

LET HEALTH HAPPEN



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Is Something to Blame for Obesity?

This column is all about taking responsibility for your own health. But, what if there were a single ingredient that may be largely responsible for the sudden rise in obesity, elevated blood pressure, triglycerides, and cholesterol, and possibly even gout, heart disease and liver damage of the American public? Shouldn't we be aware of this? No surprise that the ingredient most experts blame for all this is sugar. However, sugar has been around for centuries and the incidence of these diseases has only dramatically risen over the last couple generations. As a result, many people are beginning to believe that the primary cause for this rise in disease is linked specifically to the sugar substitute High Fructose Corn Syrup or HFCS. HFCS was invented in Japan in 1966 and was accepted in America in 1975 in response to the Nixon administration's "war on poverty." President Nixon's campaign to reduce food costs for the poor gave rise to HFCS because it was about three times cheaper than sweetening with table sugar. Since this time, the use of HFCS in the American diet has risen over 10,000% according to the USDA. Today, the number one source of calories in America comes from soda in

the form of HFCS. Likewise, many of the formulas for infants are composed of 43% corn syrup often making it the number one ingredient for developing infants. Could this be the reason science claims we now have an epidemic number of obese 6 month olds? Could this be the reason that type 2 diabetes, what used to be called "adult onset" diabetes, is rising more in children than any other age group right now? Our genes really haven't changed that much over the last 30 years, but our diet certainly has.

I really doubt that the answer can be this simple and that all the blame of our declining health can be placed on just one source. As I've discussed in the past, many lifestyle factors contribute to disease. Nevertheless, next week I will discuss how corn syrup differs from regular sweeteners and why you should at least be aware of the consequences it poses to the human body.

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