

Decisions Decisions

'Undies! You've got to write about undies,' a friend said after trying to buy some and finding there was no such thing as a basic pair of underpants any more. 'Once I used to just go in and grab one of those multi-packs and I was out of there. Not any more, now it's hipsters or briefs, prints or plain, cotton or silk, high rise or low rise.' She shook her head in sorrow; I thought perhaps I'd better not ask what she did end up with.

I know where she's coming from. You can't buy anything these days without having to make endless decisions. Take bread for instance — go to a baker and try asking for a loaf of bread.

'White, wholemeal or grain?'

'Ahh, umm, er, wholemeal.'

'Sliced or unsliced?'

'Um, sliced will do.'

'Poppy seeds, sesame seeds or no seeds?'

'I don't want to grow the darned stuff, just eat it.'

By this stage I've eaten the entire tray of tasters they leave on the counter.

Milk is another classic. First do you want white or coloured — green, pink or chocolate? Bottle or carton and what size? Now do you want hi-low or low-hi? Calcium by the bucket load or the teaspoonful? Do you want it to build up your bones or protect your heart? I'm beginning to wonder if cows have anything to do with milk these days. While we're talking dairy products let's head to the cheese section. A good half hour disappears as I compare low fat, high fat, processed and non-processed, single slices, bulk, grated or block. By the time I'm finished I'm so fed up I throw whatever I've got in my hand into the trolley and bolt from the aisle, stressed and traumatised.

Remember when shampoo came in oily, normal and dry? Forget that. Now we have to decide whether we want moisture therapy, super shine, colour lock, anti-frizz, anti-flat, scalp care. I know what I want. I want to scream!

Walking past disposable nappies I heave a sigh of relief that I no longer need to buy them. I watch mothers, with whining child in the trolley, staring at the packages with a glazed expression on their faces. I'm sure they are thinking, 'I just want some damned nappies and I don't care if they have elastic legs, if they go pink or blue when they're wet or if they have some pretty picture on them.' Let's face it, the same product ends up in them regardless.

No wonder we are such a stressed lot. To me though the last straw was the introduction of dual flush loos. The one place in your day where you can go and relax without having to make a single decision — your body did it all for you — and now you have to work out, half flush or full flush? Give us a break.