

# Homemaking: Attack of the Lemonade Twists

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By Peter McKay

**P**ushers don't usually come out and say they're trying to get you hooked on something. They find a way to get you started, making it a no-brainer. Before you know it, you need a 12-step program and a sponsor.

That's the way it worked with my family and Switzer's Chewy Lemonade Twists. We were walking through the supermarket and on one of the end caps we spied a huge display of twists -- basically candy that looks like licorice but isn't. (They started it in all these different flavors because they finally realized that 90 percent of the population actually hates the taste of licorice.)

The magic hook, though, is that they were 10 bags for 10 bucks. If you do the math, that's just a buck a bag, the magic price that makes something, anything irresistible. That is why millions of Americans go into dollar stores looking for just one item and walk out with 14 bulging plastic bags, 100 bucks poorer.

My wife brought home enough Chewy Lemonade Twists to last a normal family a couple of months. But my wife and daughters made short work of it, plowing through Chewy Lemonade Twists at night, between meals and sometimes as a side dish during meals. One morning, my wife came downstairs and grabbed a couple twists before her morning coffee, walking around the kitchen with one hanging out of the side of her mouth like a cigar.

I'm no stranger to obsessive devotion to one particular food to the detriment of all others. It's

just that I prefer to concentrate my energies on a food that meets all my daily nutritional needs -- it's got no fat, no sugar, and goes with anything. It's called beer.

But my wife and daughters became fixated on the yellow menace, with one of the girls trying to convince me that they had to eat as much as they could before it went "out of season." All three of them exercise constantly -- my daughters play sports all year, and my wife runs like a Timex watch -- so it's not as if I was worried that they'd blow up like Macy's Parade balloons.

Then one night last week, as we were heading to bed, my wife turned to me and confessed she had a problem.

"I need you to do something for me," she said. "Before I go downstairs tomorrow you have to make the Chewy Lemonade Twists disappear. I don't care where they go, they just have to be gone."

**T**he next morning, I went downstairs early and gathered the remaining twists and stuffed them into my briefcase. That day I took them to the office and put them on the "table." Every office has one -- yours does too -- a table where people can bring in doughnuts, candies, even leftovers from home. Within hours, whatever it is, it'll be gone.

Office workers are like dung beetles. You could leave a box with a skull and crossbones on it, marked "Poison" in big black letters, and someone would come along and taste what's

inside. As soon as that person didn't die, the rest would line up like lemmings. It took two hours for the entire package of Chewy Lemonade Twists to vanish.

The next day, I was in the kitchen doing dishes when our 14-year-old daughter came in and started rustling through the cupboard. I could hear her frantically pushing aside (actually crushing) healthy items, and we both knew what she was looking for.

Suddenly, I heard a voice behind me that sounded vaguely like the possessed girl in "The Exorcist."

"Where," she growled, sending a chill down my spine, "are the LEMON TWISTS!"

**T**hen, this week, my wife and I were running into the supermarket to grab some last-minute items on the way home from work. She headed to the meat department, while I ran to get milk. We agreed to meet at the register.

When I got to the register, she was waiting, a guilty look on her face. She'd gotten meat, all right, but under the other items were two packages of Chewy Lemonade Twists. I frowned.

She looked at me, shook her head, and showed me her hand.

"Don't judge!" she said. "Don't judge!"

I didn't say anything, as it was late, and I had to make an important appointment. The beer store was about to close.

Homemaking is a column about the people, projects and pride that make a house a home. Peter McKay, a Ben Avon resident, is a nationally syndicated columnist with Creators Syndicate. To see past columns, go to [www.post-gazette.com](http://www.post-gazette.com). Contact him at [pghmckay@verizon.net](mailto:pghmckay@verizon.net).

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