

# For your Health and Wellness!

## Food for thought !

### Studies Show Junk Food as Addictive as Cocaine

By Ethan A. Huff, NaturalNews  
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Is gorging on a bag of nacho cheese-flavored corn chips, for instance, the same as snorting a line of cocaine? A number of scientific studies, many of which were conducted within the past year, have found that junk food addiction is essentially the same as cocaine addiction, at least as far as the brain is concerned.

Bloomberg Businessweek reports on a plethora of recent data that identifies junk food addiction as being just as serious as drug addiction. High-fructose corn syrup (HFCS), monosodium glutamate (MSG), hydrogenated oils, refined salt, and various other chemical preservatives found in processed junk food does the same thing to a person's brain as cocaine does.

A 2010 study conducted by scientists at Scripps Research Institute (SRI) in Florida found that rats given free access to Hormel Foods Corp. bacon, Sara Lee Corp. pound cake, The Cheesecake Factory Inc. cheesecake, and Pillsbury Co. Creamy Supreme cake frosting, experienced significant changes in brain activity and function - and these changes mirrored those that occur in the brains of drug addicts.

Another study conducted by researchers at both the University of Texas in Austin (UT) and the Oregon Research Institute found that prolonged consumption of junk foods results in reduced activity in the striatum, a section of the forebrain that registers reward. In other words, just like with illicit drugs, those addicted to junk food require ever-increasing amounts of it to get the same "high."

"The data is so overwhelming the field has to accept it," said Nora Volkow, director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) concerning the findings. "We are finding tremendous overlap between drugs in the brain and food in the brain."

In a correlative study, researchers identified a similarity in dopamine production levels between drug addicts and junk food addicts. Addiction to either one essentially causes the brain receptors that receive dopamine signals to lose their responsiveness. As a result, addicts require increasing amounts of the addictive substance to receive the same level of satisfaction.

Since processed foods are loaded with synthetic chemical additives, they are technically drugs themselves. So it is no wonder that millions of people around the world are addicted to them.

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