

## Proper nutrition is tricky

Proper nutrition is a tricky thing. And calorie counting is not easy either. I sometimes refer to the supermarket as a toxic waste land mine.

Admittedly, for years, I put minimal effort into my food selections, whether I was grocery shopping or eating out. When I attempted to mend my ways, “danger” lurked. I bought muffins instead of doughnuts only to discover the muffins had the grease on the inside instead of outside. When I saw low-fat muffins advertised, I changed again only to find out that my trade in 9-ounce muffins was still almost 900 calories because more sugar was added.

Even a sugar-free, fat-free muffin was 720 calories. Did you know that you can fill up with two pounds of pineapple for only 200 calories versus just two ounces of Gummy Bears for 200 calories?



When I kicked the bologna sandwich habit for good, I thought I had made a healthy choice – tuna sandwiches at a local eatery. This time the booby trap was all the mayonnaise enveloping the tuna. A hamburger or roast beef sandwich would have been healthier.



Finally I decided I would have to be a better “food detective” but the nutritional tricksters were one step ahead with attention-grabbing, but deceptive, labels. During a 100-mile bicycle ride, I grabbed a “snack” at a convenience store. A serving was “only” 160 calories but the small package had two servings. I bought low-fat soup and didn’t notice it was saturated in sodium. I assumed any salsa was safe – just veggies and water. I later found out the brand I purchased had trans fats/lots

of sodium. The soy sauce contained wheat!

We need to understand that the food industry’s No. 1 goal is to make money – like any other business. That’s best done selling us the most stuff at the highest price with the least cost to the manufacturer. Unfortunately, that formula means producing a lot of processed foods full of preservatives, sodium, refined sugar but minimal fiber. Our only defense is to be armed with the facts, not myths.

Dairy products provide a good source of calcium but did you know that plain yogurt, spinach, beans, salmon, green peas, almonds, kale, turnip greens, beet greens, blackstrap molasses, soybeans, soy, mustard greens, okra and fortified cereals also have calcium?

In additional articles, I’ll unmask the myths and provide you with the nutritional information you need to lead a happy, healthy life. And yes, it’s a myth that all fat is bad.

When I eat my walnuts and almonds, I know that I'm eating good fat – mono unsaturated fat that is!