



EVILS OF SUGAR

Why Sugar is Not Good for You

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WHY SUGAR IS NOT GOOD FOR YOU

White sugar, or sucrose, is a highly refined and bleached product from sugar cane and sugar beets. Sucrose is glucose that is bonded to fructose in the refining process that makes refined white sugar. This product has gone in and out of favor in the past, and today is mostly out of favor as a cause of disease. The problem is that it is highly addictive because of its sweetness (the fructose bond is twice as sweet as glucose alone) and it is in almost every manufactured food you can buy in the grocery store.

High-fructose corn syrup was established in the United States in the early 1970s as a replacement for the refined sugar at that time, portrayed as evil and bad for you. High-fructose corn syrup was labeled as healthier than sugar and it had a lower cost, since it was made from corn, that would help food containing it be more affordable.

Refined sugar (glucose bonded with fructose), and high-fructose corn syrup, puts too much fructose in your blood stream and causes your liver to become overburdened. Primitive man only had berries, fruits, and wild honey, if he could get it, as the sweet things in the food supply that was available to him. Our bodies evolved with that as its norm in all the eons of humankind. Primitive man absorbed his fructose in the liver and because he ate so little of it, it caused no problem in his body. It also was not pure, but came in fruits, which also had fiber, vitamins and minerals to offset the fructose.

With the advent of sugar cane refining, and later sugar beets, history was changed and now anyone could consume any amount of sugar if he could afford it. Blood sugar levels rose and the body released insulin to help the cells absorb sugar in the blood stream as high amounts of fructose over-loaded the liver and the

pancreas. Humans started to feel the effects and different diseases affected people who ate too much refined sugar. Other systems in the body were pulled into the problems with high blood sugar, and spawned new illness.

Sugar consumption takes a massive toll on your health and causes obesity and chronic disease. High amounts of fructose is the major cause of non –alcohol related fatty liver. It also raises uric acid levels in the blood which causes puts stress on your kidneys, raises your blood pressure and causes chronic inflammation that then causes other diseases. The best thing to do is to avoid all processed foods and watch your fruit intake until you have leveled out the amount of fructose in your diet. If you have developed any of the diseases caused by sugar consumption either directly or indirectly as a result of inflammation, heart disease for instance, you may not be able to control your health without being prescribed medicine for the rest of your life.

HEALTH RELATED ISSUES FROM EATING SUGAR

Eating sugar just may damage your health over the course of your life and cause an early death depending on how much you consume. Some researchers say any amount you consume is too much, given the nature of humans to abuse what makes them feel good, and other researchers say moderation is enough to keep sugar on your table. Who is right? It's a matter of opinion since no one will agree on findings from all the research that has been done.

The main difference is that fructose, found in fruits and which we almost never consume in a pure state by itself is not the same as refined white sugar or sucrose, which has glucose bonded to pure fructose. In the past, people who lived

in the parts of the world where sugar cane grew, would chew on the pieces of the cane sugar stalk to extract the sweetness, not getting the pure extracted sucrose in the quantities we consume it in today.

As sugar cane production spread by conquering civilizations and sugar refinement improved, the addition of purer sucrose/fructose sugar to our diet increased. Soon, companies were using refined sugar to make all kinds of products for our sweet tooth. In the 1800s new inventions and processes were born: Hershey chocolate and the candy industry, Jell-o, Coca-Cola and the soda industry, the invention of the Ball canning jar and the need for pure sucrose sugar to can with, and so on.

High fructose corn syrup, invented in the 1970s to circumvent the high price of refined sucrose sugar by the soda industry, and sucrose, though different in chemistry, affect the body the same way. When we eat a large volume of sugar (or HFCS) at once, say when eating a slice of frosted birthday cake, or drinking a single 12-ounce can of soda; our bodies are overwhelmed. The liver reacts by storing excess fructose as fat as fast as it can, but the overflow goes straight into our bloodstream and triggers a call for insulin to have the sugar deposited into the cells for energy production. That is the “high” from a sugar rush.

As the body tries to cope with the ocean of sugar left, the liver and kidneys try to process it out of our bodies as fast as it can, first as fat storage, then as urine. If the pancreas has not been able to produce enough insulin to rid the bloodstream of sugar, the sugary blood circulates in the body, bringing an overload of sugar to all the organs, making them work overtime. This is the sugar “low” we feel as the body cannot absorb any more sucrose or turn it into energy. Our insulin stops working to clear the bloodstream of sucrose overload and our cells become “insulin resistant”. We feel tired and want to go to sleep. The high blood sugar starts to damage our organs and body systems and functions over time.

Metabolic Syndrome is the disease that consistent high blood sugar brings on and is the underlying cause of obesity and insulin resistance, which leads to diabetes, and eventually leads to heart disease, kidney disease and cancer. No researchers

can define what amount of sugar consumption is too much or what a daily dose should be. We are on our own to eliminate refined sugar and to stop the diseases that follow sugar consumption, ourselves.

WHAT IS METABOLIC SYNDROME?

Having metabolic syndrome is the precursor to developing diabetes type 2, heart disease and cancer. Metabolic Syndrome has also been called Syndrome X, glucose intolerance, and pre-diabetes. It affects men and women equally and at least a quarter of women are affected and don't even know it.

It is estimated that over 35% of adults over 20 years old have pre-diabetes and these occurrences increase, as you grow older. The symptoms of metabolic syndrome are lack of energy, inability to lose weight even if on a diet, high levels of triglycerides and cholesterol, high blood pressure, feeling irritated or depressed all the time, and gluten intolerance. You may not even be aware you have these symptoms.

The main cause of metabolic syndrome is having a consistently high blood sugar. The body metabolizes the fructose portion from our diet (from refined sugar and high-fructose corn syrup) differently than the way the body treats carbohydrates, which are turned into glucose by the digestive system, and then dispersed to every cell in the body.

The liver deals with the fructose in the blood by first storing it as fat. This causes a fatty liver, just like an alcoholic. Then the body, in its efforts to disperse the blood sugar, calls on the pancreas to increase insulin production. After a while, the body's cells become insulin-resistant and this constant insulin production

exhausts the pancreas. Then, your blood sugar becomes out of control, and you become diabetic.

Having consistently high levels of insulin also starts to affect your heart by increasing the levels of uric acid in the bloodstream. It causes high blood pressure, high triglycerides, and high levels of LDL the bad cholesterol, and lower levels of HDL, the good cholesterol.

This compilation of health problems escalates when your blood sugar stays high. You must seek to get it under control by adopting a healthy lifestyle, eating whole foods and exercising, and medical help if you need it.

Exercising may also help you live longer. Using resistance bands and dumbbells, you can start a workout to use up the excess sugar and tone your muscles, which will burn up more blood sugar. Adding a diabetic meal plan will then maximize your workout and help you lose weight. Watching the glycemic index of the foods you eat can help, as will watching your portion size. Stick to it and in a few weeks you will see results.

HOW TO AVOID SUGAR IN YOUR DIET

The only sure way to keep sugar out of your diet is to make everything you eat from scratch yourself. You can then monitor and administer your own level of sweetness. However, it is not as easy to put this into practice. With any dietary changes you make you will need to go slow and only change one thing at a time or you risk everything you have accomplished backfiring. Sugar is addictive and you need to wean yourself from it in steps.

The first thing you need to do is deal with the cravings you get when trying to eliminate sugar from your diet. If you drink sodas or have spoonfuls of sugar in your coffee or tea, you need to nip it in the bud. Stop drinking sugary beverages that fuel your sugar cravings. Fruit juice is off limits, too, because the fructose they contain will keep your sugar cravings up.

The best way to do this is to go cold turkey and drink only water and unsweetened tea, herbal teas, and coffee. Get rid of any sweetened drinks at home so you won't be tempted. You may need to get the family onboard with this one. Do this one thing for at least 2 weeks before you try to make any other changes to your diet. This is the toughest challenge, but so worth it.

The next item is eliminating snack foods with hidden sugar, and desserts. Over the next 2-3 weeks, start eliminating foods you eat while watching TV, while on the computer, or while in the bedroom, if you snack there, too. Make a no food rule for those areas as well. You should stop buying those snack foods and throw out any that you have in the house.

This will be very difficult to go through unless you pre-plan what you will do when you crave these foods. Having a plan will help you to achieve success. You should have some flavored water on hand, but be sure to check the label for sugar in any form. Also, find some healthy snacks you can eat and stock up. Unsalted nuts, frozen grapes, frozen banana slices, frozen berries, and the fresh versions of these as well, cut up veggies or cheese cubes and sticks stocked in the refrigerator will all help you to keep to your new eating lifestyle.

Remember that salty snacks can have hidden sugar, as can crackers. Make it a rule that no new snacks can come into the house unless they are checked first. Beware of visitors leaving snacks behind when they leave and politely ask them to take their snacks with them. You need to be serious in your resolve because any backsliding will make you have to start from the beginning.

The next 4-6 weeks focus on reducing carbohydrates in your daily diet. Use portion control and complex carbohydrates as the back bone of your new eating plan. Think about reducing the amount of carbohydrate in your meal and

substituting it with more protein. An example would be to eat half the amount of pasta you would normally eat and making sure that the sauce has meat in it. Substituting protein for carbohydrate is a good plan. Making small changes to your family meals calls for preplanning and resolve, but if you go slowly, you will make everyone's health better. Rethink all your recipes and make them healthier.

When you have reshaped your eating habits, you next want to focus on the little things like condiments and flavor enhancers. You can do things like buy organic ketchup and use it sparingly, no need to drench your food anymore. Hopefully you have found that eliminating most of the sugar you consume has helped your taste buds to appreciate the flavor your food has. Keep reading labels and look for hidden sugars. Words ending in "ose" are some hidden sugars that you can start with. Be happy that you are not craving sugar as you first did and that you have probably even lost some weight.

Detoxing from sugar has benefits in increased energy and clear thinking and a host of health problems you have avoided. You can start exercising more as you feel energy returning. Do what you can to prevent returning to your old pattern of eating. Sugar addiction can take a quick hold on you and pull you in quickly. Keep refining what you eat as you go along. You can be proud that you have eliminated much of the sugar you had been eating in your old life and can claim that it is possible as you are the proof.

NATURAL ALTERNATIVES FOR SWEETENING

When it comes to finding healthy substitutes for highly refined bleached white sugar, you have many natural choices. Each incorporates its own unique color, fragrance, and taste into any food in which you use it.

Molasses is the by-product of the cane sugar refining process. It is made from the syrup left after the majority of sucrose has been crystallized and removed. It contains trace amounts of vitamins and all the minerals of the sugar cane plant. It is used in baking for its color and flavor in things like gingerbread and molasses cookies.

Honey is the earliest sweetener used by man. It is made from flower nectar gathered by the bees and can be bought in its unrefined state. The clear golden form you buy in the grocery store is boiled, filtered, and sometimes thinned with sugar syrup. Real honey is cloudy with “bits” floating in it. The bits are pollen, pieces of flowers, and pieces of wax comb that the honey came from. Sometimes, if you buy organic honey, it is so thick it is almost solid. You can also buy honeycomb, cut from the hive in its most unrefined state. You can seek out local beekeepers everywhere and buy your honey direct from them.

Agave Syrup is made from the sap from the core of the of the Mexican agave cactus. The syrup is not as thick as honey and mixes into liquids easier. Agave syrup is 25% sweeter than white sugar and as the color darkens, its flavor increases. Use agave syrup as you would honey. Beware agave syrup that is so refined it is just like sugar syrup. Read the labels.

Rice Syrup and Barley Malt are both made from soaked and sprouted grains that are dried and then boiled into syrup. These sweeteners are more slowly digested than white sugar, and will not cause high spikes in your blood sugar.

Maple Syrup is the next most unrefined sweetener that is twice as sweet as white sugar. Possessing a unique caramel-like taste, it is made from the boiled down sap of the sugar maple tree.

Palm Sugar and Coconut Sugar are made in the same way, from various palm trees that have a sucrose rich sap. It is a less refined sugar that is sold in many South American and Asian countries.

Date Sugar is made from dried ground dates and sold in health food stores as a brown sugar substitute to provide sweetness in baking recipes.

Stevia Found in parts of South America, Stevia Rebaudiana is an herb that grows wild as a small shrub. Glycosides, found in its leaves, include up to 10% Stevioside and that accounts for its incredible sweetness. You can buy it in liquid and power form. It may have a bitter or metallic edge to the taste to some people, but is sweeter than refined sugar.

CONCLUSION

If you are dealing with any current health issue look to see if it may be caused or hindered by you consuming too much sugar. A great example of this is if you have arthritis. Your inflammation issues could be caused by sugar. Try eliminating it from your diet and see if your inflammation subsides.

While we are not saying that you should never eat sugar again. Cut down as much as possible, and become aware of how much sugar you are eating. Try to select a healthier alternative when possible and keep track of how your body reacts.

If you suddenly start gaining weight, not sleeping or lose your energy, you may be starting to include too much sugar in your diet. Remember to look for those hidden sugars included in sauces and condiments. Look for homemade recipes that you could use instead.