



HEALTH WORKS

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LIVELIGHTER

Decoding food labels

Selling food is big business which is why food packaging needs to stand out and entice us.

Food marketers commonly use words like natural, lite, superfood or gluten-free to convince us that what we are buying is a food that is more wholesome and healthy. Unfortunately, this is just silly marketing tactics.

Here are some simple tips for decoding and dodging the guff in the shopping aisle.

Natural

There's no rules about when a food company can use this in their brand or product name. Putting pictures of fresh fruit and veg or farm scenes on packaging makes us think foods are healthy and wholesome. But for the freshest and healthiest foods, choose foods with no packets at all (hint: it's fresh fruit and veg).

Lite

Lite can mean lighter in colour or flavour, or lower in fat or calories. Make sure you know what you're getting.

Superfoods

"Superfoods" are fun to try, but don't necessarily have health advantages over regular foods and can be costlier. It's a buzzword getting a lot of press.

Gluten-free

People with coeliac disease (an allergy to gluten) should avoid gluten. For everyone else, it's more marketing hype. Gluten free doesn't mean healthier. Gluten free versions of products are often higher in sugar and fat and lower in fibre, so it pays to read the labels. And just because a cake or dessert is gluten free, doesn't make it a healthy choice.

Sneaky alternative names for sugar

Honey, rice malt extract, maltose, glucose syrup, fruit juice concentrate, golden, corn or maple syrup, molasses, sucrose.



Did you know?

Cholesterol is only found in animal products. But you can still find vegan products boasting they are cholesterol-free!



Chargrilled beef with avocado and corn salsa

A fresh and tasty way to serve up your favourite steak



Prep Time: 10 min

Cook time: 35 mins | Serves: 2

Ingredients

- » 1 red capsicum, seeded and cut into 2 – 3 cm pieces
- » 1 large corn cob, husk intact
- » 1/2 medium avocado, peeled, seeded and diced
- » 2 tbs fresh coriander, chopped
- » 2 tsp fresh lime juice
- » olive or canola oil spray
- » pepper
- » 2 x 110 g lean beef, fat trimmed
- » 1 lime, cut into wedges

Method

1. Preheat oven to 200°C (180°C fan forced).
2. Place capsicum on a non-stick baking tray and roast for 10-15 minutes or until tender.
3. Microwave the corn cob in its husk on HIGH (100%) for 3 minutes. Set aside to cool slightly. Remove the husk and silk. Cut kernels from the cob into a medium sized bowl. Discard cob.
4. For the salsa, add capsicum, avocado, coriander and lime juice to the corn.
5. Preheat a grill pan or heavy based frying pan over medium heat. Spray the steaks with oil and season with pepper. Cook steaks to your liking. Rest for 2 minutes. Slice steak into strips.
6. Divide salsa between plates and top with the steak slices. Serve with lime wedges.



Have you seen this symbol?

The Health Star Rating system is a quick and easy way to compare the healthiness of products. It is a voluntary system, so many companies only use it on their healthier options, and some healthy foods don't have them at all (like fresh fruit and vegetables)! Remember to only use them to compare similar products – that's when it's the most useful.

For more information, visit www.healthstarrating.gov.au

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