

Insurance company warns don't eat and drive

BY JOHN FLESHER
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

(AP) Resist that luscious jelly doughnut while driving to work and don't grab for the coffee. One distracting spill and you could end up in the ditch.

Coffee and doughnuts are among the "10 deadliest foods to eat while driving," according to Hagerty Classic Insurance, which insures collector vehicles.

The Traverse City-based com-

pany began researching the issue after getting a claim from a customer who had been in so many food-related wrecks that his license included a restriction against driving while food was within reach.

"People are prone to become distracted while eating," company president McKeel Hagerty said Monday. "I'll set a cup of coffee in the drink holder and hit a bump and it spills all over the place. I get distracted and angry."

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McKeel Hagerty
Company president

He acknowledged the top 10 list wasn't scientific, but said it was based in part on figures from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety. The company also examined its own claim statistics and surveyed

customers and insurance adjusters.

Federal auto safety regulators have estimated that driver distraction - including eating, using a cell phone, fiddling with the radio or talking with passengers - is involved in 20 to 30 percent of all crashes.

But NHTSA has not studied what proportion of crashes can be blamed specifically on eating, spokesman Tim Hurd said.

Hagerty analysts rated the dif-

ficulty of juggling various foods while gripping the steering wheel and how a driver likely would respond to a spill.

Coffee was rated most dangerous. Not only is it painfully hot, but people seem especially desperate to get it off their clothing.

Second-worst was hot soup, followed by tacos, chili, juicy hamburger, barbecued food, fried chicken, jelly and cream-filled doughnuts, soft drinks and chocolate.

Vegetarians don't fret: plenty of dairy-free foods have calcium

BY J.M. HIRSCH
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

Forget devising new and exciting ways to make tofu exciting. The real challenge most vegetarians face is politely answering for the millionth time why it is safe to eat the way they do.

For the record: Yes, we get enough protein. No, we're not all anemic. Yes, we eat plenty of fiber. No, it doesn't bother us. And finally... yes, there are plenty of sources of calcium that have nothing to do with cows.

It's the last one that really surprises people. Most grew up being told that if they wanted strong, healthy bones they needed to drink their milk. However, while dairy is a good source of calcium, it doesn't have a monopoly on it.

That's good news for people who don't do dairy. Husband and wife food writers David and Rachelle Bronfman have written a cookbook to help those people turn calcium-rich, nondairy ingredients into great meals.

Their inspired book, *CalciYum!*

(Bromedia, \$19.95), has plenty of great-tasting dishes that are great for you.

The Bronfmans introduce readers to a whole new way of seeing calcium - it is everywhere and just waiting to be turned into delicious dishes like perfect potato salad (294 milligrams of calcium per serving) and even desserts like peanut butter marble cheesecake (231 milligrams of calcium).

The book also includes a primer that lists and describes some of the most calcium-rich dairy-free foods. Readers learn that just 1 tablespoon of blackstrap molasses has 176 milligrams of calcium, and that one of the easiest ways to boost intake is a handful of almonds (1 cup contains 377 milligrams).

Generally speaking, there are a few easy ways to increase calcium intake without resorting to cows.

- Choose dark, leafy greens such as kale (1 cup cooked, 163 milligrams), collard greens (1 cup cooked, 162 milligrams) and Chinese cabbage (1 cup cooked, 158 milligrams). Note: Spinach is an

exception to the green recommendation; it is not such a good source, since its calcium is absorbed at a low level.

- Legumes pack plenty of calcium in just a cup of beans (easy to slip into a chili or burrito, and over nacho chips), including Great Northern beans (120 milligrams) and Navy beans (127 milligrams).
- And don't forget soy. Just 1 cup of roasted soybeans (great in mixed nuts) contain 235 milligrams, and 1/2 cup of extra-firm tofu has 270 milligrams.
- Nuts and seeds are another great hidden source. Sprinkle sesame seeds over spicy noodles (280 milligrams in each ounce of toasted, whole sesame seeds, not the hulled variety).
- Try these recipes from *CalciYum!* for quick and easy ways to eat more calcium.

8 ounces soft tofu, crumbled
1 cup kale, finely chopped
1 cup grated soy cheese
1/2 cup red bell peppers, chopped
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon turmeric
One 9-inch prepared pie shell

Preheat oven to 350 F.

Heat the oil in a small skillet over a medium flame. Add green onions and sauté 3 minutes. Add remaining ingredients except the pie shell and sauté until cheese begins to soften and kale wilts slightly, about 4 minutes.

Transfer the mixture to the pie shell and bake for 40 minutes. Remove from oven and let sit for 10 minutes before serving. Makes four servings.

Nutrition information per serving:
381 mg calcium, 391 cal., 23 g pro., 25 g carbo., 23 g total fat (4.9 g saturated fat), 611 mg sodium.

GREENS WITH SUNDRIED

TOMATOES
(Preparation 15 minutes)

1 teaspoon olive oil
3 cloves garlic, minced
1/4 cup finely chopped onions
3/4 cup vegetable stock
3 cups kale, finely chopped with stems removed
3 cups collard greens, finely chopped with stems removed
1/2 cup chopped sundried tomatoes, packed in oil

Heat the oil in a large skillet over a medium-high flame. Add the garlic and onions, and sauté for 2 minutes. Stir in the vegetable stock and greens.

Reduce heat to low and cook, stirring occasionally, for 8 minutes. Add sundried tomatoes and toss with the greens. Cook another 2 minutes, or until heated through. Serve immediately.

Makes 2 servings.

Nutrition information per serving:
237 mg calcium, 166 cal., 6 g pro.,

24 g carbo., 7 g total fat (0.9 g saturated fat), 351 mg sodium.

On the Net:
One of the best sources for detailed information about calcium content is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Nutrient Data Laboratory: <http://www.nal.usda.gov/infoc/foodcomp/>

The agency's Web page includes numerous charts and searchable databases listing nutritional breakdowns for a stunning variety of foods. Among those charts is a 30-page listing of foods and how much calcium they contain.

Browsing these charts, it's easy to see how those who do without dairy should have little trouble meeting the 1,000 milligrams suggested for most adults in the Recommended Dietary Allowances.

For example, even 1 cup of cooked carrots has 48 milligrams of calcium. And 1 cup of chickpeas (think hummus) has 80 milligrams. Dunk the carrots in the hummus for a snack with plenty of fiber and calcium.

Restaurant group offers healthy eating tips for dining out

BY LANA MINI
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Michigan restaurants serve more than four million meals

each day. As the number of meals consumed outside of the house increases, so does the risk of eating fattening or unhealthy foods.

"Michigan's restaurant owners know diners are now looking for healthier menu choices," said Rob Gifford, executive director of the Michigan Restaurant Associ-

ation. "These tips will help make those choices easier."

- Order salad dressing and other sauces "on the side." This way you have control over how much or how little you add.
- When ordering grilled vegetables hold the butter or oil.
- When ordering pasta dishes, look for tomato-based sauces rather than cream-based that are higher in fat and calories.

- Order steamed vegetables as a side instead of the starchy potato or a bread.
- Substitute salsa for sour cream, butter, cheese and bacon on potatoes.
- Stop eating when you're full - listen to the cues the body is giving.
- Order sandwiches with mustard instead of mayonnaise. Mustard has flavor and virtually no calories.

- Take half of the meal home. The second half serves as second meal.
- If you want to eat less, order a vegetable and salad appetizer before the heavy meal.
- Replace fried foods with baked, grilled and steamed.
- Don't be afraid to request low-calorie or low-fat preparation on a menu item.
- Choose entrees with fruits and veggies as the main staple.

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