

BEYOND THE HYPE:

THE FACTS ABOUT ROBERT LUSTIG'S *FAT CHANCE*

The following talking points were adapted from Dr. Mark Kern's scientific review of *Fat Chance*.

Important facts are misrepresented and omitted throughout Dr. Lustig's book, leading the reader to assume his arguments are science-based, when in reality many are not.

FRUCTOSE AND OBESITY

- There is no scientific evidence to support the idea that fructose causes obesity or metabolic syndrome when consumed in typical amounts.
- Dr. Lustig's explanation of fructose metabolism and the published literature on fructose and health is misleading.
- Obesity is a multifactorial disease that is impacted by a wide array of genetic and lifestyle factors. Attributing obesity and chronic disease to the excessive intake of a particular food or nutrient (i.e. sugar or fructose) is misguided.
- Dr. Lustig misrepresents the available scientific evidence by making sweeping conclusions based on studies that do not examine real-life consumption patterns.
- Dr. Lustig's assertion that excessive fructose is converted to fat by the body, thereby uniquely contributing to obesity and metabolic syndrome, is unsubstantiated.

"A CALORIE IS NOT A CALORIE"

- Dr. Lustig's point of view on energy balance is opposed by leading government and scientific sources on health and nutrition, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND).
- Government health authorities and registered dietitians agree that a "Calorie" is a "Calorie" in terms of weight management.
- Dr. Lustig's Calorie recommendations ignore the complexity of determining individual Calorie requirements, which depend on a variety of factors, including but not limited to age, gender and physical activity level.
- Readers should use the Dietary Guidelines for Americans as an authoritative source for energy intake recommendations.
- Food nutrition labeling is a clear practice in the United States and to say that "real food doesn't have or need a Nutritional Facts Label" is wrong.

- Dr. Lustig also claims that the “food industry currently has carte blanche over what can be put in food and how it can be processed, packaged and marketed,” when there are very clear, well recognized regulations regarding ingredient restriction and nutrition labeling.
- Foods containing caloric sweeteners, consumed in moderation, are recognized as part of a healthy diet.
- The addition of the Nutrition Facts Panel to packaged foods was a major step forward in public nutrition education and transparency on behalf of food manufacturers.
- Registered dietitians use the Nutrition Facts Panel as a tool to help patients and clients make healthier purchasing decisions for themselves and their families.

SUGAR INTAKE RECOMMENDATIONS DO NOT EXIST FOR CONSUMERS

- Dietary guidelines do exist that recommend less than 25% of energy intake should be from added sugars, which directly contradicts Dr. Lustig’s assertion that no such recommendations exist.
- International and national governments, as well as professional and scientific organizations have published sugar consumption recommendations.

DR. LUSTIG DEMONSTRATES A LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF THE SCIENCE OF NUTRITION AND SEEMS TO PURPOSEFULLY MISLEAD THE READERS TO PROMOTE HIS VIEWS

- “100% orange juice is worse for you than soda, because the orange juice contains 1.8 grams of fructose per ounce, while the soda contains 1.7 grams of fructose per ounce.” A less than 0.1 gram difference does not make orange juice worse for consumers and also does not take into account the health benefits orange juice provides that soda does not.
- Dr. Lustig shows an ignorance of the process by which bananas brown, mistakenly calling it the Maillard browning reaction when it is simply an enzymatic browning process.
- Dr. Lustig claims that white foods lack fiber. Many white foods including potatoes, white beans, turnips, celery root, cauliflower and mushrooms are rich in fiber.
- Healthy diets include processed foods, like pasteurized milk and whole wheat bread. It is the role of registered dietitians to help consumers understand how to build healthy diets that are compatible with the current food environment.

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