

Tired of lies? Here are some straight answers (08, 13, 13)

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Last week I asked many questions. The entire column was questions. I admit I drove many teachers crazy with this incessant habit when I was young. Usually the less competent types, as most others welcomed questions. After all, it's the essence of the Socratic Method – questions force people to critically think.



Critical thinking has gone the way of the Dodo bird in our society. People who are supposed to represent us in public office either brazenly lie or intentionally obfuscate. They fail to directly answer any hard question. Often they attack the credibility of the questioner. That is the easy way out. Often they spin, produce a short sound bite, a red herring to direct attention elsewhere. “This matter (aka distraction) is before our lawyers or an independent panel or a wizard or a soothsayer,” they might say. My favourite political sound bite is by Bill Clinton. “I did not have “sex” with that woman.” Later, Bill questioned how one defined “sex.” I foresee a public official in charge of a country being asked, “When did you know that say, to just pick a random name out of a hat, Mr. Duffy was guilty of fraud?” The astute leader will provide his most earnest visage and say, “How do you define “know?”

Well, I know a few things for sure, and I will share them with you. For example, in short-grain white rice there are 267 calories in 1 cup, either steamed or boiled. In wild rice there are 166 calories in 1 cup, either steamed or boiled.

The recommended daily caloric intake varies depending on age, gender, height, weight, and level of activity. For adult women, it should be between 1,600 - 2,400, depending on their level of activity. For adult men, it ranges from 2,000 - 3,000 a day. The more active you are, the more calories are needed per day.

A “sugar rush” is the short burst of energy you get from eating processed sugar (candy, cookies, cake, etc). It lasts about 30 minutes; then you get a "sugar downer" where you feel even more tired and groggy than before.

The reason is that processed sugars are already broken down into sugar, which your body needs for energy, but which the body is designed to get from digesting other foods! Instead of digesting the food normally and giving you long-lasting energy and nutrition, the processed sugars leave the stomach too quickly; your digestive system thinks you have eaten, so it slows you down as if you have had a huge meal, but in reality, you have nothing but a little sugar, so you feel tired, groggy, and maybe even nauseated!

During the "rush" your heart beats faster and you feel more energetic, but then you feel bad when it wears off. This is why it's best to eat complex carbohydrates like fruits, which take a few minutes longer to break down, but which give you longer-lasting energy and no "downer."

Fish do not urinate. They use their skin and gills. Urination is a way to get rid of nitrogen and other molecules by animals. Animals need to keep good levels of ions in their body. Peeing is a way that mammals expel extra ions. Nitrogen can be lethal in animals if in high amounts. There are different molecules used by different kinds of animals to get rid of nitrogen.

Aquatic animals, like fish use ammonia NH_3 which gets expelled through the skin. They have proteins in the gills and in their skin to get rid of ions or to take in certain ions from their environments.



Mammals use urea molecules (not NH_3) that contain nitrogen and this leaves in our pee. It is important to remember that if animals do not need something, or have a different way of doing things, that they are not “less evolved” than others. (I wish I could say the same about people.)

If you are tired of constant lies and obfuscation by politicians, and you simply want to get more straight answers, go to: <http://www.answers.com> where I found those that are listed above.