

The Devil's Candy

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Have you seen these ads (paid for by the Corn Growers of America, [not] oddly enough....follow the money) where two moms are in a kitchen and one is explaining to the other how high fructose corn syrup, *SHE IS LYING TO YOU!!* Read on for an interesting lesson:

In or around 1970 food companies began adding an evil ingredient to their products; that ingredient is turning your body into a fat-storing machine. What I'm talking about is a very inexpensive sweetener that began replacing sugar in most processed foods – high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS). At that time our understanding of how fructose works in the body was very limited, and we had no idea how it would affect the population. Now we know. It is a failed experiment. HFCS is making America fat. How? By shutting off the switches that control appetite. It's more easily turned into fat than any other carbohydrate. And it's EVERYWHERE, from the obvious places like Coke and Mountain Dew to barbecue sauce and canned soup.

In 1970 Americans consumed about a half pound of HFCS per person per year. By 2007 we were consuming about 72 pounds each, according to a study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. Over the same period, our obesity rate has more than doubled, and diabetes is up 400%.

HFCS is different from other sugars and sweeteners, which can make you fat indirectly, over time. HFCS makes you fat by the straightest possible metabolic path. Let's look at where this stuff comes from, what it does to your body, and – most importantly – how to get as much of it as possible out of your diet.

Fructose can make you fat

The problem with HFCS is the fructose – a sugar that occurs naturally in fruit and honey – rather than the corn syrup. Corn syrup is primarily made up of a sugar called glucose, which can be burned up as a source of immediate energy, stored in the liver and muscles for later use, or, as a last resort, stored as fat. But corn syrup isn't as sweet as other sugars, which is why the food-processing industry fell in love with HFCS, a cheap and doubly sweet chemical derivative.

But what's good for Pepsi Cola's profits isn't that great for your health. That's because your body doesn't necessarily use fructose as an immediate source of energy. Fructose is more readily metabolized into fat.

(I should mention that we are not saying the small amounts of fructose you get through fruit or honey will make you fat. Fruit is packed with vitamins, minerals and fiber, all of which are components of a healthy diet.)

HFCS though, delivers amounts of fructose that are unprecedented in human history. Soda consumption has more than doubled to better than 50 gallons(!) per person per year. Soda alone is a major contributor to the obesity and diabetes epidemic in this great nation.

Fructose messes with your hormones

Normally, when you eat a food that contains glucose or starch - or any other carbohydrate - your body releases insulin, a hormone that does a series of important jobs to regulate body weight: First, it tries to push the carbs into the muscle cells to be used as energy and facilitates carb storage in the liver for later use. Then it suppresses appetite – telling your body, in effect, “I’m full, it’s time to stop eating”. Finally, it stimulates the production of another hormone, leptin.

Leptin acts as a nutrition traffic cop of sorts. It helps regulate storage of body fat and helps increase metabolism when needed to keep your weight in check. Fructose doesn't stimulate insulin and therefore doesn't increase the production of leptin. This is the most important part of the case against HFCS. *Without insulin and leptin, your appetite has no shutoff mechanism.* You can drink a six-pack of Mountain Dew or eat a half gallon of frozen yogurt, and your body will hardly acknowledge that you've consumed any calories at all. Eat the equivalent number of calories in the form of a Thanksgiving dinner and you feel too stuffed to move!

How to find fructose and avoid it

Soft drinks are the main vein of HFCS, but it's everywhere. Your first line of defense – avoid drinking soda! Next, read nutrition labels. Start with the ingredients. If a label says “sugar”, the product contains sucrose, which is a 50/50 blend of fructose and glucose. That doesn't seem to be as much of a problem.

If HFCS is listed first or second, look at the chart that accompanies the ingredients to see how much sugar is in the food. If it's just a gram or two, don't sweat it. But if you see a food that has 8 or more grams of sugar, and HFCS is prominent on the list of ingredients, buy something else. Remember, your body can deal with a little of anything, but a lot of fructose is a one-way ticket to Fat City.

Messing with the food supply is making a deal with the devil. The money that the food industry is saving by using a cheap but unstudied sweetener has been deposited on your waistline. It's time to close their fructose account!