

Pure fructose frequently confused with high fructose corn syrup

March 4 2009

As researchers continue to examine the role of sweeteners in the diet, it's important that people understand the differences among various ingredients used in scientific studies, according to the Corn Refiners Association (CRA). Interchanging two distinctly different ingredients, such as pure fructose and high fructose corn syrup, creates factually incorrect conclusions and misleads consumers.

Recent studies using pure fructose that purport to show that the body processes high fructose corn syrup differently than other sugars due to fructose content are a classic example of this problem because pure fructose cannot be extrapolated to high fructose corn syrup. The abnormally high levels of pure fructose used in these studies are not found in the human diet.

Fructose consumption at normal human dietary levels and as part of a balanced diet has not been shown to yield such results. Moreover, human fructose intake is nearly always accompanied by the simultaneous and equivalent intake of glucose - a critical and distinguishing factor from pure fructose used in these studies.

Following are some facts about high fructose corn syrup and fructose:

- High fructose corn syrup contains approximately equal ratios of fructose and glucose. Table sugar also contains equal ratios of fructose and glucose. High fructose corn syrup and sugar are equally sweet and both contain four calories per gram.

- Fructose is a natural, simple sugar commonly found in fruits and honey. The absence of glucose makes pure fructose fundamentally different from high fructose corn syrup.
- Common dietary sources of fructose and glucose include fruits, vegetables, nuts and sweeteners (sugar, honey, high fructose corn syrup, fruit juice concentrates and agave nectar).
- There is no meaningful difference in how the body metabolizes table sugar and high fructose corn syrup. Once the combination of glucose and fructose found in high fructose corn syrup and sucrose are absorbed into the blood stream, the two types of sweetener appear to be metabolized similarly using well-characterized metabolic pathways.
- High fructose corn syrup meets the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's requirements for use of the term "natural." It is made from corn, a natural grain product and contains no artificial or synthetic ingredients or color additives.

The American Medical Association in June 2008 helped put to rest a common misunderstanding about high fructose corn syrup and obesity, stating that "high fructose syrup does not appear to contribute to obesity more than other caloric sweeteners." Even former critics of high fructose corn syrup dispelled long-held myths and distanced themselves from earlier speculation about the sweetener's link to obesity in a comprehensive scientific review published in a recent supplement of the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* (2008 Vol. 88).

Source: Weber Shandwick Worldwide

Citation: Pure fructose frequently confused with high fructose corn syrup (2009, March 4)

retrieved 3 May 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2009-03-pure-fructose-frequently-high-corn.html>

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