

Life Can Still Be Sweet Without Sugar

Glucose is a primary fuel for the body and is produced from sugars (carbohydrates) in foods. The body will extract and manufacture the glucose it needs from carbohydrates in foods that we eat.

Some sources of glucose are health-promoting. Complex carbohydrates contain sugars in forms the body needs and can use while also maintaining a healthy state. Complex carbohydrates are found in whole, unrefined grains, vegetables, whole fruits, legumes, and tubers. These provide glucose for the body in a form that allows it to maintain healthy “blood sugar” levels, especially when combined with healthy sources of protein and fat. Thus, complex carbohydrates are a good source of fuel for the body.

Refined carbohydrates are detrimental to health. They come from foods that have been processed into forms that no longer resemble their original, whole state. Refined carbohydrates quickly raise the blood sugar level after ingestion, causing stress to the adrenals, liver, and pancreas and promoting health problems such as obesity, cancer, heart disease, and diabetes.

Refined carbohydrates include refined flours, white rice, fruit juices, and all sweeteners, such as white sugar, corn syrup, fructose, and cane juice. One or more of these are found in most processed, boxed, canned, frozen, commercially-prepared, and fast foods.

How to Reduce Your Intake of Refined Carbohydrates

Many people find it quite challenging to reduce their intake of refined carbohydrates. White sugar, in particular, seems to have an addictive quality that makes it hard to avoid. Here are some tips that will help you to reduce your intake of refined carbohydrates more easily.

- Eat a *moderate* amount of whole grains every day, if eating grains does not trigger symptoms. Whole grains are accompanied well by fresh raw or lightly-cooked vegetables, high-quality protein, and healthy, fats, such as butter and olive oil.
- If you have blood type O, you should get most of your carbohydrates from vegetables and fruits, with only small amounts from grains.
- If you do not tolerate some grains, then limit your intake to those that are well-tolerated.
- Balance your complex carbohydrate intake with high-quality protein, particularly concentrated sources, such as grass-fed meats, free-range poultry and eggs, wild-caught fish, and whole, preferably raw, dairy products.

- While your taste buds are acclimating, you can emphasize sweeter grains and vegetables, such as brown rice, carrots, sweet potatoes, yams, and winter squash.
- If you regularly include meat in your diet, it is especially important to get some complex carbohydrates for a healthy source of glucose. Meat does not provide a good, direct source of glucose in the diet.
- Make sure that you are getting plenty of B vitamins, vitamin C, zinc, and chromium in your diet and/or from supplements. A food-based vitamin-mineral combination is an excellent source. Some people may benefit from additional amounts of these nutrients, in addition to what is in a multiple.
- If you are healthy, you can eat honey and other natural sweeteners in small quantities. Keep in mind, however, that these are a rich source of simple carbohydrates, even though they are “natural.” From a health standpoint, the most gentle sweeteners are stevia, barley malt syrup, and brown rice syrup.
- Most people find it easier not to eat any sweets at all, because even a taste augments the desire for them. Long-term success is often easier with abstaining altogether, so that, eventually, the taste for sweets is lost. You can experiment and decide what you want your own approach to be.
- Dilute all fruit and vegetable juices half and half with water; this goes for kids, too. Better yet, avoid juices completely, due to the high sugar content.
- Begin juicing fruits and vegetables with your own “champion juicer,” your teeth. Thorough chewing slowly draws the sugar out of the food, dilutes it so it is not too sweet, and prepares it for healthful absorption and use by the body.
- Moderate your intake of dried fruit, which is a rich source of simple sugars. Reconstitute all dried fruit by soaking it for at least 24 hours in fresh water before eating.
- Read labels. Look for words like sucrose, dextrose, maltose, fructose, cane sugar, corn syrup, turbinado, etc. These are all forms of simple sugars.
- Snack ideas: slices of raw milk cheese, a hard-boiled egg, whole grain bagels with nut butter and apple slices, whole fresh fruit with unsweetened whole milk yogurt, homemade whole-grain muffins with applesauce as the sweetener, fresh baby carrots, or a few fresh figs with toasted almonds are only a few of the many delicious and satisfying possibilities.
- Over time, concentrate on eating a health-promoting diet and your desire for sweets will lessen. Concentrate on what you can have rather than on what you are trying to avoid. Enjoy the rich abundance of foods that are available, while being patient with yourself and doing the best you can to eat well. Eventually it will become easy to avoid refined sugars. You will lead a longer, healthier life because of it.

Resources

Fallon, Sally. *Nourishing Traditions: The Cookbook that Challenges Politically-Correct Nutrition and the Diet Dictocrats*. Washington, D.C.: New Trends Publishing, 2007.

- A nutrition book and cookbook, all in one. Explains the importance of eating a traditional diet if you want to reach your full health potential.

Weston A. Price Foundation website brochure. Go to www.westonaprice.org and click on Enter. Then click on Brochures (in the upper left corner), then click on WAPF Guidelines and Membership Booklet: "Principles of Healthy Diets."

- A clear outline of dietary guidelines that support health and protect against the development of diseases.

Lair, Cynthia. *Feeding the Whole Family*. San Diego, California: LuraMedia; 1994.

- A cookbook with recipes for delicious, nourishing, whole foods.