



# Wellness Connection

Winter | 2013

## Lifestyle Changes Key to Weight Loss in New Year

Small steps can help people finally achieve that elusive resolution, expert says

(HealthDay News) -- Many people will resolve to lose weight in 2013 but few of them will take the right steps to achieve that goal, an expert says.



“January is the time of year when gyms get flooded with new and returning members ready to try Zumba or spin classes, and dieters start filling their grocery carts with fruits and vegetables instead of chips and cookies,” Alenka Ravnik-List, diabetes program coordinator

at the Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York City, said in a center news release. “But unfortunately, too often people with good intentions will fail.”

But following a few rules can help people change their lifestyle and lose weight.

Ravnik-List offered the following advice:

- Don't skip breakfast. Research shows that eating breakfast every day can help you lose weight and keep it off.
- Keep a journal of everything you eat. People who keep food

diaries eat about 15 percent less food than those who don't.

- Get walking. Sedentary people take only about 3,000 steps a day. Adding another 3,000 steps will help you maintain your current weight and getting more than 10,000 steps a day will help you lose weight.
- Watch your serving sizes. Eat meals on a medium-sized plate (about eight to nine inches wide). A bigger plate encourages you to eat more because you can fit more food on it. Load half of your plate with colorful vegetables and the other half with lean protein and whole grain starches.
- Weigh yourself at least once a week. Doing so will help you detect small weight gains before they get out of control.
- Don't be too strict with yourself. Everyone has a craving they can't avoid, so don't. Plan a night out with friends and satisfy your craving. Moderation is the key to success.



“If you follow these tips, maybe next year you can pick a different New Year's resolution because you will feel both physically and mentally better about yourself,” Ravnik-List said.

*More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more about healthy weight. -- Robert Preidt*

*SOURCE: Mount Sinai Medical Center, news release, Nov. 26, 2012  
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## Health Tip: Exercise to Combat Stress

It will help you feel better

(HealthDay News) -- Exercise helps more than just your physical well-being, experts say.

Plain and simple, says the American Council on Exercise, exercise makes you feel better. The council offers these potential examples:

- Exercise can help reduce anxiety and help you feel less jittery.
- Exercise can boost your mood and help you feel more relaxed.

- Exercise can improve your self-esteem.
- Exercise can promote making healthier food choices.

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# Is Fructose Making People Fat?

## Simple sugar found in high-fructose corn syrup and elsewhere is tied to appetite changes in study

(HealthDay News) -- New research suggests that fructose, a simple sugar found naturally in fruit and added to many other foods as part of high-fructose corn syrup, does not dampen appetite and may cause people to eat more compared to another simple sugar, glucose.

Glucose and fructose are both simple sugars that are included in equal parts in table sugar. In the new study, brain scans suggest that different things happen in your brain, depending on which sugar you consume.

Yale University researchers looked for appetite-related changes in blood flow in the hypothalamic region of the brains of 20 healthy adults after they ate either glucose or fructose. When people consumed glucose, levels of hormones that play a role in feeling full were high.

In contrast, when participants consumed a fructose beverage, they showed smaller increases in hormones that are associated with satiety (feeling full).

The findings are published in the Jan. 2 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

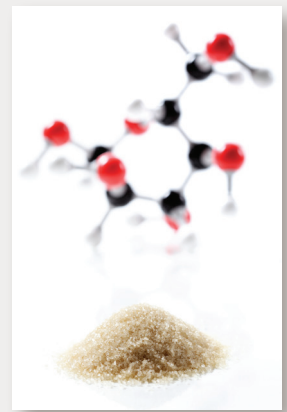
Dr. Jonathan Purnell, of Oregon Health & Science University in Portland, co-authored an editorial that accompanied the new study. He said that the findings replicate those found in prior animal studies, but "this does not prove that fructose is the cause of the obesity epidemic, only that it is a possible contributor along with many other environmental and genetic factors."

That said, fructose has found its way into Americans' diets in the form of sugars - typically in the form of high-fructose corn syrup - that are added to beverages and processed foods. "This increased intake of added sugar containing fructose over the past several decades has coincided with the rise in obesity in the population, and there is strong evidence from animal studies that this increased intake of fructose is playing a role in this phenomenon," said Purnell, who is associate professor in the university's division of endocrinology, diabetes and clinical nutrition.

But he stressed that nutritionists do not "recommend avoiding natural sources of fructose, such as fruit, or the occasional use of honey or syrup." And according to Purnell, "excess consumption of processed sugar can be minimized by preparing meals at home using whole foods and high-fiber grains."

Connie Diekman, director of university nutrition at Washington University in St. Louis, agreed that more research is needed. "This study provides an interesting look at how the brain reacts to different chemicals found in foods, but how this might impact obesity and the growing number of people who are obese cannot be determined from this study alone," she said.

Dr. Scott Kahan, director of the National Center for Weight and Wellness in Washington, D.C., added there is a lot that scientists do not know about fructose and how it affects your body. "There are certainly differences between sugar molecules, and these are still being worked out scientifically," he said.



According to Kahan, high-fructose corn syrup, a ubiquitous sweetener that manufacturers love because it is inexpensive, super-sweet and helps extend shelf life, gets a bad rap about its potential role in the obesity epidemic, but it has about the same amount of fructose as table sugar (sucrose). "We don't entirely know if there is some uniquely unhealthy aspect of high-fructose corn syrup," he said.

One thing that is clear, Kahan said, is that "almost all of us eat too much sugar, and if we can moderate that we will be healthier on a number of levels."

Dr. Louis Aronne, founder and director of the Comprehensive Weight Control Program at New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center in New York City, noted that most sweeteners contain a mixture of glucose and fructose. For these reasons, "the effect is not as dramatic as you might see in a trial like this."

Still, a growing body of evidence is pointing toward the hypothalamic brain region as having a role in obesity. "Things as subtle as a change in sweetener can have an impact on how full somebody feels, and could lead to an increase in calorie intake and an increasing pattern in obesity seen in this country," he said.

So what to do? As a nutritionist, Sharon Zarabi, of Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City, tells her patients to read food labels. "Avoid having fructose or glucose listed as one of the first three ingredients, and make sure that sugar is less than 10 grams per serving."

### More information

The American Heart Association has more about sugar. [http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/GettingHealthy/NutritionCenter/Sugars-101\\_UCM\\_306024\\_Article.jsp](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/GettingHealthy/NutritionCenter/Sugars-101_UCM_306024_Article.jsp)

*SOURCES: Louis Aronne, M.D., founder and director, Comprehensive Weight Control Program, New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center, New York City; Scott Kahan, M.D., MPH, director, National Center for Weight and Wellness, Washington, D.C.; Jonathan Purnell, M.D., associate professor, division of endocrinology, diabetes and clinical nutrition, Oregon Health & Science University, Portland; Sharon Zarabi, R.D., nutritionist/fitness trainer, Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City; Connie Diekman, R.D., director, university nutrition, Washington University in St. Louis; Jan. 2, 2013, *Journal of the American Medical Association**

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