

Sarah's problem with her weight began when she was young. "When I was nine, I weighed 109," she said. Growing up, she always weighed more than she wanted to. In her forties, she tried Weight Watchers, which worked for a while. She lost twenty-five pounds, ultimately reaching her goal weight of 145 pounds—a good weight for her height of five feet, seven inches. Eventually, however, she stopped following the plan. Over the next twenty years, she gained fifty pounds, reaching 195 pounds.

Sarah began the Shangri-La diet (the early, fructose-water version) when she was sixty-one. Over eight months, she lost forty pounds and stayed at the lower weight (Figure 1). During this time, she continued to eat three meals a day. Nor did she change her exercise routine (elliptical trainer or stationary bike for 30–40 minutes three times a week). She didn't change what she ate; she just ate less of it. She played a little game with herself. She would look at the food in front of her and think *how little can I eat and still feel satisfied?* After she started drinking fructose water, the answer was about half the amount of food she usually ate. She loved the lack of restrictions on what she could eat. "If I felt like having pizza, I'd just eat one piece—and I was satisfied with that." Rather than following rigid rules, as Weight Watchers had required, she could just eat enough to feel satisfied.

Sarah had no problem with hunger while she was drinking fructose water. Because she ate much less, food became "an event—not something you gobble down or sneak." She started drinking fructose water in September 2001; by Christmas she had lost twenty pounds. Taking a Christmas turkey out of the refrigerator, she realized "I had lost a real burden"—the weight of a large turkey. She and her friends invented a weight-loss unit called the *turkey*: one turkey = twenty pounds. Eventually she lost two turkeys. When she reached her chosen weight, she gradually cut back the fructose so that she wouldn't lose any more.

Sarah went from a size eighteen to a size twelve. She was delighted that she no longer had to shop in plus-size clothing stores. Her blood pressure went from 140/80 (borderline high) to 110/70 (normal). "My kids were in awe about what I had accomplished. It made me feel great that they were proud of me. It's certainly nice to have people compliment me on my appearance, but it's not as important as my sense of achievement. I felt I had a huge success at a battle I had been fighting my whole life."

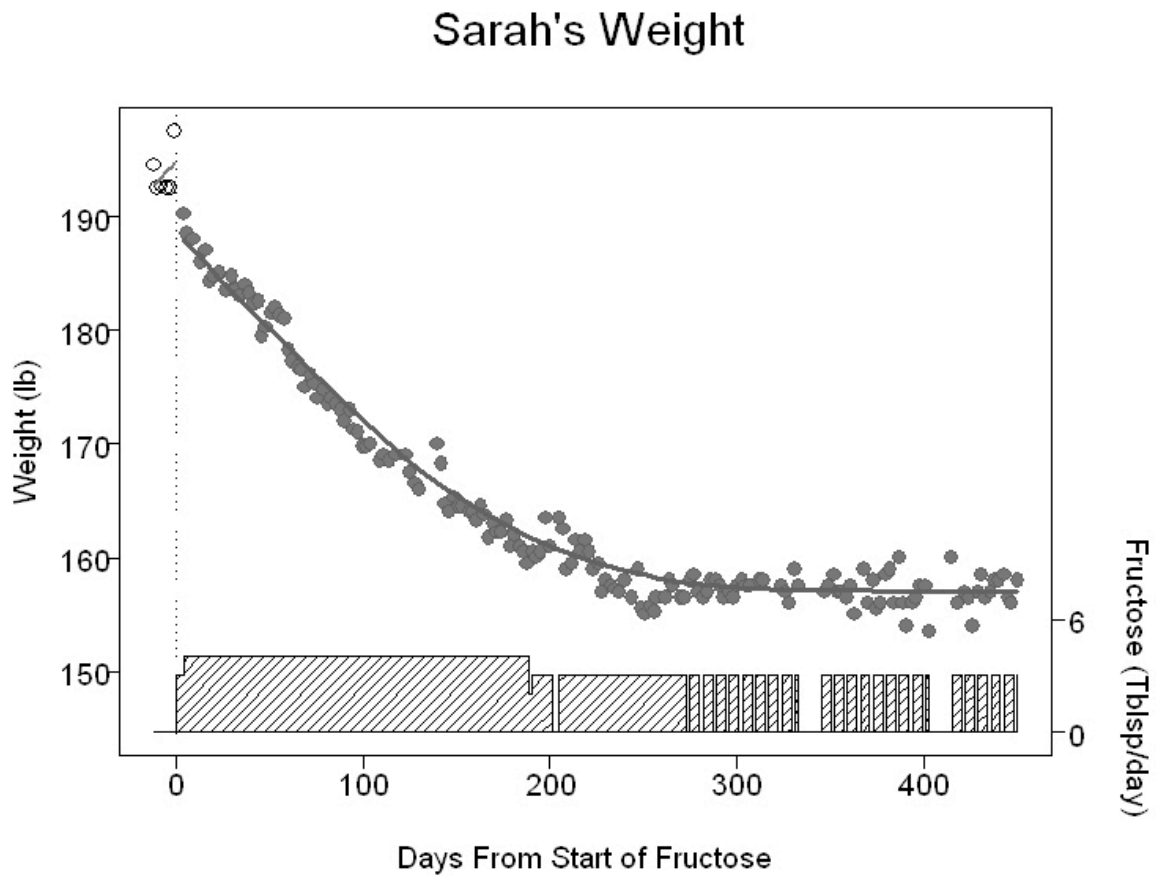


Figure 1. Sarah's weight over more than a year. The shaded area shows how much fructose she drank each day. The open circles show her weight before starting the diet.

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