

Simple Facts Parents Should Know about Sweeteners

What is a caloric sweetener? There are many terms for sweeteners commonly found on food ingredient labels: sugar (sucrose), high fructose corn syrup, honey, fruit juice concentrate, glucose (corn syrup), invert sugar, fructose, hydrolized cane sugar, and evaporated cane juice. These sweeteners contain the same calories per gram (4 per gram or approximately 15 calories per teaspoon) and are nutritionally equivalent. (American Dietetic Association December 2008). Parents should know that a sugar is a sugar, whether it comes from sugar cane, sugar beets, honey, or corn, such as high fructose corn syrup.

How do caloric sweeteners compare? Sugar, honey, and high fructose corn syrup are natural sweeteners and do not contain artificial or synthetic ingredients or color additives. All caloric sweeteners are nutritionally the same. Sugar, high fructose corn syrup, and honey are equally sweet. Most commonly used sugars (table sugar, honey, high fructose corn syrup) contain glucose and fructose in the same amounts as is present in table sugar. Glucose is the primary fuel utilized by the brain and working muscles. (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Dietary Guidelines 2005*). Glucose can be obtained from many dietary sources, including corn, rice, wheat, pastas, and legumes.

Are sweeteners safe? The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recognized those caloric sweeteners listed above as “Generally Recognized as Safe” (known as GRAS status) for use in food. GRAS status is assigned to food ingredients that are recognized by experts as having a long history of safe use or as having their safety shown through adequate scientific studies. The Institute of Medicine recommends that children should get no more than 25% of their total daily calories from added sugar.

Why are sweeteners in foods? There are numerous benefits and uses for sweeteners in your food. Sugar maintains flavor when heated, is an excellent creaming agent, and gives cookies their crunchy top. Honey provides distinct floral notes and contains antioxidant compounds. High fructose corn syrup enhances fruit and spice flavors (sauces, marinades), keeps foods fresh (condiments, ketchup, mayonnaise, mustard), improves the texture of high fiber products (cereals, breads, breakfast bars), reduces tartness (spaghetti sauce), and minimizes freezer burn. Corn syrup is primarily used as a thickening agent. Sugar, honey, and high fructose corn syrup are also used to retain moisture. “In some cases, small amounts of sugars added to nutrient-dense foods, such as breakfast cereals and reduced-fat milk products, may increase a person’s intake of such foods by enhancing the palatability of these products, thus improving nutrient intake without contributing excessive calories.” (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Dietary Guidelines 2005*).

How can parents limit sweeteners in their child’s diet? It is important to limit foods high in sugar content that also have low nutritional value. Start by reading the ingredient label found on foods and beverages. Look for foods rich in vitamins, minerals, fiber, and other nutrients. Consider foods with high sugar content (first or second ingredient on a food label) as a treat – to be enjoyed occasionally after a balanced meal. Limit your child’s consumption of juices, soft drinks, and flavored fruit drinks.

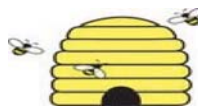
All sweeteners should be enjoyed in moderation as a part of a balanced lifestyle.



Corn Sweetener

To learn more about sweeteners, please visit:

www.SweetSurprise.com



Honey



Sugar

SCIENCE-BASED FACTS ABOUT HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP

There is significant confusion concerning high fructose corn syrup. Like table sugar and honey, high fructose corn syrup contains almost equal amounts of fructose and glucose. Studies conducted with abnormally high levels of pure fructose have been inappropriately applied to high fructose corn syrup. High fructose corn syrup and table sugar are equally sweet, contain the same number of calories, and are handled similarly by the body.

Calories: “Both sweeteners [HFCS and sucrose] contain the same number of calories (4 per gram), equal parts of fructose and glucose. Once absorbed into the blood stream, [the two] are indistinguishable.” American Dietetic Association, Hot Topics Paper on High Fructose Corn Syrup, December 2008

Metabolism: “These short-term results suggest that, when fructose is consumed in the form of HFCS, the measured metabolic responses do not differ from Sucrose in lean women.” *Nutrition*, Vol. 23, Issue 2, 103-112, February 2007

Diabetes: “The hypothesis that fructose, HFCS, and caloric beverages play a unique role in obesity and type 2 diabetes beyond their inherent energy contributions has generated tremendous attention from scientists and the media, but no credible scientific support.” *Journal of Nutrition* 138:138, January 2008

Satiety: “There was no evidence that commercial cola beverages sweetened with either sucrose or HFCS have significantly different effects on hunger, satiety, or short-term energy intakes.” *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, Vol. 86, No. 1, 116-123, July 2007

LEADING HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS AND HEALTH EXPERTS AGREE, A SUGAR IS A SUGAR

“After studying current research, the American Medical Association (AMA) today concluded that high fructose syrup does not appear to contribute more to obesity than other caloric sweeteners...” American Medical Association (AMA press release, June 17, 2008)

“High fructose corn syrup may be used as a sweetener in processed foods and beverages and is nutritionally equivalent to sucrose.” American Dietetic Association (Hot Topics paper on High Fructose Corn Syrup, December 2008)

“HFCS is glucose and fructose separated. Table sugar is glucose and fructose stuck together, but quickly separated by digestive enzymes . . . The body can hardly tell them apart.” Marion Nestle, Ph.D., Paulette Goddard Professor of Nutrition, Food Studies and Public Health, New York University, author of “What to Eat” and “Food Politics” (*Spokesman Review*, January 2, 2008)

“To pretend that a product sweetened with sugar is healthier than a product sweetened by high-fructose corn syrup is totally misguided.” Michael Jacobson, Ph.D., Executive Director, Center for Science in the Public Interest (Associated Press, September 10, 2008)

“High fructose corn syrup is one of the most misunderstood products in the food supply.” David S. Ludwig, M.D., Ph.D., Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Harvard Medical School (NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams, April 22, 2009)

“HFCS is the chemical and nutritional equivalent of table sugar (sucrose). The two substances have the same calories, the same chemical composition and are metabolized identically.” Arthur Frank, M.D., Medical Director, George Washington University Weight Management Program (*The Washington Times*, December 6, 2006)

“High fructose corn syrup is just another form of sugar, no better, no worse.” Keith Thomas Ayoob, Ed.D., R.D., F.A.D.A., Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Albert Einstein College of Medicine

For more information about high fructose corn syrup, please visit
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