



## **Why Are Americans So Fat?** **Maybe it's what they are eating.**

The subject of overweight Americans is in the news and almost everyone understands that our typical high fat and high sugar diet has a lot to do with it. When we make the choice to pull into the fast food restaurant, we know that the food tastes good but that it is not good for us. I refer to the DVD, "Supersize Me" if anyone has doubts on the effects of fast food on our bodies. But what about the food we eat that we get from the store and we think is normal, reasonably good-for-you cuisine? How does this type of food affect us? Let's explore one of the most common additives to our food:

### **High Fructose Corn Syrup (HFCS)**

Until the 1970's, most of the sugar we ate in our diet came from sucrose and glucose which is a combination of fructose and other sugars. Then the food industry created HFCS, cheaper and sweeter than sugar. This replaces most of the "normal" sugar in products but when delivered into our bodies, this manmade compound is different in many ways. HFCS contains mostly free or unbound fructose, a much higher ration of fructose (80%) to glucose ratio and does not react in the body like other combinations of naturally occurring sugars. Free fructose interferes with the heart's use of key minerals like magnesium, copper and chromium. Maybe that is why during the holidays, there is an increase in arrhythmia cases (**abnormal heart rhythms**). HFCS can also **elevate blood cholesterol** levels and has been found to inhibit the action of white blood cells, interfering with the body's defense mechanisms. Research on hormonal factors suggests that fructose actually **promotes disease** more readily than glucose. It also reduces the connector sites of insulin, which is the hallmark of type-2 diabetes.

The body then needs more insulin to handle the same amount of glucose, putting more stress on the pancreas.

Glucose is metabolized in every cell in the body and is used in the normal energy production in the cells. Fructose, however, is metabolized in the liver and does not cause the pancreas to release insulin the way it normally does and therefore **the body doesn't recognize it as a sugar** and converts it to fat more than any other sugar. Animals fed large amounts of fructose develop **fatty deposits and cirrhosis** similar to the livers of alcoholics. Between HFCS and the many drugs that affect liver function, the poor liver is always stressed.

**HFCS is in and on everything.** In 2001, the average person consumed 63 pounds of fructose. It is in drinks and fruit juices marketed to children (possible connection to ADHD?). It is in ketchup and all the barbecue and pasta sauces. It is in most breads and buns. It is in bacon and beer and even the "health bars". French fries are dipped in HFCS because it browns food seven times faster and gives them that crunch and flavor that we seem to enjoy but results in a decrease in protein quality and a toxicity of protein in the body.

### **What Can We Do?**

**READ LABELS!!!** Understand what you are putting in your body now that you have a glimpse of what it does to the way your body functions. Realize that any food that is processed will probably have HFCS in it. Also realize that you will never be able to totally avoid HFCS, but if it is high on the list of ingredients, you may want to avoid that item. Use natural, unprocessed sugar (evaporated cane juice), which you can get anywhere, even Walmart. It is very sweet which means you don't use as much and is not expensive. Another alternative is the herb Stevia which can be found in the health food sections at stores and is good for coffee and drinks but not as good for baking. Generally, we all need to take more responsibility for what goes in our body.

**Food for thought:** Why do we need health food sections in stores? Shouldn't all the food in the store be healthy? What about all that candy that appears around Halloween and Christmas? A little bit goes a long way.

*Again, thank you for being our patient!  
We appreciate you and look forward to serving you.*

*David J. Weber, D.C., D.A.B.C.O.*

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