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Foods and Diets Litigations

By Laura Ciocan

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Why is that food processing and commerce are not strictly regulated by law so as to prevent health problems generated by an inadequate diet? Unhealthy products encourage an unhealthy diet, appealing the consumer by their availability within reach and the invading advertising. If the food producers are controlled by health officials, then it must be that the regulations are too lax in as far as marketed foods are concerned.

Everyone knows that, for instance, hydrogenated oils and partially hydrogenated oils are highly unhealthy. Tons of studies and informative material have been published, yet there is a population segment that still falls into traps saying that margarine is a "healthier alternative for butter, full of vitamins", when in fact the trans-fatty acids it contains surpass the "healthy benefits" it offers. For this particular case, all foods containing hydrogenated oils (if the law allows their production, though it shouldn't) should have a health hazard warning (like those on the cigarette packs), saying something like "This product contains trans-fatty acids that increase the risk of heart disease". Thus, people would be constantly reminded of the bad effects of such products on health.

Generally, when it comes to foods and dieting, people should be advised of the potential inconvenience that might occur due to some ingredients or the way the food is prepared.

Take for instance the case of the release of so many diets that are not documented, not officially controlled and approved, promising great things but not being explicit about the great problems they generate. Such as the very popular Atkins, for instance, which is a real danger to health.

I wondered why such anti-health practices are not forbidden? Oh, pardon me! Why should I wonder? It's obvious: in an ever growing pragmatic course of events, the industrial interests have overpassed the interest for the health of people.

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At this point, the role of the well-informed consumer is decisive for his own health. And if people are not fully convinced by so many scientific studies, informative articles and materials, then they surely become when finding out of the multitude of lawsuits against food producers (such as Kraft Foods Inc, the producers of Oreo cookies), fast food chains (McDonald's) or promoters of diets (such as the Atkins diet).

The producers of the popular Oreo cookies, Kraft Foods Inc were sued in 2003 by the attorney Stephen Joseph, who based his accusations on a provision of the civil code of California saying that manufacturers are liable for products if the consumer is not advised of the products' unsafety. He rightfully claimed that the public was not aware of the high content of trans-fats in Oreos. He declared that he sued out of concern for the public health and that no money was requested in the lawsuit, which he finally withdrew, explaining that the publicity on this case had made people aware of the health risks enhanced by the product. Anyway, if the lawsuit was intended as bad publicity for the Oreos, the aim was not reached, as Kraft Foods Inc will continue to produce Oreos in a trans-fat free version.

Another famous case of litigation is the suit from 2002 against McDonald's. The lawsuit was filed by the lawyer Samuel Hirsch on behalf of some obese children. The lawyer sustained that the fast food producer misled the consumers into believing that the products were healthy and safe and claimed that the children developed health problems such as diabetes, high blood pressure and obesity because of eating McDonald's products. The suit was dismissed on the grounds that no one is forced to eat at McDonald's and that the law has not the role to moderate individuals' excesses.

A recent date "diet trial" is going on in Florida. The suit was filed by 53-year-old Jody Gorran against Atkins Nutritionals on May 26, 2004. The plaintiff claims that after going on Atkins diet his cholesterol level increased so much that he needed angioplasty in order to unblock an artery. In addition to financial damages, there is also the request that the company warns the public of the potential dangers of a diet favoring meats, cheeses and other high-fat proteins by labeling their products. The sequel is yet to come.

Even if some of these lawsuits started out of reasons beyond humanitarian, (as for instance the chase for money from damages that such important companies would pay) they have a positive result, namely, the publicity around such cases arises questioning, gives people the idea of doubt, the "assumption of guilt".

Laura Ciocan writes for

where you can find more information about diets.

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A diet may be a fad diet or a healthy diet. People often start a fad diet for fast weight loss. They do not realize that quick weight loss and a fad diet is not the answer for their weight problem. They may lose weight initially but that may not be permanent. The fad diets recommend to eat a certain group of foods and eliminate some foods or a group of foods from the diet. Such diets are not without a danger. Some of the fad diets are:

Grapefruit Diet : This diet recommends to eat only grapefruit.

Low Carb Diet : This diet recommends to eat foods low in carbohydrates.

Low Fat Diet : This diet recommends to eat foods low in fats or eliminate fats in diet.

High Protein Diet : This diet recommends to eat only protein rich foods, eliminating carbohydrates

Note that these diets recommend to eliminate some food groups that are essential for a healthy body. These diets may offer only a temporary solution and are not based on the recommendations of the food pyramid. On using a fad diet, you may lose weight fast, but later on you may again gain weight and your body may be deficient in many nutrients that can develop health problems.

A good diet should provide all the major nutrients including dietary fibers, carbohydrates, proteins, good fats, minerals, and vitamins. The best way to tackle overweight and obesity problem is to eat a balanced diet and do some physical exercise daily.

You should not start any diet if it does not allow any major group of the food pyramid. The negative calorie diet is based on negative calorie foods that include vegetables, fruits, legumes, lentils, and beans, so it allows all the major nutrients in the diet necessary for good health. By eating these foods, you will never feel hungry and you will never gain weight. If you remain physically active and eat these foods, you will drop pounds permanently.

For more information, visit the web site

This article has been written by <http://www.NegativeCalorieFoods.com> For more information, visit

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