

Where Has All the Sugar Gone?

by Nancy Appleton, Ph.D.

*Sugar can cause degenerative disease, according to FDA,
but questionable statistics may lead to false sense of safety*

In 1986, the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) came out with a report concerning the consumption of sugar in the United States, and whether this consumption of sugar had ill effects on the health of the people.

The FDA based its conclusions on scientific research reported in medical journals from around the world. The FDA did not do the research itself; its findings were based on research that others had done.

One of the conclusions of the report was that when sugar is eaten in large quantities-25% to 50% or more of the dietary calories of humans or animals - the following conditions can develop: diabetes mellitus, glucose intolerance (hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia), cardiovascular risk, behavior changes, excess secretion of calcium in the urine, gallstones, and mineral deficiencies.

The report also concludes that sugar does not lead to these degenerative diseases in the United States, because the average person does not eat too much sugar. It states that the only adverse effect sugar has in this country is to cause tooth decay.

The FDA said that the average person ate 40 pounds of sugar per person in the year 1985, which is equivalent to 12 teaspoons a day, or approximately 8 to 12% of the daily calories from sugar. This report noted that, in the United States, we manufactured 124 pounds of sugar per person per year. So what happened to the extra 84 pounds of sugar that we manufactured and did not eat? The report says this extra went to dog food, export, storage, loss in shipment, handling and processing and/or waste.

Not believing everything I read, I started to do my own research. I telephoned the FDA and spoke to Dr. H. Irausquin, one of the people who compiled the report. I asked Dr. Irausquin how the information was obtained that each person ate 40 pounds of sugar each year. The researcher told me that the method was not very scientific nor sound and that, in the future, a better method would have to be found. A questionnaire was sent to 5,000 people, asking them to keep a diet diary of what they had consumed for the next week. The information was obtained by these questionnaires.

I would like to quote Sidney Mintz, who wrote *Sweetness and Power*, on this very subject. "One fascinating expression of this modern way of eating is found in what we know was consumed and what people recall they have consumed. Whereas the Department of Agriculture figures demonstrate that we dispose of about 3,200 calories per capita per day, the average white female adult, for example, can recall, when asked what she ate on the previous day, only 1560 calories, a noticeably low average, and less than half the 'disappearance' figure. Since average weight loss has risen steadily in this country, these recall data are difficult to accept as accurate. They suggest a pattern of ragged and discontinuous but very frequent snacks that are surely forgotten by those who do the eating."

Still interested in this idea that we only eat 40 pounds of sugar per person per year, I phoned the Soft Drink Association. I spoke with Irene Melvin, who sent me a report titled "Estimated Annual Production and Consumption of Soft Drinks." The report showed that in 1985 we drank the equivalent of 486.2 12-ounce cans of soft drinks per person. She said that of those 486.2 cans, 386 cans were with sugar. One hundred were sugar free.

Each sugary soft drink has approximately 10 teaspoons of sugar. After doing a little math with my calculator, I realized that each person drinks approximately 11 teaspoons of sugar per person per day in soft drinks alone. If we only eat 40 pounds of sugar per person per year, which is equivalent to 12 teaspoons a day, we would only have one teaspoon a day left for cookies, candy, cake, pie, ice cream, fruit yogurt, ketchup and other sugary foods. I believe that the FDA has made a gross mistake in calculating that we eat only 40 pounds of sugar per person per year.

By every other source that I have read, the average American consumed over 120 pounds of sugar per year at that time. The *University of California, Berkeley Wellness Letter* reported the largest amount of sugar consumed per person per year. The *Letter* reported that each American consumed about 133 pounds of sugar each year at that time. That amount accounts for 20 to 25% of all calories and 500-600 calories per person per day. The average teenage boy eats twice that amount of sugar.

If the *U.C. Berkeley Wellness Letter* is correct that the amount of sugar we consume is approximately 133 pounds per person per year, then sugar does lead to degenerative diseases as reported by the FDA in their report. I was delighted to see that most of the FDA report focused on the research from around the world that shows sugar does cause disease when eaten in large quantities. They did a superb job of documenting this, and I commend them. The total report was 152 pages long. Of those 152 pages, 118 pages were from world research which directly correlated that when the consumption of sugar reached 20 to 25% of a person's diet, people began to develop medical problems. Thus, the FDA spent most of the report showing that sugar does cause disease. The only mistake the FDA made was to miscalculate the amount of sugar we eat each year. The charts were excellent and the bibliography was clear and precise. In the amounts that we eat sugar today, approximately 133 pounds per person per year, sugar is a problem for many people. I recommend that everyone read this report and draw their own conclusions.

This report can be read in the *Journal of Nutrition*, Vol. 116, No. 11S, November 1986 Supplement, or obtained for \$15.00 from the American Institute of Nutrition in Washington, DC, in a different form but the same information.

In my book, *Lick the Sugar Habit*, I explain the biochemical pathway that sugar takes in the body, how it upsets the delicate mineral balance so that mineral dependent enzymes are unable to function optimally, food does not all digest, and undigested food gets into the bloodstream causing havoc in the body and an immune response. Over a period of time, the immune system cannot continue to make this response and becomes exhausted. The exhaustion of the immune system leads to the degenerative disease process. It just depends on a person's genetic blueprints as to what disease will develop.

Unfortunately it is not only sugar that upsets the body chemistry but also distress, anger, depression, caffeine, alcohol, rancid overcooked fats, overeating, street drugs, and many over-the-counter and prescriptions drugs. All of these things take the same biochemical pathway in the body that sugar does. So eating a little sugar, being a little depressed, having a beer and some French fries can more than upset the body chemistry, and this in turn, over a period of time, causes disease. The research that the FDA showed only included sugar. If the researchers had also distressed the subjects, along with giving them sugar and possibly rancid fats, I believe the research would have shown that the subject would have developed cardiovascular disease, diabetes mellitus or other diseases that were discussed in the report with the far less sugar. It would have become metabolic overload with two or more different stressors.

So sugar and other abusive foods do play a role in the degenerative disease process. Any person with symptoms such as allergies, headaches, arthritis, high blood pressure, yeast infections, canker sores, fatigue, falling asleep after meals, cancer, AIDS or any other degenerative disease would be helped by removing abusive foods and not letting stress become distress.

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Visit www.HowtoLearn.com/add-adhd.html for more information about the healthy foods your child can eat to help calm them down and allow for greater learning capacity in school and life!

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