

August 2013

# HomeCures

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## The Sweetener Debate



How  
Sweet  
It Isn't!

Sweet Surrender

Sugar: Sweet  
White Poison

Why Diabetes is  
Becoming Epidemic

# HomeCures *That Work*

## For Sweeteners

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## How Sweet It Isn't!

By Dr. Scott Saunders

**M**y objective in this article is to convince each of you that the sweets in your diet are toxic. As the late Jack LaLanne, who was fit and active into his late 90s and hadn't eaten processed sugar in over 80 years said, "If it tastes good, spit it out!"

We are told about "moderation in all things..."

- But what if something is damaging to your cells and causes aging and disease?
- Then how much cyanide should we take in every day?
- What about arsenic, lead, or mercury? What if they tasted really good, or made us feel good?
- Then what is the moderation limit?
- Would we then consume these toxins until they caused disease or death?

Yet, this is exactly how we view moderation of sweet things.

The convincing reason I take this position is because I deal with the results of toxic effects of sweeteners in the diet every day. People who eat sweets come to me for treatment of preventable diseases. As sugar consumption increases, so does disease. "Addict" is how many of my patients describe themselves. In fact, in one study, rats preferred sugar and saccharine to cocaine! (1) Perhaps the addict description fits!

# Sugar

In 1970, the average person ate around 30 pounds of sugar per year! However, today the average American eats his weight in sugar every year! This is because sugar is now added to everything. There are no longer just sweet foods and salty foods; now even the “salty” foods are filled with sugar. The taste of sweet gets people coming back for more and more. Sugar sells! But, sugar isn’t healthy — even in small amounts.

The toxicity of sugar is similar to alcohol. When a person drinks alcohol it goes to the liver and causes damage — always. Any chemical that causes damage to cells in the body is called a toxin, or poison. There is no lower limit to prevent damage because every drop is toxic. People continue to drink alcohol and don’t notice the toxic effects because the liver regenerates rather quickly. Cirrhosis, or scarring of the liver, only happens when the amount of alcohol consumed exceeds the ability for the liver to detoxify it.

It’s easy for us to understand that alcohol is a toxin because we all know alcoholics and the damage it can cause. What is less understood is that sugar is just as toxic. Every little bit of sugar is addictive and toxic to the body as alcohol. We don’t notice small amounts of sugar poison in our body because the damage is minute; nevertheless, sugar is disruptive and damaging. When the body uses sugar for energy the by-product is inflammation caused by free radicals. As we continue to eat sugar, or eat more of it, we may begin to notice some of the toxic effects:

- Inflammation
- Pain
- Hypertension
- Elevated cholesterol
- Gout
- Atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries)
- Aging
- Diabetes
- Neuropathy (nerve damage)
- Metabolic syndrome
- Obesity
- Yeast (Candida)
- Caries (tooth decay)
- Arthritis
- Nephropathy (kidney failure)
- Retinopathy (blindness)



If we start thinking about it, then we may know people who have had amputations of feet, have gone blind, or are on dialysis because of eating toxic sugar. These diseases were considered by the ancients to be the diseases of kings. Only royalty could get enough sugar to cause gout or diabetes; peasants didn’t have enough money to buy such things. Now, just the opposite is true. Everyone can afford sweets. In fact, sugary treats are cheaper than real food so those who have less money are more likely to be stricken with disease.

In using the word “sugar,” it should be clear that I mean all natural sweeteners including, but not limited to:

- Sucrose, or white sugar, table sugar, brown sugar, and all cane and beet sugar derivatives

- Honey
- Molasses
- Maple syrup
- Corn syrup, including high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS), or corn sweetener
- Fructose
- Glucose
- Brown rice syrup
- Tapioca syrup

There are so many natural sweeteners I won't name them all, but you get the idea. In spite of being "natural," these still cause problems in the body for the reasons I'll discuss later.

## Artificial sweeteners

Because people started worrying about calories, we were told that we could imbibe non-caloric sweeteners with impunity and not get the toxic ill-effects of all those calories from the sugars above. They were wrong!

An eight-year study by Sharon P. Fowler, MPH, and colleagues at the University of Texas Health Science Center, San Antonio showed, again, that diet drinks cause more weight gain than sugar.

"What didn't surprise us was that total soft drink use was linked to overweight and obesity," Fowler tells WebMD. "What was surprising was when we looked at people only drinking diet soft drinks, their risk of obesity was even higher."

For *regular* soft-drink drinkers, the risk of becoming overweight or obese was:

- 26% for up to 1/2 can each day
- 30.4% for 1/2 to one can each day
- 32.8% for 1 to 2 cans each day
- 47.2% for more than 2 cans each day.

For *diet* soft-drink drinkers, the risk of becoming overweight or obese was:

- 36.5% for up to 1/2 can each day
- 37.5% for 1/2 to one can each day
- 54.5% for 1 to 2 cans each day
- 57.1% for more than 2 cans each day.

For each can of diet soft drink consumed each day, a person's risk of obesity went up 41%. (2)

We will discuss below why the rate of obesity increases with consumption of diet soda. It's not a mystery. Cattle ranchers know this well. Just prior to slaughter, ranchers fatten-up their cattle with neotame (a more potent form of aspartame). Though neotame has *no calories*, it causes the cattle to put on much more fat, bringing in a higher price.

## Natural sweets

We think we may be safe by getting off of the processed sugar and chemical sweeteners... but we still have natural sweets like fruit or juice. I'm sorry to burst your bubble, but all sweet things increase the blood sugar and have effects on insulin, adrenal hormones and weight gain.

I am suggesting that everything you've been told about "natural" sweeteners isn't true. We are told that stevia, for example, is good for you.

- Yes, stevia is natural.
- Yes, stevia is a plant extract.
- Yes, stevia doesn't have calories.
- In spite of all this, however, stevia still has the ill effects of all things sweet.

Even fruit and juice cause obesity. Let me explain:

A 22-year-old woman who had a hormone abnormality came in because she was gaining weight on a 1000-Calorie-per-day diet. I didn't believe it so I had her write down everything she ate for two weeks. When she returned, her record showed she was absolutely correct! She had both gained weight and was eating only 1000 calories per day. However, we found that she was eating lots of fruit between her small meals, which was keeping her insulin levels high and making her hold on to fat. Once she gave up the fruit, she started losing weight.

Even natural sweets will make you put on fat. This happens because the hormone insulin tells your cells to burn only sugar, not fat. Those people who are "insulin resistant" often need to give up anything that tastes sweet. The reason for this is because there are taste buds in your intestines that detect sweetness and release insulin into your blood.

## **Hormones make you fat!**

Your metabolism is controlled by hormones. This is why you could have two people eating exactly the same things and one gets fatter while the other gets thinner. How could this be if "counting calories" worked? Well, take a look around. Obesity is rampant, and I would like to tell you why. It's the hormones, primarily insulin and cortisol.

In other words, all these years we have been counting calories and getting fatter for a reason. We were told that fat has nine calories per gram, and sugar only four so it would make sense that we should eat more sugar and less fat. So, as people listened to this and applied it, they became fatter and fatter. All the doctors and nutrition experts are scratching their heads and wondering, "WHY?" Now we know. It's not the calories, it's the hormones!

Let's look at the effects of insulin:

- Insulin tells all the cells in your body to use sugar for energy.
- Insulin stops your cells from using fat for energy.
- Insulin tells the fat cells to bring in fat.
- Insulin stops the fat cells from letting go of fat.

Now, let's look at cortisol, the stress hormone:

- Cortisol makes you more resistant to insulin.
- Cortisol raises your insulin levels, causing all of the problems above.
- Cortisol makes you resistant to leptin, so you don't feel satiated.
- Cortisol stimulates more ghrelin so you feel hungry and crave starch, sugar, and sweets.

If you understand this and know that artificial sweeteners are hundreds to thousands of times

sweeter than sugar, then you will understand why they stimulate more insulin to be produced causing more weight gain. This is why diet drinks with no calories cause more weight gain than sugary drinks. It's the hormones!

## Home Cures That Work!

Ok, now that you know why everything that tastes sweet causes metabolic problems, including obesity, you should stop counting calories and start changing your hormones.

### Cortisol

There are several preparations designed to keep the cortisol levels down. Most of these are herbs that are called "adaptagens" because they help the adrenal glands "adapt" to stress. A few of these include:

- Ginseng
- Ashwagandha
- Licorice root
- Eluthero
- Phosphatidylserine (PS)

Lowering stress is important for keeping the cortisol down. I'm not going to go into a long diatribe about stress-reduction. However, I will say that any stimulants increase stress hormones and may, in some people, contribute to increased cortisol:

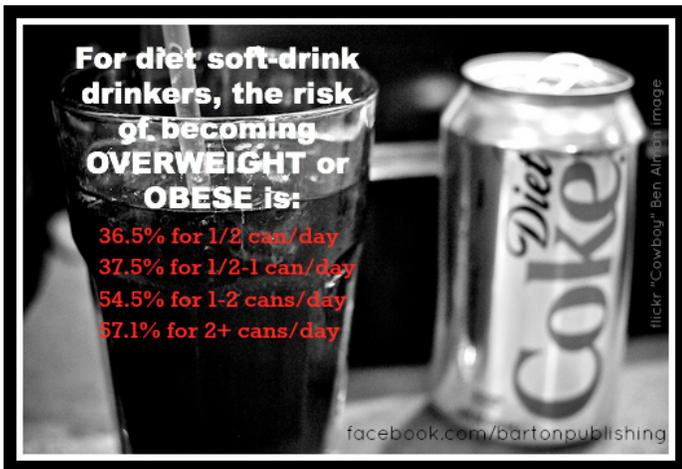
- Caffeine
- Energy drinks
- Sugar

### Insulin

I have found that the easiest way for a person to get off the obesity merry-go-round is to cut out all things sweet. The principles of insulin secretion are approximated by the following formula:

- Every time you eat, even a little snack, you release insulin.
- If you eat carbohydrates (starch), then you release about twice as much insulin.
- If you include something sweet-tasting, then you release three times as much insulin.

Now, this isn't exact. Those who are insulin-resistant may release many times more, but this is a guide to help you understand why you should avoid sweets.



So, based on these principles, we could make a plan:

- Eat fewer meals, avoid snacks and fast periodically.
- Eat less starch and don't eat any processed grains or prepared cereals.
- Avoid the taste of sweet.

Are you convinced? Did I pop all the bubbles? Do you understand why our nation is getting more obese and having more health problems? If you want to have a healthy body and avoid all the diseases of aging and obesity, then you must avoid toxic sugar — and especially avoid all artificial sweeteners.

The simple way to look at this, and the way I personally do it, is to cut-out *all* processed sugars, starches, and artificial sweeteners (including Stevia). This is what Jack LaLanne did as well. Drink only water. If you crave something sweet, eat fruit that is in season, which also has lots of nutrients and fiber. Avoid juice that you don't make yourself. But, be careful, too much fruit can make you as fat as any other sweet thing.

I found that getting off of sweet things has increased my enjoyment of foods. Things that I didn't expect, such as being able to taste the sweetness of a raw almond, or a carrot. I get a good cherry and find it better than candy. Every cherry has a slightly different flavor – try getting that from Skittles or M&M's!

### ***Do you notice the toxic effect of sugar on your body?***

(1) Ahmed SH, Guillem K, Vandaele Y. Sugar addiction: pushing the drug-sugar analogy to the limit. *Curr Opin Clin Nutr Metab Care*. 2013 May 27. 2013

(2) <http://www.webmd.com/diet/news/20050613/drink-more-diet-soda-gain-more-weight>



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# The Sweetener Debate

By Amanda Box

**H**aving been in the natural health industry for over 12 years, I have seen the rise and fall of different “healthy” sweeteners. Certain sweeteners fly off the shelves, then another takes its place as the latest fad.

There is much controversy and debate surrounding what sweeteners are safe and truly healthy. For example, one health guru may swear agave nectar is the nectar of the gods, while another says it’s a cursed food choice. It is honestly hard to sort through it the controversy over natural sweeteners and can be overwhelming for many people to choose what is a healthy alternative to white sugar.

My goal in this article is to give you a description, and my option, on the most popular sweeteners on the market today.

Not everything on the shelves of a health food store is truly healthy—especially when it comes to sweeteners. You see, white sugar isn’t the only bad guy. Alternative forms of sugar, although safer than white sugar, still affect your blood glucose levels. It’s really can be too easy to overdo it when it comes to sugars and sweeteners.

The key to every sweetener is moderation. Eating a bunch of honey, for example, can do just as much damage as eating a lot of white sugar. As natural as honey is, it can still spike your blood sugar. If eaten too often, excessive amounts of honey can set you up for hypoglycemia or diabetes! The rule of thumb is take caution with anything sweet. Treating yourself once in awhile is not going to kill you. But don’t let any kind of sweet get the best of you, or your health!

# The 4 Top Sugar Alternatives

Below are what I believe to be the four safest and healthiest sweeteners on the market today. Like I mentioned above, they still need to be used in moderation. However, these alternative natural sweeteners are leaps and bound above white sugar and some even offer other medicinal benefits.

## 4. Xylitol

This sweetener is classified as a sugar alcohol and is made from sugar cane. Although it tastes like sugar, it doesn't affect your blood glucose levels. Believe it or not, but xylitol already exists naturally inside the human body. Our bodies make xylitol from different food sources.

Xylitol is actually medicinal, helping to prevent tooth decay. Many toothpastes and gums now include xylitol for both sweetness and cavity prevention. It can prevent ear infections as well, by inhibiting bacteria inside the ear.

This sweetener measures just like sugar when baking so it is a great alternative for those who want a sweet tasting dessert without the blood sugar spike. The only downside to xylitol is that it can cause gas, bloating, and even diarrhea if consumed in excess because it absorbs water in the colon.

## 3. Raw Honey

Having been consumed for centuries, honey is probably the oldest and most natural sweetener of all. In its raw form, honey is packed full of nutrients including amino acids, minerals, antioxidants and enzymes.

The medicinal properties in honey can prevent and treat allergies. Honey is also one of the best topical treatments for burns.

Honey in its raw form is best because heat can destroy the nutrients. I do caution the overuse of honey though, as it can raise your blood sugar. A couple teaspoons of honey a day is adequate.

## 2. Coconut Sugar

Coconut sugar is one of the newest sweeteners on the market. In fact, coconuts are probably the "hottest" health food trend to date. From coconut oil, to coconut butter and coconut sugar, coconut's nutrient rich composition has skyrocketed its popularity.



- Coconut sugar is made from the sap of coconut blossoms.
- It has a lower glycemic index, so it doesn't affect your blood sugar like honey or refined sweeteners.
- It contains anti-oxidants and nutrients.
- Coconut sugar measures 1:1 for baking. It is extremely versatile and really should be a staple in every healthy kitchen to sweeten your favorite desserts and drinks.

## 1. Stevia

There is one sweetener that is not only 100% safe, but it also has zero effect on your blood sugar levels. This sweetener is called stevia. Stevia is an herb that grows in nature. It is very sweet and is now popular enough that you can get it at nearly every grocery store. It too is medicinal as it can naturally reduce high blood pressure!

Stevia is my favorite choice for sweetening many food items. However if I bake, I use one of the sweeteners above, as stevia tends to have an aftertaste in baked goods. I have been an avid stevia user for close to 12 years. My favorite brand to use is Nu Naturals because I have found it to be closest to the taste of real sugar.

## Artificial Sweetener Dangers

Many of you may think you are being healthy by substituting artificial sweeteners for sugar or drinking "diet" soda. Unfortunately, this isn't a healthy trade off. Artificial sweeteners can cause health problems even worse than refined sugar! Some of those include:

- MS
- ALS
- Memory loss
- Alzheimer's
- Parkinson's
- Epilepsy
- Fibromyalgia
- Cancer
- And much more

## Aspartame

The most common artificial sweetener, aspartame, is the most toxic of all laboratory-produced chemical sweeteners. NutraSweet is the commercial brand of the artificial sugar substitute made with aspartame.

Aspartame is an excitotoxin; it can literally 'excite" your brain cells to death. Many neurological diseases can manifest from the amount of neuron deaths caused by aspartame.

Aspartame also has an affect on the dopamine in the brain, creating a sort of high. This causes many aspartame users to become addicted. Many people who attempt to go off aspartame can actually have withdrawal symptoms. I am a former Diet Coke addict. Thirteen years ago when my eyes were opened to what NutraSweet really was, I quit drinking it. It was difficult at first, but you can't convince me to even take a sip now!

## Sucralose

Sucralose, or Splenda, is the newest artificial sweetener on the market. It has begun to replace aspartame in many sugar-free products and is touted as safe because it is derived from sugar. However, this sweetener is far from natural. Sucralose, too, is made in a lab. For this chemical cocktail, sugar is bonded to an extra chloride molecule to produce sucralose. Chloride effectively acts as a preservative in your body, killing anything alive to prevent decomposition.

There are no long-term studies on how sucralose effects on the body. The longest study done on humans lasted four days!! Recent studies have shown that sucralose can destroy up to 50% of your good intestinal flora, increase your intestinal pH, and cause weight gain. There is also evidence that it is absorbed by fat. Hundreds have also reported allergic reactions to ingesting sucralose.

The companies producing sucralose claim that it passes through the body without breaking down, which is why it has no calories or effect on insulin. However, if it never breaks down, where does it go? The water system! In a U.S. study, they found sucralose in 75% of drinking water! This percentage will only continue to rise as people keep using it. So whether you like it or not, you may be consuming traces of sucralose daily in your drinking water!



## The Agave Debate

Many of you are probably wondering about agave nectar. This newly popular sweetener has swept the nation, branding itself as the best alternative to sugar. As I mentioned in the beginning, many health gurus rave about the health benefits of agave nectar. It is praised for its low glycemic index. However, agave nectar isn't all it's cracked up to be. And in my opinion, it is far from an actual health food.

Agave nectar, although often labeled as "raw," cannot possibly be raw. The agave plant is treated with heat, chemicals, and enzymes to produce this nectar. There is no possible way to get raw agave nectar. Plus, it has NOT been used for centuries like many companies claim. The agave plant has been used to make tequila, but agave nectar has only been around since the early 1990s.

What makes agave unhealthy isn't even the fact that it isn't raw; it is the fructose content. High fructose corn syrup (HFCS), one of the most loathed sweeteners by health enthusiasts, actually

contains less fructose than agave nectar!! Agave nectar contains 70% fructose, which is around 20% higher than high fructose corn syrup!

The dangers of high fructose content can wreak absolute havoc on your body. The form of fructose naturally found in fruits is consumed in much lower amounts. Plus, when eating fruit, you are getting the vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and fiber along with it. However, when you consume agave nectar, which is 70% fructose, you are causing major imbalances in the body.

Your liver processes fructose and converts it into visceral fat, which is the fat that surrounds your internal organs. Excess visceral fat is directly connected to heart disease! The more fructose you consume (i.e. agave nectar and HFCS), the greater your chance of heart disease!

High fructose consumption also disrupts leptin, which is the hormone that tells your body it's full. So, consuming agave nectar will actually make you hungrier! And that isn't all! A diet high in fructose has been connected to:

- Cancer
- Inflammation
- Auto-immune diseases
- Memory Loss
- Digestive issues

My opinion about agave nectar is pretty clear. Agave nectar, although praised for its low glycemic index, is not a true health food. My recommendation is to stay far, far away from agave nectar.

## Naturally Sweetened Desserts

Life doesn't have to be bland. Food doesn't have to be bland. You can still indulge in some amazingly sweet and delicious desserts using my top 4 healthy sweeteners.

Below are two recipes that won't leave you feeling deprived. They are also low glycemic, so they won't spike your blood sugar like typical desserts. You really can have dessert that is sweet and delicious without wrecking your health!

## Chocolate Caramel S'mores Bars\*

Ingredients for the base:

- 17.5 oz. chocolate chips
- 6 eggs, separated
- 9 oz. coconut oil
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1oz stevia

Ingredients for the caramel:

- 1/2 cup coconut oil
- 1/2 cup honey
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 1/2 tbsp. gelatin



### Ingredients for the marshmallow:

- 1 cup water
- 3 tbsp. gelatin
- 1 cup honey
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- ¼ tsp. salt

### Directions for the base:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Grease a 7" x 11" baking tin then line it with 2 rectangular pieces of greaseproof paper. This is so you can lift the bars out of the tin when it has cooked, so overlap the pieces and leave half an inch at either side, which will be your 'handles'.
3. Chop chocolate into the top of a double boiler and add the coconut oil.
4. Place over simmering water and melt. Add the vanilla and remove from the heat, then quickly stir the egg yolks into the chocolate.
5. Beat egg whites in a bowl until stiff but not dry.
6. Beat in the stevia a little at a time until stiff peaks form.
7. Stir 2-3 tbsp. of meringue into the chocolate then gradually fold the chocolate into the meringue.
8. Turn into the baking tin and bake for 30 minutes.
9. Remove from the oven and let stand until cooled.

### Directions for the caramel:

1. Dissolve the gelatin in a little very hot water.
2. Place the oil and honey in a saucepan and bring to the boil.
3. Boil until it reaches the soft ball stage. (Drop a little into a glass of cold water and see if it forms a ball of set caramel).
4. Remove immediately from the heat.
5. Add the cream slowly so it doesn't splatter.
6. Beat until the caramel is smooth.
7. Add the dissolved gelatin and beat again to incorporate it.
8. Place in the fridge to cool then pour over the base.
9. Place in the fridge to set.

### Directions for the marshmallow:

1. Place the gelatin with 1/2 cup of the water (heated) in a bowl and stir to dissolve.
2. Pour the other 1/2 cup of water into a saucepan with the other ingredients.
3. Bring the mixture to the boil and continue to boil until it reaches 240°F.
4. Remove from the heat.
5. Using eggbeaters or a stand mixer, pour the boiled mixture into the bowl containing the gelatin and beat the mixture until it becomes thick (this takes a while).
6. Turn off the mixer and pour or spoon the marshmallow onto the set caramel.
7. Smooth out the top and set in the fridge.
8. Once set, cut into squares with a sharp knife, which has been dipped in boiling water. Re-dip it often so the marshmallow doesn't stick.

# Healthy “Almond Joy” Bars

All natural almond joys\*\*? Yes please! Now you can even have a healthier version of one of the most beloved candy bars!

Ingredients for the chocolate base:

- 1/2 cup coconut oil
- 1/2 cup almond butter
- 1/4 cup xylitol or substitute 4-6 scoops stevia extract
- 6 tbsp. cocoa powder
- 3 tbsp. sweetener xylitol
- 1 tsp. vanilla

Ingredients for the coconut topping:

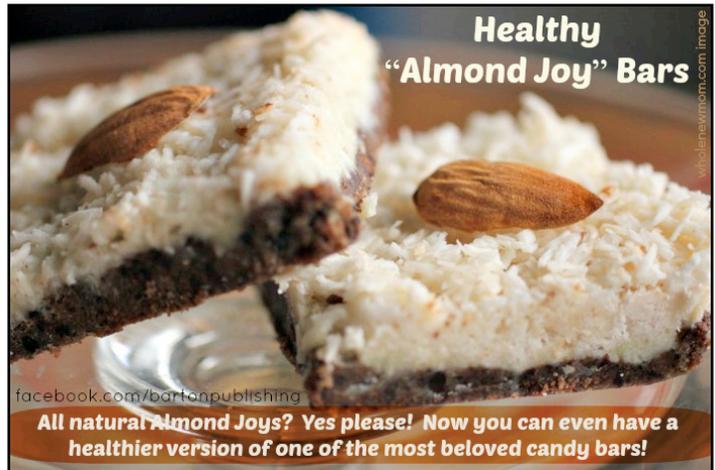
- 1 2/3 cup unsweetened coconut flakes
- 7 tbsp. coconut oil
- 1/3 cup xylitol or 2-3 scoops stevia extract powder (Nu Naturals)
- 1 1/2 tsp. vanilla
- 1/4 tsp. additional flavoring (optional - almond or coconut are good choices)
- 2 tsp. arrowroot powder (cornstarch may be substituted)
- Almonds halves or slices (optional)

Directions for chocolate base:

1. Melt oil and nut/seed butter over low heat.
2. Stir in cocoa and granulated sweetener and combine thoroughly.
3. Mix in remaining ingredients except for vanilla. Continuously stir until it slightly thickens, then remove from heat.
4. Stir in the vanilla.
5. Pour the mixture into an 8×8 pan and place in freezer to harden while you make the topping. If you don't have room in your freezer, the fridge will get it solid enough to work with.

Directions for coconut topping:

1. Melt oil in small pan and add coconut flakes. Stir.
2. Add remaining ingredients. Simmer and stir until it thickens a bit.
3. Once the chocolate is hardened, gently smooth the coconut mixture on top.
4. Place slivered or whole almonds on top. Place bars back in the freezer until hardened. Again, the fridge will work, but it will take longer.
5. Slice into squares of desired size and enjoy! They'll probably be too hard to cut right out of the freezer so you may need to let them thaw a bit first.
6. Store in the refrigerator.



Swap out your white sugar and stock your pantry with these 4 healthy sweeteners. Sweets don't have to be the bad guy any longer! Safe sweeteners will keep your taste buds satisfied without the guilt or the negative health effects. Once you notice how well you feel, you won't want to go back. Don't wait, do the swap today!

**Do you give yourself well-being by avoiding sugar? How does this make you happy?**

\*Recipe from [www.foodrenegade.com](http://www.foodrenegade.com)

\*\*Recipe from [www.wholenewmom.com](http://www.wholenewmom.com)



Amanda Box is a Doctor of Naturopathy and a graduate of Clayton College of Natural Health. She's been in the health and wellness industry for over 10 years. Her passion is helping others achieve wellness of the whole person – mind, body, and spirit. If you don't have a good local naturopathic doctor to turn to for your personal needs, Dr.

Amanda does phone consultations! She can help you with weight loss, detox/cleansing, acute and chronic illnesses, skin and body care, grocery shopping, pantry overhauls, and more! Visit her blog "My Life in a Healthnut Shell" at <http://amandabox.blogspot.com/> for contact info.



## Sugar: Sweet White Poison

By Amanda Box

**W**e all have different preferences and tastes when it comes to food. However, in nearly every culture and every country around the world, we share a love (or rather an addiction) in common. Sugar! Whether you are in Paris gazing into their sweet shops or on a bustling street in Greece admiring their beautiful choices of baklava, you can find delicious desserts almost anywhere! Sugary foods make us happy. Unfortunately, they can do much more than just temporarily lift our mood.

We all know that eating those delicious sweet candies and desserts can expand our waistline. However, sweets are the awful culprit behind other many diseases and ailments. When you indulge your sweet tooth too often, you risk the following health conditions and diseases:

- Diabetes
- Hypoglycemia
- Candida
- Heart Disease
- Cancer
- Insulin Resistance
- Early aging
- Autoimmune diseases
- And much more

## The Sugar Effect

I believe sugar, in its most refined form, is one of the most toxic things you can put into your body. And unfortunately, most people aren't just indulging in sweets once in awhile. They are bombarding their bodies with this addictive white poison day after day, all throughout the day!



From our coffee drinks to a bottle of ketchup, you will find some form of sugar in most commercial and prepackaged foods. It is really no surprise because sugar is in nearly everything — especially here in the United States. Even a typical serving of infant formula has the sugar equivalent of a can of soda!

Americans really do seem to like their sugar treats more than most other countries and nationalities. I remember when my friend from England came to visit. She kept mentioning how sickeningly sweet our foods were. For most of us, our taste buds have adapted to the increasingly sweet tasting foods we eat. Then, it takes more and more sugar for us to become satisfied. Seriously, it is no wonder we have an obesity epidemic!

Honestly, most people have no idea how bad sugar really is. Especially if they are under the belief that a calorie is a calorie no matter what the food is. I've known people who count calories and are extremely strict with their eating. However, most of what they eat throughout the day is packed with sugar and carbohydrates. They have absolutely no idea why they aren't losing weight and why they feel so terrible. They expect to lose weight and feel great because they are restricting calories. However, sugar's ability to cause weight gain and health problems goes beyond just calories. What sugar does to your blood sugar and insulin level is what actually contributes to weight gain health issues.

When we eat foods on a regular basis that contain a lot of sugar, this causes a continual spike in blood sugar, which in turn causes a rise in insulin. The more frequently that the body has to release insulin to control blood sugar levels, the less responsive cells become to insulin. The result is called insulin resistance. Insulin resistance takes place when the

body's cells turn off receptor sites and ignore insulin's messages. When this happens, both insulin and blood sugar levels remain high. Many doctors also call this pre-diabetes, because without a change, diabetes is the likely result.

The reason people gain weight during insulin resistance is because sugar circulating in the blood that is not used by the cells as energy is stored as fat. This is why sugar is the worst thing you can eat if you want to lose weight. Calorie restriction or not, you will still store fat if you are regularly consuming sugary foods.

Maybe you are now wondering if you're struggling with insulin resistance. Ask yourself these questions below. If your answer is yes to even one of these questions, you may have insulin resistance.

- Are you heaviest around your midsection, otherwise known as the spare tire?
- Do you have high triglycerides and/or cholesterol?
- Do you crave sweets?
- Do you have a fasting blood sugar level of 100 or above?

Insulin resistance isn't something you want to mess around with; it can only lead to something much worse. It isn't just about losing weight. It is about avoiding potential life threatening diseases like diabetes and heart disease!

## **Breaking the Sugar Habit**

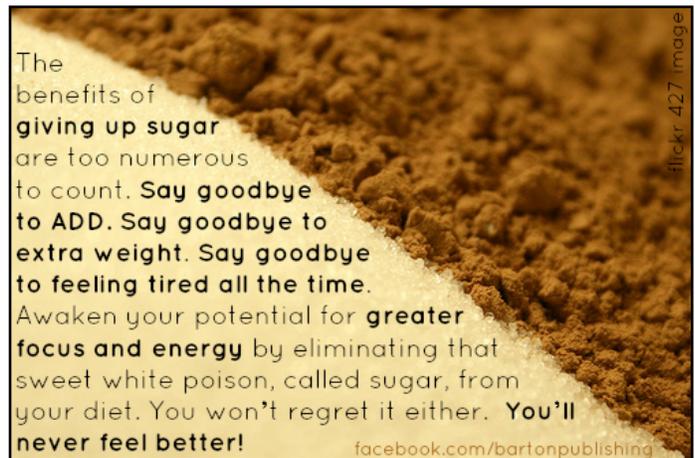
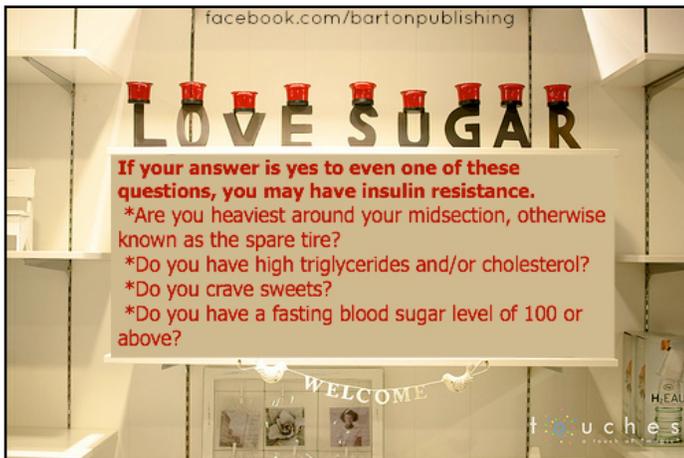
Quitting sugar can be a difficult task. However, eliminating sugar from your diet is worth the effort! Not only does sugar create the perfect environment for potential diseases, but it is completely void of nutrition! Other than the taste in leaves on your tongue, there is absolutely no benefit when it comes to consuming sugar.

I recommend quitting sugar by going on a complete sugar fast. Though this is extremely difficult to do, especially in the beginning, avoiding sugar can reset your body so you don't even crave sweet foods anymore. Some call it a sugar detox. In reality, "detox" is appropriate, as sugar is said to be more addictive than cocaine!

It usually takes around a month for your body to reset and balance out, once it's cleared of excess sugar consumption. So be sure and pick a time when you won't be tempted by sugar very often. The holiday's would not be the most ideal time to begin your sugar fast!

When you eliminate sugar from your diet, the important thing is to read labels and eliminate sugar in all forms! Sugar can "hide" under many other names and forms including:

- Corn Syrup (high fructose corn syrup)
- Honey
- Agave Nectar
- Organic Cane Sugar
- Fructose
- Glucose syrup
- Fruits (berries are the only exception)
- Refined Carbohydrates (white potatoes, white flour, etc)



As you can see, even the “healthier” forms of sugar like honey and fruits are not allowed during a sugar detox. They can be added back in moderation later. However, when you struggle with sugar addiction, your body will crave sugar so bad that you may end up turning to natural sugar sources for the sugar rush you crave. Try to resist! You must teach your body how to handle life without any sugar spikes. The sugar detox is about going cold turkey!

Also remember that refined carbohydrates turn into sugar in the body. Therefore, it is best to avoid any form of carbohydrates while on the sugar fast. Limit your overall carbs. If you do eat some carbohydrates like a piece of whole grain toast, have peanut butter, almond butter, or some other form of healthy fat with it. Eating healthy fat with carbohydrates slows the spike in blood sugar. Coconut oil is a nice healthy fat, as well, and would make a great addition to your sugar cleansing diet.

I’m sure you’re wondering if there is anything you can add to your sugar detox diet to “sweeten” things up. Artificial sweeteners are a huge “no-no.” In fact, they are just as bad or even worse than sugar! These chemical based sweeteners should be avoided like the plague, no matter how bad you may be craving something sweet.

There is one healthy alternative you can use. It is a plant-based sweetener called stevia. It has no effect on blood sugar levels and even has medicinal properties, like lowering blood pressure! However, I still recommend using it in moderation during your sugar detox. Why? Because not tasting sweet food all the time is important to learn. If you douse everything with stevia, then you will always have a palette for something sweet to the taste. Part of the purpose of a sugar detox is training your tongue to get used to having food that is unsweetened.

## Treat Yourself To A Life Without Sugar

As a former sugar addict, I can honestly say that I rarely eat sweets anymore. And if I do indulge in dessert or sugary foods, I can usually only take a few bites before I am satisfied. I completely cut sugar out of my life and did a sugar detox. It was insanely difficult the first three days. My body was crying out for something sweet. But, I pushed through and I have never regretted it! You won't regret it either. You'll never feel better! The benefits of giving up sugar are too numerous to count. Say goodbye to ADD. Say goodbye to extra weight. Say goodbye to feeling tired all the time. Awaken your potential for greater focus and energy by eliminating that sweet white poison, called sugar, from your diet.



Amanda Box is a Doctor of Naturopathy and a graduate of Clayton College of Natural Health. She's been in the health and wellness industry for over 10 years and currently has a Naturopathic consulting practice in Sioux Falls, SD. Her passion is helping others achieve wellness of the whole person – mind, body, and spirit. If you don't have a good local naturopathic doctor to turn to for your personal needs, Dr. Amanda does phone consultations! She can help you with weight loss, detox/cleansing, acute and chronic illnesses, skin and body care, grocery shopping, pantry overhauls, and more! Visit her blog "My Life in a Healthnut Shell" for contact info: <http://amandabox.blogspot.com>



## Sweet Surrender

By Michael Tyrrell

**P**illow cases full of Halloween candy...birthday cakes...wedding cakes...chocolate Easter bunnies...marshmallow chicks...Christmas candy canes...fruitcakes...Valentines Day candy... doughnuts...Twinkies...brownies...S'mores...Mars Bars...Almond Joy...Snickers...Reese's Peanut Butter Cups...Kit Kat...Butterfinger...M&M's...Chip's Ahoy...Nilla Wafers...

Like Pavlov's dogs, are you salivating? You are not alone! Americans are addicted to sugar!

Welcome to this month's *Home Cures That Work* topic: Sweeteners. As you can plainly see from the above list, sugar plays a key role in most of our celebrated holidays — but it wasn't always this way.

- In the 1700s, an average person consumed 4 pounds of sugar per year.
- In the 1800s, an average person consumed 18 pounds of sugar per year.
- In the 1900s, an average person consumed 90 pounds of sugar per year.
- In 2009, 50% of Americans consumed roughly a half a pound per day for a whopping 180 pounds per year.
- In 1893, there were fewer than 3 cases of diabetes per 100,000 people.
- Today, there are 8,000 cases of diabetes per 100,000 people.



The reason behind the epic spike in these statistics is not a surprise to many of you, but “Big Sugars” dark secrets and political power may be.

Make no mistake about it! Sugar and other artificial sweeteners are America's number one addiction! And where there is an addiction, there is big money to be made!

“Big Sugars” history and lobbying power is well known, especially by those of us who live in the Everglades region of South Florida where the destruction to our Everglades from “Big Sugar” can be seen everyday. For more information, research “Big Sugar” and you will be shocked to learn about their connection to slavery, murder, political corruption ecological destruction and more.

## Little Sugar Addicts

Let's talk about what causes people to become slaves to sweets. Believe it or not, sugar addiction happens to a lot of us before we are old enough to start school! As a child, I never thought of games like *Candy Land*, the *Easy Bake Oven*, Pez dispensers, Keebler Elves or candy bar commercials as marketing tools aimed at a certain demographic (kids) to sell products!

One of my favorite candies growing up was candy cigarettes. Remember those white powdery sticks packaged in their own little cigarette boxes? I was shocked to learn a few years back that those little candy cigarettes were a concerted effort on behalf of “Big Sugar” and “Big Tobacco” to get kids hooked on sugar, at the same time to get kids used to having a cigarette in their hands and have cigarette boxes in their pockets with the same company logos as “real cigarettes,” such as Winston, L&M, Pall Mall, Salem and Viceroy. Beyond human gullibility, there is some real hardcore science behind our addictions.

The body electric is truly a divine creation. Its neural-pathways connect points of the body like a super highway connects our country.

“I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.” Psalm 139:14 (NIV)

## Taste is Sweet

Taste is our sensory “gatekeeper” mechanism that audits foods and other substances before they enter the body. And there could be no tasting without the star of the sensory show — the tongue!

The tongue is covered with thousands of small bumps called *papillae*, which are visible to the naked eye. Inside of each *papillae* are hundreds of taste buds, which are tiny organs responsible for taste transduction. There are between two and five thousand taste buds that virtually cover the entire tongue, the sides and roof of the mouth and are even present in the throat. Now here is the cool part each of those taste buds contains fifty to one hundred taste receptor cells.

There has been much debate in scientific circles concerning the ability of these receptor cells until a major breakthrough occurred in 2001 concerning the isolation of the “sweetness receptor” called the T1R2 protein. This protein forms a G-protein coupled receptor that is the receptor responsible for sensing sweets in mammals. Here are some interesting findings:

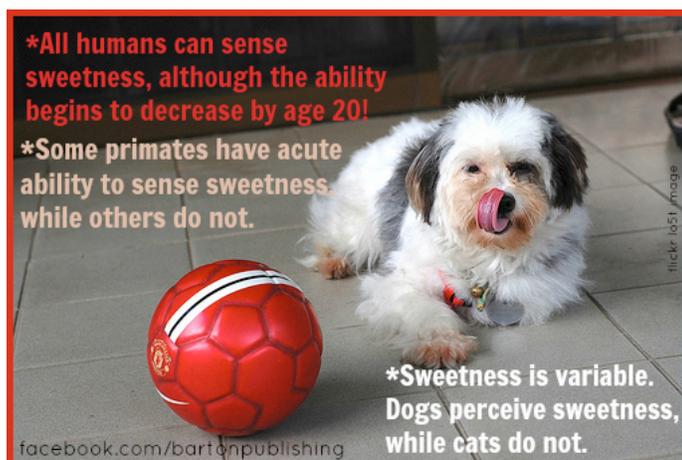
1. Sweetness is variable. Dogs perceive sweetness, while cats do not.
2. Some primates have acute ability to sense sweetness, while others do not.
3. All humans can sense sweetness, although the ability begins to decrease by age 20!

With this knowledge, it is easy to determine why children really love sweets. Unfortunately, it is during our youth that our bodies become dependent on sugar and the health problems begin.

Recently, Barton Publishing and Home Cures That Work released an amazing study on diabetes that is extremely comprehensive. I highly recommend the Diabetes Reversal Solution Kit to all of our readers, not to mention the amazing contributors that will weigh in on this month’s topic. I will try to “stay in my lane,” as the *Sweetener* subject could far more easily render a book than merely an article.

## Sweet Poison

Years ago, I was sitting in a Pizza Hut (busted!) with some friends. In a moment of utter boredom, I opened a package of Sweet ‘N Low and poured a bit into the table candle. I was shocked to learn that the product was quite flammable; emitting lovely sparks as I poured! Sweet ‘N Low, a saccharin based product that is a proven carcinogen, is only one of four dangerous FDA-approved artificial sweeteners permeating the American market place. These toxic sweeteners round out the list of troublemakers.

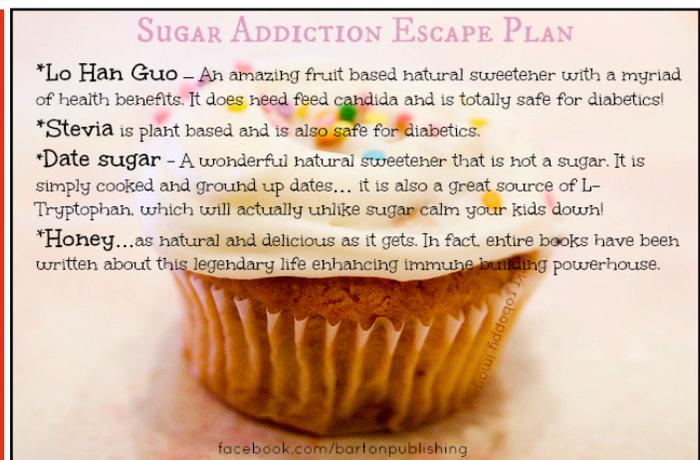


**\*All humans can sense sweetness, although the ability begins to decrease by age 20!**

**\*Some primates have acute ability to sense sweetness, while others do not.**

**\*Sweetness is variable. Dogs perceive sweetness, while cats do not.**

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### SUGAR ADDICTION ESCAPE PLAN

**\*Lo Han Guo** – An amazing fruit based natural sweetener with a myriad of health benefits. It does need feed candida and is totally safe for diabetics!

**\*Stevia** is plant based and is also safe for diabetics.

**\*Date sugar** – A wonderful natural sweetener that is not a sugar. It is simply cooked and ground up dates... it is also a great source of L-Tryptophan, which will actually unlike sugar calm your kids down!

**\*Honey**...as natural and delicious as it gets. In fact, entire books have been written about this legendary life enhancing immune building powerhouse.

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- Aspartame (Equal, NutraSweet)
- Sucralose (Splenda)
- Acesulfame Potassium (Sunett, Sweet One)

Can we employ a little common sense here?

- Knowing that the FDA recently removed the warning info on all products containing saccharin...
- Considering the term “artificial” means unnatural...
- Knowing that these sweeteners are created in a laboratory and not the garden...

...Why would you ever purchase them in the first place?

Remember what happened when I poured the Sweet ‘N Low into the candle? What do you think happens in the body when we ingest refined sugar or artificial sweeteners and our body burns it for energy?

I will tell you what happens: inflammation from carbonization!

Think about it...joint pain, arthritis and stiffness...is it possible that sugar and artificial sweeteners could be the culprits lurking beneath your chronic pain? There is quite a bit of solid research that substantiates my claim. To learn more, research “Can sugar and artificial sweeteners cause inflammation and pain?” You will be shocked!

## **Tasteless Sugar Addiction**

When I was in Junior High, I remember my Mom telling me, “Honey, your Father went in for a check-up and the doctor said his sugar was very high so I am going to cut back on sugar and salt.” When I sat down to dinner the next night, everything tasted terribly bland, but I didn’t say anything because I knew Mom was doing this for Dad’s sake. After about a week, I didn’t notice the food tasting bland, so I asked my Mother if she stopped cutting back on the condiments. She replied, “Not at all.”

You see, many of you are so addicted to the over use of condiments that you have forgotten what food *actually* tastes like. The truth is most proteins, fruits and vegetables have plenty of naturally occurring sugars and salts as is. By overusing (abusing) sweeteners, your brain has been fooled into thinking food tastes bland — unless you pour on the sweetener. Like all addictive behavior, the more you use the more you need.

## **Sugar Addiction Escape Plan**

I recommend fasting (abstaining) from sugar, and salt shaker, for a month and see if after 30 days you still think you need to “doctor” your food. After the 30 day period comes to a close, if you still want something a little sweeter, then let me recommend my list of natural sweeteners that will not only satisfy your sweet tooth but will render amazing health benefits, as well!

1. **Lo Han Guo** – An amazing fruit based natural sweetener with a myriad of health benefits. It does need feed candida and is totally safe for diabetics!
2. **Stevia** is plant based and is also safe for diabetics.
3. **Date sugar** - A wonderful natural sweetener that is not a sugar. It is simply cooked and ground up dates... it is also a great source of L-Tryptophan, which will actually unlike sugar calm your kids down!
4. Last, but certainly not least...



**Honey**...as natural and delicious as it gets. In fact, entire books have been written about this legendary life enhancing immune building powerhouse.

## Sweet as Honey

And speaking of honey...(like that segue?)...The Bible is rife with mentions of honey. In fact, honey is mentioned 61 times in the scriptures. Here are a few biblical references to the power behind the natural sweetener honey.

- **Honey concerning the Promised Land:** “But I said to you, ‘You will possess their land; I will give it to you as an inheritance, a land flowing with milk and honey.’ I am the Lord your God, who has set you apart from the nations.” Leviticus 20:24
- **Honey as an honored gift:** “Put some of the best products of the land in your bags and take them down to the man as a gift- a little balm and a little honey, some spices and myrrh, some pistachio nuts and almonds.” Genesis 43:11
- **Honey as wisdom:** “My Son, eat honey because it is good, and the honeycomb which is sweet to your taste.” Proverbs 24:13
- **Honey as sustenance for John the Baptist in the desert:** “This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: A voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’ John’s clothes were made of camel’s hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey.” Matthew 3:3
- **Honey compared to gracious words spoken:** “Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.” Proverbs 16:24
- **Finally, honey is mentioned as a complete food that revived a starving man:** “There were honeycombs oozing here and there in the fields. But no one so much as put his finger in the honey to taste it, for the soldiers feared the curse of Samuel for anyone who broke the fast. But Jonathan hadn’t heard his father put the army under oath. He stuck the tip of his staff into some honey and ate it. Revived, his eyes lit up with renewed vigor.” 1 Samuel 14:25-27

Friends, honey is a type and shadow of Christ in the Old Testament. His words are sweeter than the honeycomb and he invites us to:

“Taste and see that the Lord He is good and blessed (happy) is the one who takes refuge in him.” (Psalms 34:8).

The message of Christ is sweet as honey. The words of Christ are pleasant words. They are the words of eternal life, sweet to the soul. Receive the milk and honey of God’s word and enter heaven, the true Promised Land, come to Jesus now.

Believe me, there is nothing sweet about an addiction to sugar. In fact, it will eventually lead to death. But a life addicted to Christ will eventually become eternal and that, my friend, is the sweetest surrender of all.

Being a Christian is not a church, a crutch or a religion...it is a relationship with the sweetest friend you will ever meet. Talk to Him, He is listening! As always, I consider it a great honor and an awesome responsibility to share Him with you through my monthly articles.

In lieu of my customary Q & A at the end of my musings, I have opted to leave you with some lyrics from the artist, Sarah McLachlan from her song, *Sweet Surrender*. God bless you!

Michael

### **Sweet Surrender**

By Sarah McLachlan

You take me in no questions asked  
You strip away the ugliness that  
surrounds me  
Are you an angel am I already that gone?  
When I am down here on my knees

And Sweet Sweet Surrender  
Is ALL I have to give.



Michael Tyrrell is founder of the Network Center Inc., a not-for-profit, an 501(c)(3) organization which works as an advisory agency to local churches, faith-based ministries, Para-church ministries, schools, home fellowships and music ministries. Michael is committed to training to deliver the message of their Christian faith in order to reach the lost, the disenfranchised, the sick and the hurting. Michael has been in full time ministry for the last 27 years and is a writer music producer and well known musician.  
[www.michaeltyrrell.com](http://www.michaeltyrrell.com)



# Why Diabetes is Becoming Epidemic

By David Kekich

**S**ome of the most damaging groups of substances we are exposed to on a daily basis are starches and refined sugars, such as:

- Sucrose
- Fructose
- Glucose
- Dextrose
- And corn syrup

Our metabolism was just not designed to handle the tremendous amount of nutrient-free calories (i.e., sugar, starches, and to some degree fat) that the typical American diet has in it. The majority of those calories come from refined sugar (sweets, soft drinks, etc.) and starches (bread and pasta).

Excess sugar and starch cause multiple assaults to your system. First, as we discussed, high blood sugar causes excess insulin release. Of the two hormones that control the amount of sugar in your blood stream—insulin and glucagon, insulin causes sugar to be taken into the cells, while glucagon causes it to be released. By eating excess carbohydrates, you put your blood sugar control system onto a dangerous roller coaster ride. Up, down, up, down—after repeated bouts of this, your system will crash. The result is Type II diabetes, which is becoming more and more prevalent.

There's more. People with diabetes are twice as likely to have arthritis. In fact, more than half of the U.S. adults diagnosed with diabetes also have arthritis. That puts them in a double bind, as the pain in their joints keeps them from getting the exercise they need to keep both diseases at bay.

Diabetics are unable to take up sugar efficiently, because their cells no longer respond to insulin. A nasty side effect of this process is that your body begins producing way too much insulin to try and overcome the unresponsiveness of your cells. So now you have high insulin and high blood sugar,

which causes all kinds of damage to your arteries. This includes higher cholesterol in your blood, more useless molecules being made by sticking to the excess sugar (crosslinking) which clogs your arteries, the production of oxidized molecules, and the release of the hormone cortisol which causes tissue breakdown.

Insulin also causes excess sugar to be converted to fat. Want to lose weight? Stay away from white flour and sugar.

We also know sugar depresses the immune system. The root of all disease, common cold or cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis or cancer, is at the molecular and cellular level. And insulin is probably going to be involved in almost every aging disease, if not totally controlling it.

Insulin is that important.

Some of us are less susceptible to the perils of sugar and starch than others. Starch in general does not cause diabetes according to a new study by Dr. Richard Johnson, the chief of the division of kidney disease and hypertension at the University of Colorado, and author of *The Sugar Fix*. The new appreciation is that if you have your uric acid level checked and have a level of 4 for men, or 3.5 for women, you probably are at a low risk for fructose toxicity and can be more liberal with your intake.

The higher your uric acid though, the more you need to limit fructose to about 16 grams a day, or even avoid it until your uric acid level normalizes.

Even with a healthy uric acid level, I suggest avoiding all foods with added fructose like the plague. A growing lineup of scientific studies is demonstrating that consuming high-fructose corn syrup is the fastest way to trash your health. It is now known without a doubt that sugar in your food, in all its myriad of forms, is taking a devastating toll.

And fructose in any form, including high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS) and crystalline fructose, is the worst of the worst!



To replace those high-calorie, low-nutrient carbohydrates you were consuming before, eat lots of raw fruit and vegetables. Some fruits that have been discovered to be particularly good for their anti-aging properties are blueberries, pomegranates, bilberries, strawberries, purple grapes, and tomatoes (Yes, tomatoes are technically fruits, not vegetables). Since fruits contain natural fructose, I suggest you eat more veggies than fruit.

The deeper and richer the colors of your fruits and vegetables, the more nutritional value they have for you. If your meals look like rainbows, you're on the right track. Why all the fuss about color? Because loads of scientific studies have shown the natural pigments that give fruits and veggies their vibrant colors offer remarkable health benefits. A major class of compounds in this category is the flavonoids.

Flavonoids are powerful antioxidants that are linked with health benefits including protection from cancer, heart disease, dementia, diabetes, stroke and more.

Fruits with rich colors, especially deep blue or purple, tend to have high concentrations of anthocyanins, one of nature's most potent classes of flavonoids. And get this.

In case you haven't heard, dark chocolate and red wine are also rich sources of flavonoids. A study at University Hospital Zurich showed 6 grams of dark chocolate a day reduces risks of heart disease and stroke by 39%. Take it easy though. Too much dark chocolate will overdose you with sugar and saturated fat. Limit yourself to 7.5 grams of dark chocolate a day. More than two glasses of red wine a day works against you due to excess sugar and alcohol. Moderation is the word of the day if you must indulge.

Strawberries have high concentrations of ellagic acid, another antioxidant that has been shown to protect rats against many age-related defects. The molecule lycopene in tomatoes is yet another powerful antioxidant.

If you do eat simple carbohydrates, take some high-grade protein with it to reduce its damage by about half. Don't beat yourself up and worry about eating a hamburger, ice cream or pizza once in a while if it gives you pleasure. But making it a habit will undermine your health and shorten your life.

On the flip side, when you plan to eat your meal or snack, visualize yourself as being healthier and slimmer. Then concentrate on your food while eating, and reward yourself mentally when you make your healthy choices.

### ***What is your favorite dark chocolate?***

