

High Fructose Corn Syrup: Pretty Poison

You've seen the slick TV ad: a concerned father walks with his small daughter through an idyllic corn field, telling us that "whether it's corn sugar or cane sugar, your body can't tell the difference."

No greater lie has ever been told.

The body metabolizes "corn sugar"—a.k.a. high fructose corn syrup, or HFCS-- completely differently than cane sugar, and that difference can make you fat, sick and old. It's a causative factor in the country's three biggest killers—heart disease, diabetes and stroke. It contributes to cancer and causes liver disease, exposes consumers to mercury poisoning, and is a major factor in the rise of Alzheimer's.

The scores of scientific studies have documented its destruction, which is why the Corn Refiners Association is spending \$30 million on ads, websites, and direct mailings to physicians to convince us that HFCS is a "natural" product that's a healthy part of our diet when used in moderation. (The fact is that it's an unnatural product, but because of subsidized corn growing, it's cheaper than sugar. And in the last few decades, it has come to be used in over 75% of all processed food—even in "health" foods like granola bars and yogurt.

Here are the reasons you should avoid products containing HFCS:

It is metabolized differently than table sugar.

It bypasses the small intestine, and is instead routed directly to the liver, where it raises triglycerides and cholesterol, leading to atherosclerosis and obesity. It's also a major cause of liver damage in this country: non-alcoholic fatty liver, which affects 70 million people. The rapidly absorbed glucose also triggers big spikes in insulin—body's major fat storage hormone—causing metabolic syndrome. Improper insulin metabolism leads to diabetes, obesity, hypertension. Interferes with leptin production; leptin is a hormone that signals you to stop eating because you're full.

HFCS is found in processed, poor quality foods that contain few nutrients and dangerous fats, sugars, salts and chemicals.

HFCS can contain mercury. Because of the chlorine/alkali products used in its manufacturing.

HFCS can cause mineral deficiencies because fructose unbound to other sugars interferes with the key minerals like magnesium, copper, and chromium; these mineral imbalances contribute to ailments such as kidney stones and gout.

HFCS alters intracellular metabolism including cross-linking damage, oxidative damage that contribute to aging of organs, bones skin, brain tissue.

Getting the HFCS out may be a challenge—it's in your bread, your bacon and your beer. But doing so may be the best single move you can make toward greater health.