

Football Hall of Famer Jerry Rice tackles Kidney Disease

It's estimated 30 million adults in the U.S. have chronic kidney disease (CKD)--and most don't even know it.

To help increase awareness of CKD, Jerry Rice, Pro Football Hall of Famer, winner of three Super Bowl rings, and veteran of two decades in the National Football League, uses his youthful, seemingly boundless energy to keep carrying the ball for the cause closest to his heart.

"My brother Tom has CKD," Rice explained. "I've watched him go to dialysis three days a week for years, which is really hard on the body. He's a very positive individual. Still, sometimes I spend the long hours that he endures just sitting by his side. It was my brother, after all, who loved, encouraged and pushed me early on by telling me that I had to make it to the NFL."

To promote kidney health and raise awareness of kidney disease, Rice made a series of PSAs for the National Kidney Foundation (NKF). The NKF is the largest, most comprehensive and longstanding organization dedicated to the awareness, prevention and treatment of kidney disease.

Given Rice's genuine concern about and personal connection to the disease, NKF enlisted the widely beloved sports legend to help to speak

to the general public as well as kidney patients. He already has lots of practice doing so up close and personally whenever he joins his brother at a neighborhood dialysis center in Jackson, Miss.

"I'd go there to mainly be with my brother, of course, but I always walk around the room to say hello and socialize with the other dialysis patients," Rice said. "You don't realize it until you see for yourself in centers that there are lots of people on dialysis. It puts everything in perspective whenever I start complaining. When I visit the dialysis center, people often know who I am and are happy to see me, and if I can bring a smile to some faces and make them forget even for a second, that warms my heart. That's how I felt playing football, seeing the smiles in the stands and helping people to forget problems for a little while."

Rice is also part of NKF's continuing and growing Heart Your Kidneys (#HeartYourKidneys) public campaign to help elevate awareness of the kidneys to the status of other vital organs such as the heart. He is amazed that most people know very little about their kidneys.

"It's important to me to keep working hard to get the word out with NKF, because you can see that this



Football icon Jerry Rice works with the National Kidney Foundation to promote kidney health.

really hits home for me in more ways than one," Rice said.

Further Facts:

- African Americans are three times more likely to suffer from kidney disease than are people of other races.

- The kidneys' major function is to filter out waste products and excess fluid from the body.

- Eat healthy and drink water in-

stead of sugary drinks.

- Exercise regularly.
- Ask your doctor about your kidney health.

To learn more about kidney disease and whether you're at risk, call (800) 622-9010 or visit www.kidney.org.

Sugar and sweeteners, cont'd.

sweetener needs a category all on its own. High fructose corn syrup is made from corn starch – the main carbohydrate found in corn. Corn starch is made of thousands of glucose molecules bonded together. At an industrial scale, the starch is broken into individual glucose molecules using enzymes. This glucose is then treated with a second enzyme to convert some of it into fructose. Generally, high fructose corn syrup is roughly 42%-55% fructose.

This blend is sweet and cheap to produce but has a high calorie content. As with other natural sugars, too much high fructose corn syrup is bad for your health. And since most processed foods and drinks are packed full of the stuff, it is easy to consume too much.

could be defined as natural nonsugar sweeteners. These are food additives such as stevia and monk fruit, as well as natural sugar alcohols. These molecules aren't sugars, but they can still bind to the sweet receptors and therefore taste sweet.

Stevia is a molecule that comes from the leaves of the Stevia rebaudiana plant. It contains "sweet" molecules that are much larger than most sugars and have three glucose molecules attached to them. These molecules are 30 to 150 times sweeter than glucose itself. The sweet molecules from monk fruit are similar to stevia and 250 times sweeter than glucose.

The human body has a really hard time breaking down both stevia and monk fruit. So even though they're both really sweet, you don't get any calories from eating them.

Sugar alcohols, like sorbitol, for example, are not as sweet as sucrose. They can be found in a variety of foods, including pineapples, mushrooms, carrots and seaweed, and are often added to diet drinks, sugar-free chewing gum and many other foods and drinks. Sugar alcohols are made of chains of carbon atoms instead of circles like normal sugars. While they are composed of the same atoms as the sugars, sugar alcohols are not absorbed well by the body so they are considered low-calorie sweeteners.

Chemists have developed a number of lab-made chemicals that taste sweet and are sold as no-sugar sweeteners.

Artificial sweeteners

The third way to make something sweet is to add artificial sweeteners. These chemicals are produced in labs and factories and are not found in nature. Like all things that taste sweet,

they do so because they can bind to certain receptors in taste buds.

So far, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved six artificial sweeteners. The most well known are probably saccharin, aspartame and sucralose – better known as Splenda. Artificial sweeteners all have different chemical formulas. Some resemble natural sugars while others are radically different. They are usually many times sweeter than sugar – saccharin is an incredible 200 to 700 times sweeter than table sugar – and some of them are hard for the body to break down.

While a sweet dessert may be a simple pleasure for many, the chemistry of how your taste buds perceive sweetness is not so simple. Only molecules with the perfect combination of atoms taste sweet, but bodies deal with each of these molecules differently when it comes to calories.

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The Unity Group of Chattanooga 52nd Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Week Celebration "Embracing Brotherhood and Sisterhood-Unity in the Community!" January 9 thru January 17, 2022 {Calendar of Events}	
Sunday, January 9th, 2022 - 6 PM - {Via Zoom}	"Black Flight: The Impact of Market-Based Urban Renewal in Chattanooga" Presenter: Dr. Ken Chilton, Tennessee State University Associate Professor
Monday January 10th 2022 - 7 PM - {Via Zoom}	"2022- What's New About Voting?" Facilitator: Hamilton County Voters Coalition
Tuesday January 11th, 20 7PM - {Via Zoom}	"Community and the Courts: Criminal Justice Issues in 2022" Presenter: (CALEB) Chattanooga in Action for Love, Equality and Benevolence
Thursday January 13th, 2022 - 7 PM - {Via Zoom}	"Making Our Communities Decent & Safe Places to Live" Facilitator: Bro. Kevin Muhammad
Friday January 14th, 2022 - 6 PM - {Via Zoom}	"Riots are the Voices of the Unheard" Presenter: Pastor Charlotte S.N.N. Williams
Saturday January 15th, 2022 - 7 PM - {Via Zoom}	"Continuing the Movement for Community Control" Presenter: Community Control Now Coalition
Sunday, January 16th, 2022 - 7 PM - {Via Zoom}	"Covid-19 is not dead!" Presenter: Chattanooga-Hamilton County Branch NAACP
Monday, January 17th, 2022 - 1 PM 52nd Annual Memorial March {Virtual} Monday, January 17th, 2022 - 2 PM BELOVED COMMUNITY GATHERING	



Amanda N. Jelks
Licensed in TN and GA

JELKS LAW
423.602.2230
jelkslaw.com

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