

*Sweet
Surrender*

Shake Your Sugar Habit



 CommonHealth

Chances are you already know that eating too much sugar isn't good for you.

Are you overdoing it?

Americans average about 270 calories of sugar each day, that's about 17 teaspoons (85 grams) a day. Recommendations for men are no more than 9 teaspoons/45 grams (~150 calories) of added sugar per day, and women should consume no more than 6 teaspoons/30 grams (~100 calories). One teaspoon is equal to about 5 grams.



Let's Clear Up Confusion



Sugary drinks, candy, baked goods, and sweetened dairy products are sources of added sugar, but so are breads, tomato sauce, and energy bars. Look for ingredients like corn syrup, agave nectar, palm sugar, cane juice, or sucrose.

No matter what it's called, **sugar is sugar.**

Other Names for Added Sugar

According to the FDA, added sugars include sugars that are added during the processing of foods, foods packaged as sweeteners, sugars from syrups and honey, and sugars from concentrated fruit or vegetable juices. Added sugars do not include naturally occurring sugars that are found in milk, fruits, and vegetables. If these appear in the ingredients list of your favorite beverage, you are drinking a sugar-sweetened beverage.

Cane juice

Dextrose

Fruit juice concentrates

Glucose

Honey

Maple syrup and syrup

Raw sugar

Sucrose

Corn syrup

Fructose

Fruit nectars (such as agave nectar)

High fructose corn syrup

Malt syrup

Molasses

Sugar

Sugar cane

How Did Sugar Consumption Get So Out of Control



01



Beginning of mankind

Processed sugar was not present.

02



1647

Sugar industry took off.

03



1700

Average sugar consumption is about 4 pounds per year.

04



1800

Consumption rose to 18 pounds per year.

05



1900

Average American consumption is 60 pounds per year.



Today, the average American consumes 150 -170 pounds of refined sugar per year. 30 pounds would be the average recommended level.

Food Science Behind Sugar

We are born with a sweet tooth that makes us crave the breast milk needed to survive.



Food manufacturers learn that added sugars can make many foods tastier.

Manufacturers learn added sugars also increase appetite and override the satiety-regulating system.



Eating processed sugar triggers the release of opioids and Dopamine in the brain, just like potentially addictive drugs do.

Sugar is added to all kinds of foods, even foods that are not considered sweet like breads and condiments.



People consume significantly more sugar than they realize. Sugar and food consumption both increase.

All About Added Sugars

Added sugars are sugars that are added during the processing of foods, during preparation, or at the table. Some examples are sucrose or dextrose added during food processing as well as honey used to sweeten tea at your kitchen table.

Fortunately, “added sugars” are listed separately on Nutrition Facts panels underneath the line for “total sugars,” making it easier to determine whether or not your food contains any added sugars.



The sugars found naturally in fruit and dairy products don't have the same negative effect and are lower in fructose than sugary processed foods. "In fruit, that sugar is bound up in the fiber, vitamins, and other nutrients," says Andrea Dunn, a certified diabetes care and education specialist at the Cleveland Clinic.

Let's be clear, there is a big difference between eating an orange and drinking a glass of orange juice.



Excess Sugar Leads to Health Issues



High Blood Pressure



Heart Disease



Brain Function



Weight Gain



Diabetes Risk



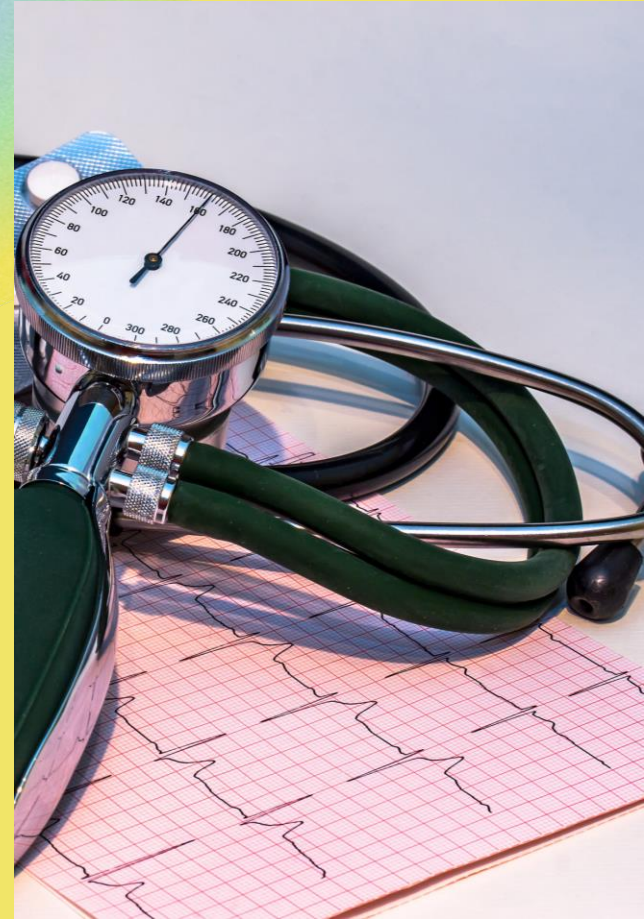
Aging Skin

High Blood Pressure

The force of blood pushing against the wall of the blood vessels

Changes to blood sugar levels have a larger impact on blood pressure than consuming salt. Excessive added sugars, especially high fructose corn syrup, lead to increased inflammation in the body.

Replace processed foods with whole foods such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.





Heart Disease

Eating less sugar can help lower blood pressure, a major risk factor for heart disease.

When you eat or drink too much sugar, the extra insulin in your bloodstream can affect the arteries all over your body. It causes the walls to get stiff and inflamed.

This puts stress on your heart, which may lead to heart attacks or heart failure.

How Does this Impact Your Brain?

**The brain releases
a feel good
chemical called
Dopamine.**

When sugar is
consumed in excess,
the brain begins to
crave it more
frequently.

**Consuming sugar
will give you a
burst of energy
due to rapid raising
blood sugar.**

Ultimately, it
impacts mood by
leading to a mid day
"slump."

**Too much sugar
may lead to an
increased risk of
depression in
adults.**

Opt for the
consumption of whole
fruits and vegetables
as they don't release
as much Dopamine.

Excess Sugar Can Lead to Weight Gain

Consuming sugary beverages is associated with weight gain and increased risk of Type 2 Diabetes. Excessive fructose consumption may cause resistance to Leptin, an important hormone that regulates hunger and tells your body to stop eating.

Increased Risk for Type 2 Diabetes

Diabetes is a leading cause of mortality and reduced life expectancy.

Excessive sugar consumption has been associated with an increased risk of Diabetes. Eating large amounts of sugar contributes to weight gain and increased body fat — both are risks for developing Diabetes.



Aging Skin

Wrinkles are a natural sign of skin aging. However, poor food choices can worsen wrinkles and speed up the skin aging process.

Consuming a diet high in refined carbs and sugar may cause your skin to age prematurely.



Cutting Sugar Can Improve Health

The USDA recommends limiting added sugars to less than 10% of your daily calories. Meanwhile, the American Heart Association recommends no more than 6 teaspoons/30 grams (100 calories) of added sugar for women and 9 teaspoons/45 grams (150 calories) for men. Currently, adults are consuming nearly 17 teaspoons/85 grams.



How can YOU cut back on your sugar intake?

Target Your Weaknesses

In the U.S., most added sugar comes from the following five sources: sweetened beverages; desserts and sweet snacks; sweetened coffees and teas; candy and other sugars; and breakfast cereals and granola bars. **Figure out which category you get the most added sugar from and start cutting back there.** You'll get the greatest reduction in overall sugar and boost in health benefits. (Eating Well, 15 Ways to Eat Less Sugar, August 2021)





Aim for High Quality Carbs

Many packaged products—tortillas, granola bars—fall into a nutritional gray zone. They may be made with whole grains and still contain lots of sugar. Even a product with "no added sugars" can be questionable if it replaces sugar with refined starches that have no fiber and affect your body similarly to added sugars. ***Evaluate overall carb quality, not just sugar content.***

One simple way to do that: use the 10-to-1 metric. This means ***for every 10 grams of total carbohydrate that a product contains, 1 gram or more should be fiber.***

Don't Drink Your Sugar

Soda is full of sugar, but other drinks may slip past your nutritional radar. Coffee drinks can have 34 grams of added sugar, and one 20-ounce sports drink packs as much as 48 grams—which is just about 100% of your daily limit. Juices and smoothies are also usually made with added sugar. Sweetened drinks are the largest source of added sugars. ***Swap out one sweetened beverage a day for water or flavored seltzer.***



Watch Out for Sneaky Sources of Sugar

Sugar isn't just added to make foods taste better--it is also a preservative that extends shelf life. It makes pastries tender and helps breads to rise. This is why food manufacturers add sugar not just to traditionally sweet foods, but to tons of savory ones as well.

Another reason to read and compare labels!

Condiments, sauces, and dressings



Soups and broths



Processed, packaged, or frozen foods




Gradually Reduce Sugar

Be sure to reduce your sugar intake slowly to make it easier on yourself. Try reducing sugar by 5 to 20% every week—equivalent to deleting about 20 to 60 teaspoons or 4 to 12 grams a day. This will give you some time to allow your perception of sweetness to change.



Get Enough Sleep

The average adult needs between 7 and 9 hours a night—yet more than 35% of Americans get less than that. Missing out on sleep can increase your hunger hormones, making you crave sugary foods.



5 More Ways to Cut Back

01



Know how much you consume

Determine your average daily consumption and try cutting out one item a week. This will help your overall intake.

02



Start reading labels

Sugar sneaks into "healthy foods," so be sure to know sugar has many names.

03



Roast your veggies

Rather than sautéing your veggies and adding dressings, try to roast them and caramelize the natural sugars.

04



Add your own

Buy unsweetened products and add your own sugar to control how much sugar is added.

05



Rethink recipes

Experiment with using less sugar than the recipe suggests. Limiting sugar helps your palate adjust.



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WEB RESOURCES

How Does Too Much Sugar Affect Your Body? (www.webmd.com)

The Bitter Truth About Too Much Sugar (www.aarp.org)

11 Reasons Why Too Much Sugar is Bad for You (www.healthline.com)

Get the Facts: Added Sugars (www.cdc.gov)

How Much Sugar is in Popular Drinks? (www.thediabetescouncil.com)

Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth, _Rev Your Bev (www.revyourbev.com)

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