

Mitigating Mad Cow

Dear Tim:

I've been reading a lot lately about the appearance of this "mad cow" disease up in the Northwest. Though I'm not exactly sure what a mad cow is, I'm pretty sure I don't want anything to do with one. What can you tell me about this funny-sounding phenomenon?

—Concerned on College Hill



DEAR TIM

Dear Concerned:

First, let me be clear that the ailing cow in question was found in the Pacific Northwest—not on the Northwest side—so there's little if any reason for you, your family and friends to be alarmed. Mad cow is slang for a rare and hard-to-pronounce disease that can affect an adult cow's central nervous system. It has never been found in humans, though there is a human illness that's very similar. The U.S. Food & Drug Administration has preventive measures in place to reduce our risk of exposure to meat that may carry the disease, and they've been exercising them thoroughly in the case you've been reading about. I can assure

you there's never been a mad cow among the healthy local herds that supply our delicious and nutritious beef. All our cows are quite happy, in fact. I'm told it's because they get some on a regular basis. Makes sense to me.

Dear Tim:

My previously awesome annual Super Bowl party has lost momentum ever since the commercials became bigger than the game. What can I do to bring back the big-fun, big-game atmosphere to my sagging Super Sunday?

—Sacked on Sandover

Dear Sacked:

I know what you need. It's

called TiVo. It's like a little computer that lets you pause live TV, make your own instant replays and block out commercials. TiVo is the greatest TV tool since the remote control. It will completely change the way you and your friends watch the game, and it may very well bring your Super Bowl bash back from the dead. That is unless you serve lame snacks and stale beer. Head to your favorite electronics superstore for TiVo. Head to Huffman's for the best bowl-day brews and munchies.

Dear Tim:

You don't suppose Britney Spears' recent Vegas marriage and quickie annulment could be a publicity stunt to save her swiftly descending career, do you?

—Spears Fan on Springhill

Dear Fan:

Of course not. With her abundant musical talent, she's got lots more chart-topping success to look forward to. And Saddam Hussein's got some Iraqi real estate to sell you.

Dear Tim is presented as a public service by Tim Huffman, owner of Huffman's Market at Tremont Center in Upper Arlington. Tim is not a licensed psychologist, though it's been suggested he have his head examined. Write to him in care of Huffman's Market. If you do, Tim's wife Glenda says you're only encouraging him.