

Food for Thought

Ice cream may lick calcium deficiency fight

"I scream! You scream! We all scream for ice cream!"

Americans eat about 18 pounds of ice cream each year. Statistics show that the favorites are the expensive, rich, super premium brands. We seem to think that when we dish out the extra money for premium ice cream that the producers are dishing up a

healthier dessert. But nutritionists say we're paying extra money for more cholesterol, calories and fat.

To be real ice cream, it must contain at least 10 percent butterfat, according to federal standards. Some "high quality" brands contain 20 percent. Sure, it tastes a little creamier, but it's much worse for your heart and your hips.

Fortunately, for ice cream lovers who don't want the extra calories and heart risks, some tasty alternatives are available.

Ice milk, which is made in the same flavors as ice cream, contains only one-third of the fat, cholesterol and calories.

Soft-serve ice cream has fewer calories than hard ice cream, about one-fourth as much fat and one-third more protein, calcium, and vitamin B a serving. This is partly because it's usually made with skim milk.

Frozen tofu, which hasn't yet become popular in Nebraska, contains no cholesterol and is lactose-free for people who can't digest milk. That's the good news. The bad news about frozen tofu is that it has 65 percent more calories than ice cream and only one-fifth the calcium.

Frozen yogurt seems to be the best buy, nutritionally speaking. It has one-third the fat and still manages to have more protein and calcium. If you opt for

frozen yogurt, you'll have no trouble finding a place to buy it. But watch out for the toppings that are displayed temptingly in yogurt stores. Oreo cookie or M&M toppings defeat the purpose of eating yogurt. (See yogurt review, Page 12)



Cheryl Petersen

A special note to women, especially to those who don't drink milk or eat other dairy products: I see women with Diet Cokes all the time, but rarely do I see one with a carton of milk. Frozen yogurt or reasonably sized servings of ice cream could help fight your calcium deficiency without ruining your diet.

Almost everyone has heard of the painfully destructive bone disease called osteoporosis is caused by insufficient calcium intake. To prevent this disease, women must get enough calcium every day. The recommended daily amount is 800 milligrams or slightly more for very active women. Without this amount of calcium, women's bones never reach maximum strength and density before age 40, and then bone deterioration begins. Weak bones can't support a body for long.

The National Dairy Board suggests that women who don't drink milk should eat a cup of yogurt each day to make up about one-third of their calcium. The rest, they said, should come from cheeses, low-fat milk products and from a balanced diet.

The scope is that ice cream and other frozen desserts aren't always as sinful as they taste. They even can play an important role in staying healthy and in helping women lick their calcium deficiency.

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Sweet savings will cost you more

The country's first taste of the artificial sweetener NutraSweet began with magazine advertisements that offered free gumballs by mail.

Now U.S. consumers aren't only blowing bubbles with it, but are consuming it in carbonated drinks, instant pudding, gelatin and even breakfast cereal. How did we ever live without it?

NutraSweet, scientifically known as Aspartame, is a calorie-free artificial sweetener created by combining two proteins that naturally assimilate in the body. Because it is two hundred times sweeter than sugar, just two calories worth of NutraSweet is equal to 16 calories of sugar — sweet savings

indeed. Sweetness minus the calories and, supposedly, the aftertaste associated with other artificial sweeteners has a



Sandy Gordon

price. Because the Searle Company of Skokie, Ill., has a patent on NutraSweet until 1992, the consumers may have to

endure the price for a while.

NutraSweet has become a marketing success, and soon it may be found in orange juice, yogurt and ice cream. Cakes, cookies and pies will lose out because NutraSweet chemically breaks down and loses its flavor during baking.

How did we ever live without NutraSweet? It's simple. We just ate. Now we have a choice: regular or low-calorie.

As far as the Food and Drug Administration is concerned, NutraSweet is safe. However, there are hazards associated with too much of anything. Because NutraSweet is not only calorie-free, but nutrition-free, it should not become a substitute for a balanced diet.

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