

[IMAGE]

## **A War You Can Win: 9 Ways to Make Better Food Choices**

By David Seaman, DC, MS, DABCN

The average American consumes approximately 60 percent of calories from sugar, flour and refined oils.<sup>1</sup> A donut is a good example of a so-called "food" that represents these calorie sources. We also consume a considerable number of calories from French fries and ketchup, each of which began as vegetation, but after refinement represents more sugar, flour and refined oil calories. Generally, Americans consume very little in the way of vegetables and fruit. The result is big business for the refined-food manufacturers and ultimately, Big Pharma. But what about us? Here's how you can fight back.

### **Unhealthy Food Is Big Business**

The cost of producing foods made with sugar, flour and refined oil is modest when it comes to the price of these commodities. In other words, there is still an acceptable profit margin for "foods" made with these calorie sources. And companies that use these calorie sources are still doing very well financially. To confirm this, all one needs to do is look at the stock prices of companies that use huge amounts of these calories sources. For example, the stock price for Coca-Cola was \$11 in 1995, \$21 in 2009 and \$39 in June 2015. For McDonald's, the stock price during those years were \$15, \$55 and \$95.

Clearly, if one is involved in the selling of refined calories, there is a financial benefit. Refined calories are a good business. If you would have put all your money in Coca-Cola or McDonald's in 2009, you might be able to retire right now because you would have doubled your money. Imagine that – your retirement would be based on sugar, flour and refined oil.

junk food - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark **The High Cost to All of Us**

What about the people who eat calories from sugar, flour and refined oils? I've labeled these folks "dietary crackheads" because these calories are addictive.<sup>2</sup> To be fair, even if you eat few calories from dietary crack, you can still be a dietary crackhead. This is because almost everyone loves the taste of dietary crack, and most of us would like to eat a lot of it, which means we are either practicing or non-practicing dietary crackheads. (I have been mostly a non-practicing dietary crackhead for many years.)

But what about those who consume 60 percent of their calories from dietary crack? What happens to them over time? The answer is obvious: most gain weight and eventually develop the metabolic syndrome. Unfortunately, 34 percent of individuals 20 years and older in America have the metabolic syndrome.<sup>3</sup> Clearly, the consumers of dietary crack do not benefit unless they simultaneously own stock in companies that distribute "dietary crack."

The metabolic syndrome is an interesting condition because it is a pro-inflammatory metabolic state that can last for many years before an overt disease develops, which then requires a specific drug or surgical intervention. Here is example of conditions that develop after the metabolic syndrome state is achieved by eating dietary crack: acne, type 2 diabetes, cancer, cardiovascular disease, stroke, hypertension, polycystic ovarian syndrome, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, gallstones, sleep apnea, myopia, male vertex balding, depression, low testosterone, and erectile dysfunction.<sup>4-5</sup>

Practically speaking, someone might take acne medication for several years before graduating to metformin for elevated blood glucose and a statin for elevated cholesterol. Eventually, by the time a man is 50 years of age, he may be taking medications for glucose, cholesterol, hypertension, depression *and* erectile dysfunction. And during this time, he has continued to eat 60 percent of his calories from dietary crack.

How does this man benefit beyond the temporary pleasure he gets from the taste of dietary crack? Clearly, there is no benefit for him – just suffering. And the suffering can continue if he develops vascular disease or cancer that requires surgical intervention.

### **Big Pharma Continues to Reap the Financial Rewards**

In addition to the manufacturers of dietary crack, the pharmaceutical companies and the hospital system are also beneficiaries. While many drug companies had their peak stock price during the tech bubble days (2000), they are certainly not suffering. Their stock prices have a similar upward pattern as the refined food-producing companies. When you get a chance, check out the stock price patterns for Merck, Pfizer and AstraZeneca. Like the refined-calorie producers, drugs companies would have been a good investment over the past several decades.

### **How to Make Better Food Choices**

Refined foods and drugs continue to be growing industries. They obviously have a good business model. Interestingly, people like to blame refined-food companies and drug companies for our bad health. In my opinion, this is completely incorrect and reflects a state of ignorance. If I eat dietary crack and take medications as a result, it is my fault. No one is forcing me to eat their refined calories or take their drugs and support industries that subsequently benefit. This is a voluntary choice made by the majority of Americans. Simply put, we need to make better choices.

The challenge, of course, is to avoid refined calories on a long-term basis. This can be complicated for many people, even if you're wellness-inclined. So, here is a list of things you can do:

1. Cultivate a proper eating mindset – this involves finding a reason to truly "care" about avoiding disease-promoting refined foods.
2. Understand that almost everyone will always like the taste of dietary crack. Do not feel guilty about wanting it or occasionally partaking. Just don't overdo it on a chronic basis.
3. Eat more vegetables during meals to create the sensation of fullness. In general, the feeling of gut fullness must be respected in spite of what food-eating thoughts one might have.
4. Keep dietary crack out of the house so there is no temptation at home.
5. Drink more water.
6. Build up to exercising at an aggressive-enough level that appetite suppression occurs.
7. Get adequate sleep, as less than six hours per night on a chronic basis can promote weight gain by various metabolic mechanisms.
8. Fight stress with exercise, not by eating excess / unhealthy food.
9. Mentally accept that steps #1-8 represent a process to utilize throughout life.

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