

# NUTRITION



## F A C T S H E E T

### Facts About Fructose

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Fructose occurs naturally in fruits, vegetables and their juices, as well as honey. It gives these foods their sweet taste. Fructose in crystalline form has been widely used for the past 20 years as a nutritive sweetener in foods and beverages.

#### **What is fructose?**

Fructose is a simple sugar that occurs naturally in foods. It gives fruits their sweet taste. Crystalline fructose obtained from processing corn or sugar is used in food and beverages as a nutritive sweetener. It's roughly 1.2 times the sweetness of table sugar in most food applications. Although originally marketed as a health supplement, crystalline fructose became available as a food ingredient about 20 years ago. However, when compared to all other naturally occurring and added starches, syrups and sweeteners, fructose contributes only a small amount of calories to the average American diet.

#### **What is the difference between crystalline fructose and high fructose corn syrup?**

Crystalline fructose and high-fructose corn syrup are often mistakenly confused as the same product. Crystalline fructose is simply pure fructose in crystalline form. It's 100% fructose. High-fructose corn syrup is composed of nearly equal amounts of fructose and glucose.

#### **What are the advantages of crystalline fructose?**

Crystalline fructose offers unique benefits when used in a variety of products, including improved product texture, taste and stability. When combined with other sweeteners and

starches, crystalline fructose boosts sweetness, cake height (in baked goods) and mouth-feel of foods and beverages. In addition, it produces a pleasing brown surface color and pleasant aroma when baking.

#### **Is fructose safe?**

The safety of fructose, both crystalline fructose and high-fructose corn syrup, has been thoroughly and consistently documented in authoritative scientific reviews conducted over the past 25 years. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) concluded, "High fructose [corn] syrup is as safe for use in food as sucrose, corn sugar, corn syrup and invert sugar." An International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI) Expert Panel concluded, "Fructose is a valuable, traditional source of food energy, and there is no basis for recommending increases or decreases in its use in the general food supply or in special dietary use products."

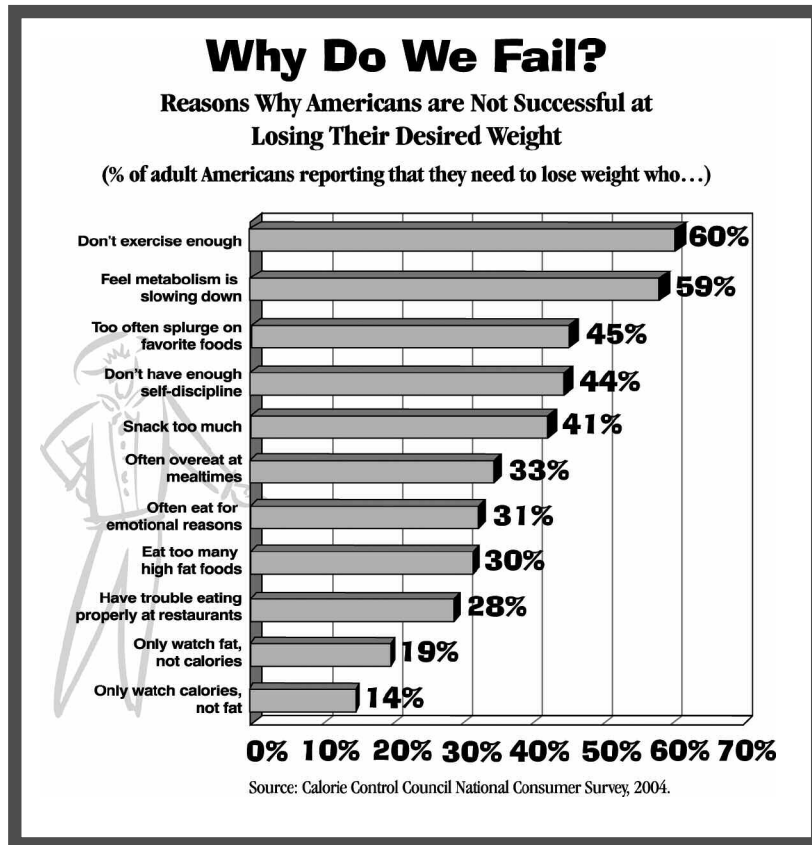
#### **How does fructose fit in as part of a healthy lifestyle?**

Recent research from the Calorie Control Council consumer survey shows that more than 180 million adult Americans are incorporating

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low-calorie, sugar-free foods and beverages into their meal plan as part of a healthy lifestyle. People will continue to demand a greater variety of low-calorie products as they strive to make healthier food choices. Fructose can help meet this demand because of its unique texture, taste and stability.

Fructose occurs naturally, for example, in fruits, vegetables and their juices and honey. The primary uses for crystalline fructose include dry mix beverages, low-calorie products, enhanced or flavored water, carbonated beverages, sports and energy drinks, chocolate milk, breakfast cereals, baked goods, yogurt, fruit packs and confections. Fructose has been used in whole new categories of food and beverage products, such as shelf-stable nutrition bars, soft moist cookies, pourable frozen juice concentrates and reduced-calorie products.



### Does fructose contribute to obesity?

There is growing agreement among obesity experts that fructose does not promote obesity any more than other carbohydrates.

### Summary

Fructose is sweeter than table sugar so less is needed to achieve the same sweetness, offering calorie savings. Fructose has a low Glycemic Index, which is useful in formulating foods with a low Glycemic Load. Crystalline fructose offers unique benefits when used in a variety of products, including improved product texture, taste and stability.

For a referral to a registered dietitian and for additional food and nutrition information visit [WWW.EATRIGHT.ORG](http://WWW.EATRIGHT.ORG)

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