

Deciphering Diet Soda

Dear Tim:

Like everyone else, I'm trying to lose a few pounds. On the advice of my doctor, I started exercising a few days a week and watching what I eat. If you can believe it or not, the former is a lot easier than the latter. It's not that I'm a big fan of working out, it's that I'm a bigger fan of sugar. Mostly in the form of soda. I drink about three a day. And with the sizes you can buy them in these days, it's probably more like four. I've decided to make the move to diet, but there are so many kinds now – Plus, Zero, Light, Diet – that I can't tell the difference. If I'm going to do this, I want to do it right. What can you tell me?

—Soda Jerk on Somerford

Dear Soda Jerk:

First let me say that I applaud your efforts. Every little bit helps, and making some basic life changes is a great way to start. Let me also say that I'm no expert. I've fought the battle of bulge like most people, but I don't have any better strategies than the ones you're



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already following. From what I can tell, though, switching sodas is a smart idea. Unfortunately I'm no better at keeping up with the soda makers' name games than you are. I do know this, though. They are interested in accommodating your healthier lifestyle and keeping you drinking. That's where all these options came from. My advice is to spend a few minutes in aisle 1, read the labels carefully, then follow your taste buds. Mine have never led me astray. Except for the unfortunate cupcake incident of '96. But that's another story.

Dear Tim:

I'm new in town and I'm still finding my way around. More often than not, though, I wind up lost. Any advice?

—Disoriented on Dierker

Dear Disoriented:

Bread crumbs. Aisle 3.

Dear Tim:

My wife is entering the "craving" phase of her pregnancy. She has some very specific food demands and is not shy about letting me know what she wants and when she wants it. How long should I expect her to be irrational like this, and where can I find the pickles and cream puffs?

—Scared on Squires

Dear Scared:

First lesson: Pregnant women are not irrational. They're highly motivated. Say that quietly (very quietly) to yourself whenever she has a hankering for something you haven't anticipated. Then stop in. Pickles are in aisle 2. Cream puffs in aisle 6. Stay as long as you dare.

Dear Tim is presented as a public service by Tim Huffman, owner of Huffman's Market. Write to him in care of Huffman's Market, 2140 Tremont Center, Upper Arlington, Ohio, 43221, stop by and say hi or visit www.huffmansmarket.com.