

Does High Fructose Corn Syrup Make You Fat?

High-fructose corn syrup (HFCS) is made of roughly 55 percent fructose and 45 percent glucose. Since its introduction in the late 1970s, it has become the preferred sweetener for many food manufacturers, mostly because it is cheap (especially when made with government-subsidized corn, as is unfortunately the case in the U.S.).

Now, new research from University of Texas Southwestern Medical Centers shows what many have long suspected: our bodies make fat from fructose more readily than from other kinds of sugar. In the research, published in the *Journal of Nutrition*, six healthy individuals went through three tests: one in which they drank 100 percent glucose, another with half glucose and half fructose, and a third with 25 percent glucose and 75 percent fructose. The tests were random and double-blind, and the subjects ate a regular lunch about four hours later.

The researchers found that lipogenesis, the process by which sugars are turned into body fat, increased significantly when as little as half the glucose was replaced with fructose. Fructose given at breakfast also changed the way the body handled the food eaten at lunch. After fructose consumption, the liver increased the storage of lunch fats that might have been used for other purposes.

Of course, HFCS isn't the sole cause of the obesity epidemic, but it is certainly a major offender. Regardless of what the new industry commercials say about its being natural, one of the best dietary decisions you can make is to eliminate it from your diet. Not only does [HFCS boost fat storage](#), but it also serves as a "marker": any food that contains it is likely overprocessed and full of cheap, unhealthy, unnatural ingredients. Stick with natural sweeteners such as honey or maple syrup and use them in moderation - or better yet, retrain your taste buds to appreciate the subtle sweetness of fresh fruit. While fruit contains a small amount of natural fructose, the bulk, fiber and relatively low sugar density of the fruit's flesh minimizes the lipogenesis potential.