



Holding Yourself Accountable During the Holiday Season

Dr. Charles Shaffer

We are officially heading into the holidays! While this may be exciting for many, it is one of the worst times for others. Many individuals have developed a habit of social eating, meaning they eat with friends and family and justify their choices because they are in a social setting. Additionally, their decisions seem justifiable because they are under the bondage of food. Please pay attention to what you are putting in your mouth this holiday season.

You realize you are bound to food. At the Weigh Station, we see individuals struggle with a host of items in different way. We often see a struggle with sugar, carbohydrates, alcohol, emotional eating and overeating. Many people are bound to these items and cannot be successful until these ties are cut. Surrounding ourselves with people we care about, such as friends and family, is one of my favorite parts of the holiday season. However, I still have to watch what I eat because I can easily gain 15 pounds during the holiday weekend.

WHAT YOU'LL FIND INSIDE:

- **HOLDING YOURSELF ACCOUNTABLE DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON**
- **THE RECIPE OF THE MONTH**



Recent literature in obesity journals has shown an uptick in addiction to carbohydrates and sugar. As discussed before, these foods trigger a pleasure response in our brains. When you're lonely or stressed, your brain releases chemicals craving that particular food. Once you give in to that food item, the brain releases a dopamine response. Thus, whether you realize it or not, you are now stuck in the cycle of venturing to the cabinet or refrigerator to satisfy your craving.

The question you need to answer is: food or feelings? Do you open the refrigerator or cabinet when you are stressed? Are you angry, sad, hurt, or lonely? These emotions typically lead people to eat the wrong things. Many times, these are not feelings but a product of circumstances. In the eyes of many, food is seen as a comfort tool. Once negative feelings arise, individuals want to be comforted, thus they turn to bad choices. Once you realize why you are eating, we can help make a change in dietary habits.

When individuals claim to be too busy to take care of themselves, they are only exacerbating their weight gain and causing additional health issues. Please remember we are here to help you overcome your addiction to food. We are with you every step of the way and offer many different recipes to help you make informed choices. Some patients come for appointments but do not put in the effort required; we, the Weigh Station, can only do so much. If you need help, or extra motivation, please do not hesitate to ask or let us know. This year has been rough for everyone, especially those affected by COVID-19. Please pray for the individuals and families around the world who have been affected by this horrible disease.

Remember to utilize our holidays menu. Please remember to be kind to one another and lend a hand to those that may need it.

Blessings and Happy Thanksgiving,
Chuck Shaffer MD

Synergistic effects of fructose and glucose on lipoprotein risk factors for cardiovascular disease in young adults

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BACKGROUND: Fructose consumption increases risk factors for cardiometabolic disease. It is assumed that the effects of free sugars on risk factors are less potent because they contain less fructose. We compared the effects of consuming fructose, glucose or their combination, high fructose corn syrup (HFCS), on cardiometabolic risk factors.

METHODS: Adults (18-40 years; BMI 18-35 kg/m²) participated in a parallel, double-blinded dietary intervention during which beverages sweetened with aspartame, glucose (25% of energy requirements (ereq)), fructose or HFCS (25% and 17.5% ereq) were consumed for two weeks. Groups were matched for sex, baseline BMI and plasma lipid/lipoprotein concentrations. 24-h serial blood samples were collected at baseline and at the end of intervention. Primary outcomes were 24-h triglyceride AUC, LDL-cholesterol (C), and apolipoprotein (apo)B. Interactions between fructose and glucose were assessed post hoc.

FINDINGS: 145 subjects (26.0 ± 5.8 years; body mass index 25.0 ± 3.7 kg/m²) completed the study. As expected, the increase of 24-h triglycerides compared with aspartame was highest during fructose consumption (25%: 6.66 mmol/Lx24h 95% CI [1.90 to 11.63], P = 0.0013 versus aspartame), intermediate during HFCS consumption (25%: 4.68 mmol/Lx24h 95% CI [-0.18 to 9.55], P = 0.066 versus aspartame) and lowest during glucose consumption. In contrast, the increase of LDL-C was highest during HFCS consumption (25%: 0.46 mmol/L 95% CI [0.16 to 0.77], P = 0.0002 versus aspartame) and intermediate during fructose consumption (25%: 0.33 mmol/L 95% CI [0.03 to 0.63], P = 0.023 versus aspartame), as was the increase of apoB (HFCS-25%: 0.108 g/L 95%CI [0.032 to 0.184], P = 0.001; fructose 25%: 0.072 g/L 95%CI [-0.004 to 0.148], P = 0.074 versus aspartame). The post hoc analyses showed significant interactive effects of fructose*glucose on LDL-C and apoB (both P < 0.01), but not on 24-h triglyceride (P = 0.340).

CONCLUSION: A significant interaction between fructose and glucose contributed to increases of lipoprotein risk factors when the two monosaccharides were co-ingested as HFCS. Thus, the effects of HFCS on lipoprotein risks factors are not solely mediated by the fructose content and it cannot be assumed that glucose is a benign component of HFCS. Our findings suggest that HFCS may be as harmful as isocaloric amounts of pure fructose and provide further support for the urgency to implement strategies to limit free sugar consumption.

The Recipe of the Month

Hot Artichoke Dip

***16 servings**

Ingredients

- 2 (6.5 oz) jars artichoke hearts
- 2 C mozzarella cheese
- 1 C grated parmesan cheese
- 1 C mayonnaise

Directions

Preheat oven to 275 F. Chop artichoke hearts and shred mozzarella cheese. In a shallow baking dish, combine the artichoke hearts, mozzarella cheese, parmesan cheese, and mayonnaise. Bake for 45 minutes, or until hot and bubbly. Serve hot with raw vegetables.



**Delicious,
Hearty, Yum.**

