



## The Dark Side of High Fructose Corn Syrup

Eat a bowl of cereal. Munch a granola bar. Season your salad with a little dressing. You might be eating healthy foods ... or not. Literally thousands of processed foods contain high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS) – a man-made corn-based sweetener with a dark side.

In a recent study, researchers found that animals that ate regular food but drank water sweetened with HFCS gained a lot more weight than those that ate regular food and drank water sweetened with table sugar (sucrose).

The connection between HFCS and human obesity has not yet been shown in studies. But scientists do note that obesity rates in this country started to climb dramatically

40 years ago – at the same time HFCS was first added to our processed foods.

Today, HFCS is in about 50 percent of all processed foods. Read food labels and you'll see. It is used not only as a sweetener, but also to lengthen shelf life and add moisture to processed foods. You might expect to find HFCS in candy, soft drinks, and packaged cake. But you'll also see it used in bread, yogurt, and applesauce.

If you want to control your weight and prevent other health problems, it's a good idea to cut back on all sugars, especially HFCS-sweetened foods in your diet. And it's easy. Drink water instead of soft drinks. Eat more fresh fruits and vegetables. And look for HFCS on food labels before you buy.

*Pharmacology, Biochemistry, and Behavior. 2010.  
Princeton University. 2010.*

## Make Healthy Choices With Your Smartphone

Did you know that your smartphone can help you exercise, choose healthy meals, and lose weight? You can use applications – or apps – to make healthy lifestyle choices.

Right now you can choose from more than 7,000 health and fitness apps to do things like count calories, log workouts, make a fruit smoothie, or sleep better at night. The bit of encouragement you need to make healthier lifestyle choices might just be a button on your smartphone.

Here are a few health and wellness apps currently available:

- **The Smokefree Quit Guide** ([smokefree.gov/apps](http://smokefree.gov/apps)). Developed by the National Cancer Institute, this app gives smokers expert advice on how to kick the habit, connect to online support groups, and stay smoke-free after quitting.



- **Breathe2Relax** ([apps.usa.gov/breathe2relax](http://apps.usa.gov/breathe2relax)). Created by the National Center for Telehealth and Technology, this app shows you how to manage stress with breathing exercises.
- **BMI Calculator** ([apps.usa.gov/bmi-app](http://apps.usa.gov/bmi-app)). The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute created this app to help you keep your weight in check. This app tells you your body mass index and provides information about weight management.
- **Cardio Trainer** (<https://market.android.com/details?id=com.wsl.CardioTrainer&hl=en>). Used in a study at Illinois State University, this app tracks your exercise activity and helps you count calories.

*American Council on Exercise  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
American College of Sports Medicine*

## Better Not Boil the Broccoli



When you eat broccoli as a side dish with your dinner, you're dining on the best Mother Nature has to offer. You may not have believed it when you were a kid, but broccoli – cooked or raw – packs the most nutritional punch of any vegetable.

Broccoli is loaded with nutrients like vitamin C, vitamin A, folic acid, calcium and fiber. It's one of those brightly colored vegetables that can help strengthen your bones, prevent cancer, and reduce your risk for heart disease. But that all depends on the way you prepare it.

In a recent study, researchers found that broccoli loses up to 77 percent of its nutritional value when it's boiled. Fortunately, there are other cooking methods that preserve most of the nutrients broccoli has to offer.

If you plan to cook your broccoli, steamed, stir-fried, or microwaved is in, and boiling is out. Cook broccoli for up to 15 minutes steamed, up to 3 minutes microwaved, or up to 5 minutes stir-fried, and enjoy.

*University of Warwick. 2007.*



## Four Ways to Reduce Your Risk for a Stroke

In the time it takes you to wash your hands, you could have a stroke – from a burst artery or a blood clot that cuts off blood flow to the brain. In the United States, someone

has a stroke about every 45 seconds. A stroke often causes physical, mental, and emotional problems. While many people recover from the effects of a stroke with therapy, strokes also claim the lives of about 137,000 Americans each year.

Here are four ways you can reduce your risk of a stroke:

- 1. Lower your blood pressure.** You can lower your blood pressure by eating more fruits and vegetables and less processed foods. Exercising 30 minutes a day and losing weight will help too. You'll feel better and your heart will be healthier.
- 2. Lower your cholesterol.** High levels of LDL "bad" cholesterol can clog your arteries. Medication is one option. Eating fish, nuts, and foods high in fiber can also lower your cholesterol.
- 3. Quit smoking.** If you smoke, you can quit with the help of a smoking cessation program or medication. In addition to its link to cancer, smoking limits blood

flow in the brain and kills about 467,000 people in the United States every year.

- 4. Take aspirin.** Aspirin reduces your blood's ability to clot. Studies show that aspirin can effectively prevent a stroke in high-risk people. Talk with your doctor before you try this to see if you might benefit.

Other risk factors include diabetes, stress, drinking alcohol, lack of exercise, and a family history of a stroke or heart attack. If you think you may be at risk for a stroke, talk with your healthcare provider.

*Center for Disease Control and Prevention*

### Know Stroke. Know the Signs. Act in Time

The symptoms of stroke happen quickly. If you see or have any of these symptoms, call 911 immediately.

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg (especially on one side of the body)
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding speech
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause

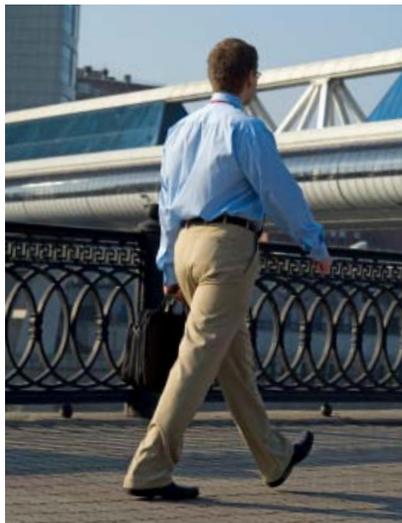
*Stroke.NIH.gov*

## Start Exercising – Thinking Doesn't Make You Fit

If you want to lose weight and be more active, go for a walk after reading this. Learning about the benefits of healthy eating and regular exercise is great. But just thinking about it doesn't make you fit.

In a study on motivation and physical activity, people were more likely to exercise when they focused on how and when to exercise instead of on the health benefits of exercise. If you want to exercise more, focus on setting a goal, tracking your progress, and scheduling time to work out. Or choose a reward for completing your goal, like buying new clothes after losing weight.

According to the study, the most effective way to be more active is to exercise with someone else such as a personal trainer, a friend, or a workout group.



You should try to get at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise five days a week. Take a brisk walk during your lunch break. Play with your kids. Or make time to hit the gym. Even a little exercise will help.

Break it up into three 10-minute walks if you need to. In fact, take one of those walks...right...now.

*University of Missouri. 2011.*

*American Journal of Public Health. 2011.*

### ASK THE WELLNESS DOCTOR

**Q:** How can I tell if I'm depressed?

**A:** Go to [www.wellsourc.info/wn/ask-depression.pdf](http://www.wellsourc.info/wn/ask-depression.pdf) to read the answer from Don Hall, DrPH, CHES.

To ask your question, email: [evan@wellsourc.com](mailto:evan@wellsourc.com), subject line: Ask the Wellness Doctor. Emails with any other subject line will be directed to the spam folder.

**Health Challenge:** "Eat Unprocessed Foods" available at: [www.wellsourc.info/wn/hc-unprocessed-foods.pdf](http://www.wellsourc.info/wn/hc-unprocessed-foods.pdf)

Make healthier food choices this month with these helpful tips.