

Do You Crave... SUGAR & SWEETENERS?

Many individuals have questions about sugar and natural sugar alternatives. Increased sugar consumption is a well-known contributing factor to behavioral challenges and it is a leading cause of many other health conditions as well. If you have chronic sinusitis, migraines, headaches or back pain, it is very important for you to understand why you need to be a label reader.

The average American consumes 149 pounds of refined sugar each year. If your body were to convert this, it would add 79 pounds of fat. By calculating the amount of sugar that comes from soda consumption, it is easy to see why our children are in a diminished state of health. Most Americans eat too much refined sugar, which travels through your mouth and stomach tissues right to your bloodstream. This wreaks havoc on your blood sugar levels and your immune system.

Our human instinct to seek sweeteners is so strong that an unborn baby will make swallowing motions when its mother is injected with a sweetener. Our intense instinct for sweeteners causes us to seek out sweet breast milk. Even in adulthood, sugar continues to be a common craving. How many of you had something sweet to eat within the last 24-48 hours? If not, do you plan on having something sweet very shortly?

Sweet, appealing foods have become hopelessly intertwined with pleasure and euphoria. These foods are alluring, symbolizing reward or comfort. After a hard day at work or school, devouring a candy bar seems to be a valid reward (or a survival mechanism). Sugar causes our brains to release endorphins, a "feel good" chemical. Yet, it is not white sugar or derivatives that your body wants -- it wants complex carbohydrates that are as whole as mother's milk.

All sugars are not created equal. Some would say there is no differentiation between natural or refined sugars because our bodies use both for energy. Sugars can be either simple or complex carbohydrates. Natural sugars are almost always complex carbohydrates; white (or refined) sugars are almost always simple carbohydrates. Complex carbohydrates (like those in beans, fruit, vegetables and whole grains) are made of long chains of simple sugar. Your body digests them more slowly and provides your blood with a more balanced sugar supply. Whatever sugar your body doesn't immediately need is stored in your liver as glycogen, an energy reserve for a rainy day.

White sugar is a human invention, not a gift from nature. In 1795, Louisiana farmers devised a cheaper way to granulate sugar on a large scale, which made white sugar available to the masses.

Complex carbohydrates give you all the energy you need. When you are looking for something to satisfy your sweet tooth, however, turn to natural sweeteners like rice and barley malt syrups that are 50 percent complex carbohydrates. Our body's digestive enzymes break these two types of sugars down to glucose, a sugar that the body uses for energy.

The difference between simple and complex carbohydrates is how quickly each enters the blood stream and how each affects insulin in blood sugar levels, a real key to the reason why many believe we have major problems with obesity in our society today.

Here is an example of the vicious cycle of refined sugar cravings:

First: Energy rush. Simple sugars go directly into your bloodstream, giving you a temporary high.

Second: There is a pancreatic panic. You may be feeling good, but your high blood sugar is causing your pancreas to scream "DANGER!" There is an enormous response from your pancreas. It dumps huge amounts of insulin into your blood, bringing your blood sugar level down again.

Third: This rush of insulin causes a fast crash. Blood sugar levels swing too low too fast, leading to the sugar

blues (leaving one with fatigue and irritability and perhaps a hyperactive response).

You are trapped in a sugar rush cycle. Your energy crash will stimulate your need for another sugar rush to elevate your energy to normalcy. The vicious cycle continues.

There are long-term health hazards associated with refined sugar. Remember, sugar depletes your body of essential minerals and B vitamins. Refined sugar is actually a stripped carbohydrate. When sugar cane -- the raw material for sugar -- is turned into refined sugar, it is depleted of minerals and nutritional elements. Eating a depleted or stripped carbohydrate forces your body to use its own vitamins and minerals for digestion. Over time, excessive consumption of refined sugars can lead to nutritional deficiencies and serious problems like Osteoporosis, gum disease and arthritis.

Your body can't produce enough digestive enzymes without the right balance of minerals and B vitamins. Compensating for your sweet tooth by consuming extra healthy foods may be a losing battle since your body is no longer digesting or assimilating food efficiently. This is another real challenge for children with hyperactivity, since they are already consuming food that is nutritionally stripped.

Notice: Eating sugar puts stress on digestion. Poor digestion can lead to allergies. Sugar consumption results in poor health!

What you eat is your choice! Why not choose to modify your diet and regain your health. What is good health worth? This is a question we all need to ask ourselves. How much money would you take for your right arm? Your improved health may be as easy as making a few simple dietary choices. Rest assured... it's not yesterday's hamburger alone that raised your triglycerides. It's your dietary lifestyle.

To learn more, visit our website www.nwcdrg.com

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