

Got Fear? Get Facts

NAPSI — Got fear? That's the message some special interest groups promote about our food.

Under the banners of "physicians' committees," "public interest" groups and "consumer rights" organizations, they scare us to raise money for themselves.

A recent campaign-in TV and newspaper ads, highway billboards, supermarket flyers and the Internet-abuses the popular "Got Milk?" ads. These groups ran "Got Beer?," "Got Prostate Cancer?" and other misguided ads to scare consumers away from dairy products.

Other wild claims include milk causing diabetes, cancer, ear infections, infant allergies, colic and anemia. One group actually said calcium-rich milk increased, rather than decreased the risk of osteoporosis.

According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, American Cancer Society, American Dietetic Association and many other government and independent experts, the scary claims are seriously misleading and plain false.

Some state "public interest" groups placed fullpage newspaper ads attacking milk produced by cows receiving hormones. Similar messages circulated in "Safe Food News" magazines at pricey "natural" food supermarkets.

This "Got hormone-free milk?" campaign falsely claims dairy consumers risk breast and prostate cancer, increased antibiotic resistance and other ills. The campaign offers coupons for "hormone-free" ice cream and ways to help schools ban the offending milk.

But extensive, world-wide testing of milk and meat from such cows shows the products are safe, according to the FDA. Separate reviews by the National Institutes of Health, the World Health Organization, and studies in prestigious medical journals such as Pediatrics and the Journal of the American Medical Association also conclude the products are safe.

What do these multi-million dollar campaigns have in common besides being misleading? The special interests raise money with the assistance of a slick, marketing and public relations firm in Washington, D.C.

Documents expose these campaigns as designed to "generate revenues" for the special interests by exploiting headline-grabbing scares. When the scares were exposed as false, one group blamed the media for "muddling" the message.

The PR firm conveniently also represents many for-profit "natural" and "organic" products businesses whose marketing campaigns benefit from the scares. Often, for-profit marketing efforts are included with the non-profit ads as free product coupons or acknowledged sponsorships. Not surprisingly, the for-profit businesses also fund the various special interest groups.

The lesson for consumers when presented with "Got fear?" campaigns, is to "Get facts."

For more information about food scares and their sponsors visit NoMoreScares.com. Got Fear? Get Facts.

Holiday Safety

No matter how hectic your schedule is during the holiday season, always keep safety in mind. A fall from a ladder, trip on the stairs or electrical accident can quickly take the fun out of this special season.

When using a ladder to hang

decorations, don't stretch too far — you may lose your balance. Make sure the ladder is safe and sturdy before you begin. It's also wise to have someone steady it for you as you climb.

Don't carry too many things up or down the stairs at one

time. Sometimes it's better to make two trips than to struggle on the stairs and lose your vision. Avoid leaving objects on the steps. Some of the worst accidents in the home are caused by tripping over items left on stairways.

New Perspectives On Caffeine And Headache

NAPSI — Caffeine has been enjoyed by millions of people around the world for centuries. In one form or another, the average American consumes about 200 to 300 mg of caffeine per day, and many say caffeine helps energize them and perform at their peak.

What many people may not know is that caffeine has been used to help treat headaches for many years. Caffeine has also been added to prescription and over-the-counter pain relievers to boost their efficacy.

But how much caffeine is too much? Can people who regularly consume caffeine in the form of coffee or cola still use a "caffeinated" pain reliever without overdoing it? To help answer questions like these, the National Headache Foundation, a nonprofit organization that provides information to headache sufferers and promotes headache research, asked a panel of medical experts to examine the published material on the relationship between caffeine and headache. This panel agreed with published studies that show caffeine, when combined with aspirin and acetaminophen, enhances the pain-relieving power of these over-the-counter headache medicines-by up to as much as 40 percent. In

addition, the panel reviewed safety data and concluded that caffeine, when used properly, is not addictive and poses no health risk for most people.

According to Jerome Goldstein, MD, director of the San Francisco Headache Clinic and chair of the expert panel, caffeine offers another benefit. "Because medications that contain caffeine work faster, there is less likelihood that people will need to take more of the medicine, and the risks of unwanted side effects are reduced."

To help consumers understand these findings, the National Headache Foundation has developed a new information brochure, "New Perspectives on Caffeine and Headache," that offers new ways to help people understand the relationship between caffeine and headache and help them make a well-informed decision about treatment.

Consumers can also learn ways to measure their caffeine consumption and gain a better understanding of the role caffeine plays in treating headaches.

"We wanted to bring consumers the opinions of experts to help them make the right decisions about treating their headaches," says Suzanne Simons, executive director of the National Headache Foundation. "Our hope is that the findings of this panel and the information in the bro-

chure will help eliminate any confusion headache sufferers may have regarding what triggers their headaches and how to treat them."

The "New Perspectives on Caffeine and Headache" brochure addresses the science behind caffeine's headache-fighting properties. By increasing the production of stomach acid, caffeine helps the body absorb headache medicines more quickly. Caffeine also constricts certain blood vessels, which reduces blood flow and eases pressure associated with certain headaches, such as painful migraines. The brochure offers a quiz that helps people determine how much caffeine they consume on a daily basis, a list of the most common sources of caffeine and a chart to gain a better idea of their weekly caffeine intake. Common questions about caffeine are also addressed, such as:

Can I become addicted to caffeine?

What happens when I stop consuming caffeine?

How can I avoid rebound headaches and caffeine withdrawal?

To order a copy of "New Perspectives on Caffeine and Headache," call the National Headache Foundation at 1-888-NHF-5552.

Caffeine reduces blood flow and may ease the pressure associated with certain headaches.

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