.

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