

# WEIGHING IN JULY 2011



## Addiction..... Carbohydrates. The Cocaine for the Brain

You have heard Dr. Dums and I talk about the addiction that we see in people who crave refined carbohydrates and high sugar in foods. We have witnessed clients struggle with food addictions over and over again at The Weigh Station. We now know that there is a cause-and-effect relationship between food and cravings for it. The brain has a center for addiction. Those with food addiction usually also have a family member who struggles with this too. If you see alcohol addiction in your family, chances are you will have someone in your family history who is an alcoholic or they are addicted to other substances.

This is one of the reasons that people fail at dieting, they go back to their old habits because of addiction. We do all we can to help you stop the addiction that can ruin your weight loss progress.

A recent article published in the Journal of Natural Neuroscience had a study that showed over three years that unlimited junk-food closely parallels patterns of drug addiction...I've included the excerpts from the article below:

“A diet including unlimited amounts of junk food can cause rats to become so addicted to the unhealthy diet that they will starve themselves rather than go back to eating healthy food, researchers have discovered.”

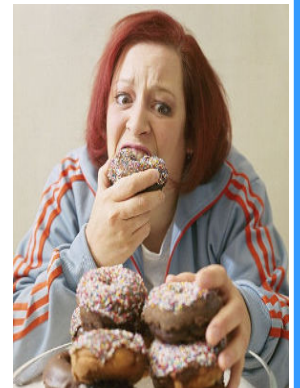
*“What we have are these core features of addiction, and these animals are hitting each one of these features,” Kenny said.*

*In their first study, the researchers fed rats on either a balanced diet or on the same diet plus unlimited access to junk foods purchased at a local supermarket, including processed meats and cakes. Within a short time period, the rats on the junk food diet began to eat compulsively and quickly became overweight.*

*“They’re taking in twice the amount of calories as the control rats,” Kenny said.*

*The researchers hypothesized that the rats were eating compulsively because, like drug addicts, they had become desensitized to smaller amounts and needed more and more for the same rush of pleasure.*

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Researchers say compulsive eating has a brain mechanism akin to drug addiction. According to New Zealand scientists, carbohydrates that have undergone heavy-duty processing are likely culprits in causing such addictions.

According to researchers from Auckland Regional Public Health Service, high GI foods cause a sudden and unhealthy rise in blood sugar levels. This spike in blood sugar levels stimulates the same areas in the brain as nicotine and other addictive drugs.

Scientists say that this theory could have far reaching implications for the health of millions, if proven. Like any other addiction, eating high GI carbohydrates could create a vicious cycle of addictive behavior. This could lead to compulsive consumption of more of the same thing for more of the same fix. Withdrawal is also common in the absence of this blood-sugar spiking food, which makes it more plausible than ever that it does indeed cause addiction.

To take this into a real world example consider this example of a well known popular chain cafe: The company is on *Fortune's 2010 list of the Fastest Growing companies and earned more than \$1.3 billion in 2009, mainly from selling flour and sugar by the railcar. Last year, Zagat named it the most popular large chain in the United States and ranked it second in the Healthy Options category. The company responded by touting its "wholesome" food. Sure, they sell a few salads. But why do the scones, pastries, baguettes, and bear claws get all the attention? Why are the grab-and-go packs of cookies and brownies next to the register? What need is fulfilled by serving soup bowls made of bread, with a mound of bread for dipping, and then offering more bread on the side?* It's certainly not fulfilling nutritional needs, instead it is fulfilling the addicts cravings for sugar.

Remember that fast-burning carbohydrates, just like cocaine give you a rush. As with drugs, this rush can lead to cravings in your brain and intrusive thoughts when you go too long without a fix. But unlike cocaine, this stuff does more than rewire your neurological system. It will short-circuit your body. Your metabolism normally stockpiles energy so you can use it as fuel later. A diet flush with carbohydrates will reprogram your metabolism, locking your food away as non-burnable fat. When you get hungry again you won't crave anything but more of the same food that started you down the path to dependency. Think of this stuff as more than a drug, it's like a metabolic parasite, taking over your body and feeding itself.

There is hope however, because those addicted to high GI carbs, can get their sugar hit, albeit slowly, from low GI carbs just as easily or food patches that mimic their nicotine counterparts.

Maybe it's just as well then that these unhealthy foods are liable to be taxed and subjected to advertising bans coupled with statutory warning signs on the package and stricter regulations.

As you can plainly see from the above articles, addiction to carbohydrates is an ongoing problem for many Americans. As we see increasing carbohydrate diets affecting other countries. We are seeing the same diseases that have faced the West now catching on in Africa, Europe, Indonesia, and Japan.. The diseases of diabetes, heart disease, cancer are now on the rise.

You aren't supposed to talk this way about carbohydrates. According to USDA dietary recommendations, they are not only healthy but are supposed to make up the majority of the food we eat—45 to 65 percent of all calories. Carbs, which are classified as starches and sugars, make up the essence of bread, cereal, corn, potatoes, cookies, pasta, fruit, juice, candy, beer, and sweetened drinks—basically anything that isn't protein or fat.

Our government's recommendations were established in the 1970s and have since been accompanied by an explosion of obesity and diabetes. The advice came about as early nutrition scientists rallied around a misguided maxim that remains embedded in the fabric of our attitudes toward food to this day: Eating too much fat makes you fat. But science never bore out this pre-Galilean view of nutrition. What is now clear is this: At the center of the obesity universe lie carbohydrates, not fat.

"You could live your whole life and never eat a single carbohydrate other than what you get from mother's milk and the tiny amount that comes naturally in meat, and probably be just fine," says Gary Taubes, the award-winning author of *Good Calories, Bad Calories*, which is helping to reshape the conversation about what makes the American diet so fattening.

If all you knew about food is what you read in the USDA guidelines, you'd think our bodies conveniently come into the world seeking the one nutrient that is cheap and amenable to commercial mass production: carbohydrates. "Sugars and starches provide energy to the body in the form of glucose, which is the only source of energy for red blood cells and is the preferred energy source for the brain," says the latest edition of the guidelines. Wrong, says Taubes, who just released *Why We Get Fat*, a layman's version of his influential scientific tome. *In the absence of carbs, your body will burn fatty acids for energy. It's how you sleep through the night without eating for eight hours. "The brain does indeed need carbohydrates for fuel," Taubes says, "but the body is perfectly happy to make those out of protein, leafy green vegetables, and the animal fat you're burning." As a pair of Harvard doctors (one an endocrinologist and one an epidemiologist) wrote in the Journal of the American Medical Association last summer, carbohydrates are "a nutrient for which humans have no absolute requirement."*

So Weigh Station family...we're here to help you with your addictions. Please be open and honest and we will help. You have come too far to allow addiction to take away your success.

Blessings,

Chuck Shaffer M.D.

## Planning for a Healthy Cookout for Summer:

It's Summer time! Time for weekend cookouts!!! With a little planning you can have a great cookout and enjoy the food too!

### What to buy:

#### For Burgers:

Lean ground beef or turkey

Lettuce or spinach/onions

Seasonings such as garlic powder, pepper, etc

Mustards, Mayo and low sugar ketchup

Balsamic vinegar (adds great flavor to the meat)



#### For Skewers:

Make chicken, shrimp or lean beef kabobs with your favorite stage 2 veggies

#### Sides:

Green beans

Salad

Consider making cauliflower cheesy mashed potatoes!

Fruit and veggie tray with approved fruits and veggies of course!

If you have a dehydrator you can make zucchini chips, slice then and season as you wish, these are delicious.

#### Drinks:

Sobe slush: place Sobe in icecube trays freeze and then blend with some sparkling water and a few strawberries

LaCroix sparkling water by itself, unsweet tea, or bottled water can also be enjoyed!

## Recipe of the Month

### Scallion Fireworks:

#### Fun center pieces for Summer Cookouts

Using a small sharp knife, trim the ends of the scallion, leaving 5 or 6 inches of the green stalk.

Hold the stalk against a cutting board and slice through the top 2 inches of the scallion toward the end

Rotate the scallion and make additional lengthwise slices until the end is shredded.

Drop the scallion into a bowl of ice water and let it sit until the ends curl back and look brushy (about 20 minutes)

Recipe From: [www.Familyfun.go.com](http://www.Familyfun.go.com)

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### Fun Fruit cups:

1 serving:

1/4 C sliced strawberries

1/4 C blueberries

1 tbsp heavy cream



Simply mix the berries and drizzle the heavy cream on top for a red, white and blue treat! Try frozen on hot days. May add Truvia to make it extra sweet.