

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Our Food: How we went wrong

Aamir Shahzad

The editorial, 'Our food: How we went wrong' in your recent Life and Science magazine (Vol. 3, No. 1, Jan 2022) needs rephrasing and a bit of explanation. The editorial represents the journal's official standing on a scientific issue. So it has to be carefully worded.

The editorial referred above claims, 'Glucose is not a mandatory fuel for metabolizing tissue cells. Protein and fat deficiencies are known to cause disorders. There is no disease produced by absence of glucose from diet.'

This statement gives an impression that glucose is not essential for the human body as its deficiency does not lead to any chronic deficiency disease, (unlike fats and protein, so they are more essential). This statement is likely to create misunderstanding. Infant glucose is extremely essential and life depends upon its uninterrupted supply to vital organs. Its deficiency is not known to cause any disease as a low glucose level below a certain limit will result in death within a few minutes. That's why our body homeostasis does not allow glucose to be decreased critically and immediately starts gluconeogenesis to convert amino acids and fatty acids to glucose.

There are certain conditions in which the capacity of gluconeogenesis is overwhelmed and all those situations are considered urgent life threatening situations.

Claim that, 'Sugars and starches have addictive potential' is likely to stretch the definition of 'Addiction' to a new unscientific limit. Moreover in the said editorial, it is mentioned that our forefathers who were hunter-gatherer perhaps had great health given their circumstances favoring better survival based on diverse foods. This phrase is also in need of further elaboration. There is no medical/archeological evidence that hunter-gatherers enjoyed better health or more life expectancy. Rather it is the other way round. With advancement of modern science, overall health and life expectancy has improved a lot.

In Fact the problem nowadays is lack of physical activities, use of refined sugars, and processed food leading to an epidemic of metabolic syndrome and its associated complications. Although the editorial does mention these facts as well but still some further explanation is essential. Most of the diet programs (like Mediterranean and DASH diet) suggest 50% of daily calories from carbohydrate, 30 % from Protein and 20% from fat. Keto diet is still debatable as far as its long term effects on health are concerned.

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