My children are big peanut butter eaters. How can I be sure that the peanut butter I buy is free of additives? Can I make my own?

Karen C., Bloomfield Township

The FDA has set new standards for labeling peanut butter. A product labelled "old Fashioned peanut butter" must contain only ground roasted peanuts and salt. Since no stabilizers are added the oil rises to the top of the jar.

Any product labelled "peanut butter" must be free of artificial flavors, colors, and preservatives. It must consist of at least 90 per cent peanuts, the rest being seasonings and sweeteners.

Products labelled "peanut spread" must have the same nutritional value as peanut butter but may contain chemical preservatives and artificial flavors. "Imitation peanut butter" does not have the same nutritional value as peanut butter and has many chemical additives. Be sure to read you labels.

To make your own simply put roasted, unsalted peanuts through a food mill, or grinder. Salt and sugar are optional, as it is delicious plain.

I've always thought of alfalfa as food for livestock. Now I see alfalfa sprouts in the grocery store and alfalfa seeds and tablets in health food stores. Just what good is alfalfa seeds and tablets in health food stores. Just what good is alfalfa in the human diet?

Marvin W., Redford

Besides being a delicious and inexpensive substitute for lettuce in your salads and sandwichs, alfalfa is unusually high in vitamins A, D, E, and K. It is one of the richest sources of trace minerals and has eight important digestive enzymes.

Often drunk as a tea, it is said to improve the appetite, is a diuretic for the kidney, and aids in bowel regulation.

One of the earliest known herbs, alfalfa was first mentioned in a book on plants by the Emperor of China written in 2939 B.C. The Arabs discovered its valuable properities and called it Al-Fal-Fa, meaning Father of All Foods. It is also one of the better sources of iron, magnesium, phosphorus, sulfur and potassium.

Add to all of that the fact that it takes 8-10 pounds of humanly edible grain to yield 1 pound of meat and you can begin to see the need for humans to add more grains to their diet.

My children drink lots of pop in the summer. I would like o break them of the habit. Any suggestions?

Mary K., Garden City

According to research statistics from Maxwell Associates in Advertising Age magazine, sugary soft drinks took first place in a survey measuring the favorite beverages of Americans. On the average, each person drank 34.2 gallons of the syrupy-flavored stuff. Changing your children's habit is a good idea. Try this easy to make drink as a starter, and then encourage them to create their own recipes.

Summer Smoothie

Put in blender:
6 ice cubes
¼ cup instant non-fat dry milk (undiluted)
¼cup orange juice concentrate (undiluted)
½ cup water.

Blend for several minutes until ice is crushed. Makes two small or one large thick, delicious, and healthful drink. Other juices and fruits may be substituted.

Concern, Inc., Detroit ansers your questions on consumer and environmental issues. For Eco-Tip 12 Environmental Update on Nutrition Toxic Substances, Bottled Water, Industrial Air Pollution, Land Use and Wildlife Protection, send 25 cents and a stamped self-addressed evnelope to Concern Inc. Detroit, 1 Northfield Plaza, Troy, Mich. 48098.

Grace R. Gluskin
Executive Director

Graphologically Speaking

by LORENE GREEN

Green in care of this newspaper. Please use an unlined sheet of paper and write in the first person singular.

Dear Mrs.Green

I thoroughly enjoy reading your column and am considering taking a course in graphology.

I would be very pleased if you could tell me about my personality through my handwriting. Thank you.

B.C.-Troy

Dear B.C.

I am so happy that you are considering enrolling in a graphology course. I would love to see everyone study at least a little graphology. It is such a wonderful tool to help us better understand ourselves and others.

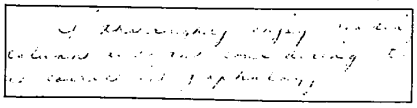
If I were an employer seeking a woman for precision work I would hire you pronto. Everything about your tiny, legible handwriting bespeaks precision. You are neat, well organized, efficient, orderly, and aware of all details. Friends and family may call you a perfectionist.

With your good intelligence and ability to concentrate you are able to zero in on a job devoting all your energies to the task at hand. Highly disciplined, you insist on business before pleasure.

In your early life the mother figure was not idyllic in your eyes. I think you were severely criticized by her. As a defense mechanism you have learned to repress or block out these painful childhood memories.

While you are a caring person and like people you have made it a practice not to allow them to become too intimate with you. Close friends you choose carefully.

If you have a question regarding your personality, write to Mrs. Lorene



On children

Blood pressure test is not unusual for 5-year-old

By DR. RALPH CASH

Dear Dr. Cash:

When my 5-year-old had his annual physical, I was surprised that the doctor took his blood pressure. I know this is standard in an adult's physical, but I never heard of a child with high blood pressure. Why would a doctor do this on a perfectly healthy child?

F.S., Birmingham

The American Academy of Pediatrics strongly recommends that a blood pressure reading be obtained in children as soon as practical—certainly by the age of 3. This is very important, but I'm sorry to say it is only a recent practice, and is not yet a universal one.

Preventative pediatrics must include the search fo these physical signs that may warn of impending adult diseases. High blood pressure (hypertension) is one of our greatest health hazards, with over 20 million Americans affected.

The most common type, "essential" hypertension, was considered a disease of adulthood. But now significant numbers of children with persistent high blood pressure have been identified. Frequently they have a strong family history of hypertension and are obese. Yet they have no other symptoms suggesting high blood pressure.

Hypertension is sometimes the result of a specific, treatable disease. The most common cause of such "secondary" hypertension is renal (kidney) disease. That is why a routine urinalysis is so important in a child's physical examination.

Dr. Larry Fleischmann, director of renal services at Children's Hospital, says hypertension in school-aged children is uncommon. Before a child is considered to have high blood pressure, it should be confirmed by repeated blood pressure readings. Children under the age of 10 who have confirmed hypertension require an in-depth study to identify and correct the cause.

It is important that the proper child-sized apparatus be used when taking a child's blood pressure. The wrong sized cuff can give incorrect reslts.

Hypertension usually responds to treatment. This may include weight reduction for the obese child, dietary restrictions of salt or use of various medications. These children require careful observation since high blood pressure is never considered normal.

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