



"Smart Choices" food label is marketing fraud

(Opinion) The big food companies have dreamed up yet another clever con to sell processed junk foods to parents and children: A "Smart Choices" label that implies the food product is a smart choice for health and nutrition. The problem is that the standards for qualifying for this designation were set by the food companies themselves, and processed junk foods like Froot Loops (a sugary breakfast cereal) qualify.

Froot Loops is 41 percent processed white sugar. It also contains processed flour and partially-hydrogenated vegetable oil. But that's not all you'll find in the box: Froot Loops is also made with synthetic coloring chemicals, including Red #40, Blue #2, Yellow #6 and Blue #1. The No. 1 ingredient of Froot Loops is sugar, and each serving contains 12 grams of sugar.

So how, exactly, did Froot Loops qualify for the "Smart Choices" label?

I'll tell you how: Because the Smart Choices label is a marketing fraud. It's a manipulative, dishonest food package labeling system that is intentionally designed by the processed food companies to mislead and misinform consumers into buying processed food products, in my view.

You'd have to be deeply misinformed about nutritional basics to think that a processed breakfast cereal made of 41% sugar, partially-hydrogenated oils and artificial coloring chemicals is a "smart choice" for any child. A more appropriate label might be "Diabetes Choices" or "Obesity Choices", but certainly not "Smart Choices."

In my opinion, this marketing fraud is little more than a marketing gimmick. It makes you wonder who, exactly, came up with it.

Did Tufts University sell out to the food giants?

The president of the Smart Choices board is Eileen T. Kennedy, dean of the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University. (<http://nutrition.tufts.edu/11745629...>)

Eileen Kennedy and other Tufts University faculty members have established ties with the Kellogg's company, having participated in a "Children's Health" forum that was co-sponsored by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

That event, held in June of this year, was entitled: 'Children's Health: The Future of Food & Nutrition Policy'. It claimed to offer in-depth discussions on topics like "childhood obesity, nutrition standards, global child nutrition and school food." (<http://www.reuters.com/article/pres...>)

(Did their discussions even mention that perhaps children shouldn't eat breakfast cereals made with 41% processed sugar?)

In promoting the event, Eileen Kennedy was quoted in a joint press release, admitting how closely her university works with food companies:

"Working with our colleagues across academia, the food and nutrition industry, government agencies and nonprofit organizations, we will influence and change the "nutritional landscape for our children."

She certainly accomplished that. Now, products made with 41% refined white sugar are fraudulently marketed as "Smart Choices."

Guess who else was invited to speak at the event? Dr. Cathy Woteki from Mars, Inc., makers of candy bars and other sugar processed foods that are aggressively marketed to children.

Tufts University: Sugar for kids?

It all makes you wonder: With all these corporate junk food giants being so heavily involved in this event presented by Tufts University, what exactly does this university really stand for in regards to healthy food for children? Does Tufts University itself stand behind the promotion of sugary junk foods for children? Does it endorse products like Froot Loops being labeled as "Smart Choices" for kids?

Aiming low

She might answer, of course, that "it meets U.S. government nutritional guidelines." Those are the same guidelines that have already made the United States of America a nation grappling with a pandemic of obese children and adults.

Clearly, U.S. government nutritional guidelines are a public health disaster. If we hope to improve the health of our children, it only stands to reason that we must improve the nutritional guidelines being followed to feed our kids. And you can't improve nutritional guidelines if you're in bed with the very same corporate food giants who are making and peddling their sugary, chemically-enriched breakfast cereals that promote diabetes and obesity in the first place.

Continued →



Emeril's Spaghetti Squash with Marinara Sauce

Ingredients: Yields 4 servings
2 small spaghetti squash, halved and seeded
1 teaspoon salt, plus more for seasoning
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
Water
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 cups marinara sauce
2 tablespoons roughly chopped parsley

Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.
2. Sprinkle the bottom of a large shallow baking dish with salt and pepper. (The halved squash should just fit in one layer.)
3. Place the squash flesh side down in the pan and add enough water to come up about one inch.
4. Cover tightly with foil and cook in the oven until squash is fork tender, 1 to 1 1/2 hours.
5. Shred the squash with a fork and transfer the squash strands to a bowl.
6. Toss with the Marinara Sauce and garnish with parsley.

Basic Marinara

Ingredients:

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 garlic clove, peeled and minced
1 small onion, peeled and thinly sliced
1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
1 (28-ounce) cans diced tomatoes in juice
1 (14-ounce) can tomato puree
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley leaves

Method:

1. Heat olive oil in large Dutch oven over medium heat.
2. Add garlic and onion and cook, stirring, until tender, 5 to 6 min.
3. Add the Italian seasoning and cook for 30 seconds.
4. Add the diced tomatoes with juice, the tomato puree, and parsley.
5. Stir to blend and reduce the heat to low and simmer for 1 hour.
6. Serve over the squash.

~ Emeril Lagasse



You also can't improve kids' health if you're nutritionally ill-informed and yet you've somehow found your way into a position of influence over nutritional policy... as seems to be the case with Dr. Eileen Kennedy. Here's her explanation of why Froot Loops deserves the "Smart Choices" label, in her own words: "You're rushing around, you're trying to think about healthy eating for your kids and you have a choice between a doughnut and a cereal. So Froot Loops is a better choice."

Better than a donut?

Huh? Is she serious? Froot Loops gets a Smart Choices label because it's better than a donut? Is this the limit of the nutritional awareness of the dean of a nationally-recognized school that's part of the Tufts University system?

This all really reminds me of the movie Idiocracy, where the whole nation is run by complete idiots and water fountains have been replaced with sugary sports drinks because everybody knows that "water is only for toilets."

In terms of really idiotic thinking, check out this quote published in the New York Times: "Dr. Clark, who is a member of the Smart Choices board, said that the program's standard for sugar in cereals was consistent with federal dietary guidelines that say, that 'small amounts of sugar' added to nutrient-dense foods like breakfast cereals can make them taste better. That, in theory, will encourage people to eat more of them, which would increase the nutrients in their diet."

Are they serious? Break down this logic for a moment: Sugar is GOOD because it encourages children to eat MORE processed breakfast cereals!

How on earth could this be a legitimate answer in a nation where kids are eating too much sugar and too much processed food in the first place?

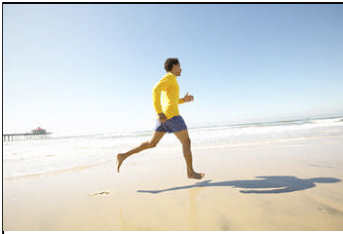
The utter abandonment of basic common sense by the people in this program is truly awe-inspiring. It really makes me wonder how we can ever turn around the health problems of this nation when we have such nutritionally illiterate people being quoted in the New York Times as nutritional experts. (Or perhaps the NY Times was just trying to point out how nutritionally ignorant these people are, and on that point it succeeded wildly...)

Smart Choices companies aren't so smart choices

In case you're curious, here's the list of the companies participating in this "Smart Choices" label program:
General Mills
Kellogg's
Kraft Foods
PepsiCo
ConAgra Foods
Unilever
Tyson Foods

...it reads like a who's who of processed food and junk food giants. In terms of making truly smart choices at the grocery store, by the way, the smartest choice would be to avoid any product made by any of these companies, in my view.

~September 22, 2009 by: Mike Adams, the Health Ranger, NaturalNews Editor



More Misleading News About Exercise

More than 45 million Americans now belong to a health club, up from 23 million in 1993. And yet obesity figures have risen dramatically in the same period. The Time magazine article linked below asks the question -- Since many people get hungry after they exercise and eat more, could exercise actually be keeping them from losing weight?

"In general, for weight loss, exercise is pretty useless," says Eric Ravussin, chair in diabetes and metabolism at Louisiana State University and a prominent exercise researcher. Many recent studies have found that exercise isn't as important in helping people lose weight as you hear so regularly in gym advertisements or on shows like The Biggest Loser -- or, for that matter, from magazines like Time.

The basic problem is that while it's true that exercise burns calories and that you must burn calories to lose weight, exercise has another effect: it can stimulate hunger. That causes us to eat more, which in turn can negate the weight-loss benefits we just accrued. Exercise, in other words, isn't necessarily helping us lose weight. It may even be making it harder.

~ Time August 9, 2009

Fitness Magazine Challenges Time's Misleading Exercise Info

There is so much misinformation floating around the airwaves that I want to be sure Time's negative article gets properly balanced with a positive one. Fitness Magazine has done just that and recently published *10 reasons why exercise is, in fact, a very good method for weight loss.*

1. Exercise zaps belly fat

Regular moderate to high intensity aerobic exercise has the greatest impact on reducing abdominal fat -- the dangerous fat that increases your risk of diabetes and heart disease.

2. Exercise controls calories

You need to burn more calories than you consume in order to lose weight. Regular exercise uses up excess calories that would otherwise be stored as fat.

3. Exercise keeps lost pounds MIA

Ninety percent of people who have successfully lost weight and kept it off for a year do about an hour of physical activity a day.

4. Exercise boosts metabolism

You'll lose fat when you diet without exercising, but you'll also lose muscle, which means you'll burn fewer calories. The more muscle you have, the higher your metabolism and the more calories you'll burn.

5. Exercise does more than the scale shows

If you gain 3 pounds of lean muscle and lose 4 pounds of fat, you've actually experienced a 7-pound improvement in your body condition, despite the scale only showing 1 pound of weight loss.

6. Exercise curbs emotional eating

Working out has been proven time and time again to help regulate mood, which has a direct effect on people who eat when they're stressed or upset.

7. Exercise creates a healthy chain reaction

Healthy habits tend to cluster together. When people make positive changes, like getting more exercise, they tend to work on other health improvements as well, such as eating better.

8. Exercise brings on the fun

Rock-climbing is more exciting than eating a celery stick. That's why it's sometimes easier to be active to stay slim than to maintain a strict diet.

9. Exercise stops hunger

People who exercise and diet are actually less hungry than those who only diet, according to at least one study.

10. Exercise increases energy

Regular physical activity increases stamina by boosting your body's production of energy-promoting neurotransmitters. That gives you even more motivation to get moving and shed pounds.

Exercise is About So Much More Than Just Weight Loss

Weight loss is a goal for many people, and one of the top reasons why people start an exercise program. However, the benefits of exercise extend way beyond your weight. In fact, even if you are already at your ideal weight -- or even if you are underweight -- exercise is still a vital part of staying healthy.

Exercise is simply one of the most powerful tools available to drop your insulin levels, and elevated insulin levels are one of the primary drivers for high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes and weight gain. It is my belief that properly performed exercise is far more powerful for controlling these symptoms than any drug yet developed.

Regular workouts can also reduce your risk of **cancer**, boost your brainpower and lower your risk of heart disease, all of which are essential as you get older. And did you know exercise can even help you **fight off a cold**, **cure insomnia** and fight depression?

Well it can, and the benefits do not stop there. But as with many aspects of life, all types of exercise are not created equal ... and if you want to take advantage of all the benefits exercise has to offer you must do it correctly.

~Dr. Joseph Mercola, mercola.com, September 24 2009

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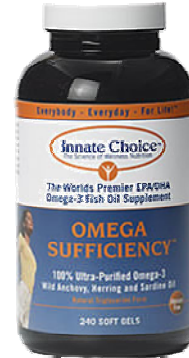
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News of our Omega-3 Fish Oil

I emailed Dr. Chestnut (one of the leading wellness experts in the world!) asking him, "In detail, how do you make sure your fish oil comes from a sustainable source?" The fish oil in question is the one we offer in the office that we believe to be the highest quality on the market, but I wanted to make sure it was sustainable as well.

He personally responded shortly after stating, "The fishing industry for these fish is HIGHLY regulated so that each year only a certain percentage of the fish are allowed to be caught. Further, our oil is from fish that are already being caught, we render the oil from the waste from the fish that used to be thrown away in landfills or used for fertilizer. Our fish oil does not result in any more fish being harvested. At present time only 5% of the fish waste that we use is being utilized."

I was very happy and impressed to hear this, and can now proudly say that we offer the highest quality AND sustainable fish oil!

~ Maggie Winters



Emeril's White Bean Dip for Veggies

Yield: 6 Servings

Ingredients:

2 small shallots
1/4 cup parsley
1 can white beans
Juice of one lemon
1/4 cup olive oil
Veggies for Dipping

Method:

Pulse all ingredients in food processor and blend until a smooth paste forms and transfer to a bowl. Serve with cut veggies such as carrots, red pepper strips, celery and mushrooms.

~Emeril Lagasse