

# Does HFCS shorten life? Maybe, for some female mice.

By ACSH Staff — January 7, 2015



A newly published study appearing in *The Journal of Nutrition*

[1] reports on the sad fate of female mice given high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS) in quantities like what we eat [sic!]. These researchers at the University of Utah, led by biology professor Wayne Potts, studied the little rodents 104 females and 56 males over the course of the next 32 weeks. For 40 weeks post-weaning, half the rodents (the study rodents) were fed a mixture of glucose and fructose similar to that in HFCS; the other half (the control mice) were fed sucrose, with both types of diets containing otherwise similar calories and nutrients. After the 40 weeks, all mice were released into a unique study environment, described as organismal performances assays seminatural enclosures where mice competed for territories, resources, and mates ! (The [press release](#) [2] describes the enclosure as a mouse barn).

While there was no discernible effect of the variation in diet among the males, the females on the HFCS-analogous diet had a mortality rate almost double that of the sucrose-feeders, as well as a 26 percent decline in reproduction.

ACSH's Dr. Gil Ross had this comment: What can I say, after I say that these are mice, not people. The alleged fact that the glucose-fructose mixture was fed in amounts similar to what humans might ingest does not make this analogous to a clinical study. I guess it would be hard to do this study on humans: who among us would consent to be fed variable amounts of carbohydrates after weaning and then be confined to a human-barn for months or years and be studied like well, like a lab-mouse? And have your reproductive success (not to mention competing for territories, resources, and mates) measured? Talk about an ego-downer!

OK I jest, but this is not to be taken seriously, as the senior author seems to have done: This is the most robust study showing there is a difference between high-fructose corn syrup and table sugar at human-relevant doses, says biology professor Wayne Potts. And his senior assistant had this in addition: James Ruff, the study's first author and a postdoctoral fellow in biology, says, Our previous work and plenty of other studies have shown that added sugar in general is bad for your health [1].

I think that he rather gives away the game there: the mission of this group and this study is to show how bad for you sugar is, and even worse: HFCS! If this is really the case, why did the effect disappear among the males? And how could living in a mouse-barn be compared in any meaningful way to the human condition? This is just another study with an agenda, and they got their way with these poor little mice.

ACSH's Dr. Ruth Kava added Getting 25 percent of one's calories from either sucrose or from HFCS doesn't sound like a healthful diet to me, so it's not clear how the authors of this study can say their diet is similar to that of humans.

For verifiable information about HFCS, I'd suggest you read ACSH's [peer-reviewed analysis here](#) [3].

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**Links**

[1] <http://jn.nutrition.org/content/early/2014/12/10/jn.114.202531.abstract?sid=17a3c2b1-3e39-42b3-92e1-83587f84c935>

[2] [http://unews.utah.edu/news\\_releases/fructose-more-toxic-than-table-sugar-in-mice/](http://unews.utah.edu/news_releases/fructose-more-toxic-than-table-sugar-in-mice/)

[3] <http://acsh.org/2013/01/high-fructose-corn-syrup-separating-myths-from-facts/>