

SUGAR: **Your Sweetest Enemy**



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Sugar: Your Sweetest Enemy

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Contents

Introduction	1
The Different Types of Sugar	3
13 Reasons Sugar Is Bad for You	6
The Surprising Places Sugar Hides	9
How Much Sugar Is Too Much?	15
Are You Addicted to Sugar?	18
Tips for Breaking Your Sugar Habit	20
How to Fight Sugar Addiction Withdrawal Symptoms	22
Recipe Ideas to Keep Your Sugar Cravings at Bay.....	24
Frozen Fruit Dessert.....	24
Snacks	24
No Sugar Fiber Loaf.....	24
Fermented Veggies	25
What Now?	27

Introduction

What is it about us that we seem to love sweet tastes so much? It's down to our evolution. We sense tastes through the taste buds on our tongue with different parts of the tongue able to sense different tastes. We taste sour through taste buds towards the back of the tongue and bitter at the sides. But it's the taste buds right at the front, at the tip, that allow us to taste sweetness.

Taste is a hugely important sense, and not just for the pleasure we get from tastes. It allows us to identify the foods that are good for us. By this reckoning, sugar must be good for us. And different sugars are indeed hugely important for our well-being. Our brain rewards us through a feeling of pleasure when we consume sugar. But we need sugar in limited quantities. Too much is very bad for us. Just as salt is essential but is poisonous in high doses, we need to get enough sugar, but not too much. However, we are very bad at identifying when we have enough sugar.

This problem arises because, for much of our history, we were somewhat starved of sweet tastes with the only common sources being honey, fruits (when available) and some vegetables that caramelize when burned. Sweet tastes were the preserve of the lucky few. So, no danger of having too much of a sweet thing! The other side of this is that we are hardwired to pursue and consume sugars when we do encounter them.

This was not a problem when sugar was scarce. But, humans being the resourceful animals they are, set about addressing this problem of scarcity as soon as they were able. It is thought that sugar cane juice was first extracted in Southeast Asia around four thousand years ago. By two thousand years ago granulated sugar was being produced in India. But it wasn't until the 16th and 17th centuries when sugarcane was grown in the Americas that sugar became widely available in the West, although it remained a luxury item.

When the ability to grow sugar beet in temperate climates was developed in the 19th and 20th centuries this all changed. Sugar in many forms, including many highly

processed forms, rapidly became a cheap commodity ingredient. This was a major change, but our desires did not change in line. Now that sugar is plentiful, pretty much ubiquitous, we are physiologically and psychologically ill-prepared. We find it hard to adjust and not just follow our – mindless – instincts by consuming what we get.

In recent years, scientific research has drawn increasing attention to the link between sugar and obesity. Health authorities say that Americans have gotten fatter because they are consuming too many calories of all kinds. Many experts have singled out the role of added sugar consumption, which [increased more than 30 percent](#) between 1977 and 2010.

Therein we have the problems we are faced with. We need some sugar and are programmed to eat sweet things (some of us more than others). But we only need a limited amount. However, sugar is now easily available. Worse, we very often don't know we are consuming sugar as it is often hidden in high quantities in processed foods. We can't just go with the flow.

Because of this, Governments all over the world are starting to crack down on our consumption of sugar. They are passing taxes on sugary drinks and snacks, banning them from schools, and more treatment programs are becoming open to people who believe they are addicted to sugar. These interventions seem to be [having some success](#) in terms of reducing the amount of sugar people consume, although they remain at an early stage.

But what is the truth? Is sugar your enemy? How much do you need? And can you be trusted to act in your own best interests? This report aims to give you the information you need to answer these questions for yourself.

The Different Types of Sugar

Coca leaves were used for centuries in their natural state to chew on or to make tea. This was normal and there were no issues. But, then they were highly processed and turned into a dangerous and addictive drug known as cocaine.

The innocent poppy flower suffered the same fate. Formerly a safe and effective tea, often used for relaxation and pain, it got super-processed and became a powerful, dangerous and addictive opiate.

Sugar first starts out as sugar cane - a healthy stalky plant. Used in its natural form you can't consume enough to make you sick. But super-concentrated and processed it becomes like a drug. In fact, with lab rats, sugar outperformed cocaine as the drug of choice.

It's important to know that there are various types of sugar, some natural and some very processed - to the point that even if they started natural, they are no longer natural.

- **Fructose** – Don't get confused by the word. While fructose is derived from fruit, it's gone through processing that makes it a highly concentrated form of sugar. This type of fructose should really be called "industrial fructose". Eating fructose from natural fruit is not unsafe and should not be avoided. Once processed, though, it becomes something else entirely and causes a lot of health problems.
- **Glucose** – This is the sugar that's in your blood. You get it from natural plant foods such as carbohydrates, fruits, and vegetables, especially starchy ones. It's one of the most important medications and very readily available in nature. It supplies almost all the energy to the brain. It's important for metabolic health, respiration and more. If you want to be able to think clearly, you must have the right amount of glucose. Glucose is created

industrially by using starchy plants like corn, rice, wheat, and other ingredients.

- **Lactose** – Found in milk, it's made from galactose and glucose. Industrially it's produced as a by-product of the dairy industry. Most humans produce lactase to help digest this type of sugar far into adulthood. But some people, especially from eastern and south-eastern Asia and some parts of Africa cannot properly digest this type of sugar in adulthood.
- **Maltose** – This sugar is found in the germination process as the seeds break down their starch stores for food to sprout and grow. This type of sugar can cause many intolerances as well as weight gain, kidney stones and more. However, eating it in its natural form such as in sweet potatoes, soybeans, barley and wheat (other than those who suffer from celiac) is healthy.
- **Sucrose** – This type of sugar comes from cane and beets. Modern processing can make it look just like table sugar. Before it's been processed it has a lot of health benefits, vitamins, and minerals. Honey is mostly fructose and glucose with trace amounts of sucrose.

As you see, most sugars start in a very natural state and aren't bad in their natural and most whole form until they undergo super-processing. It's the super-processing that's bad for you, because it makes natural sugars into highly addictive drug-like substances. A big problem is that most of the sugar we encounter is highly processed and often incorporated into common foods and drinks in its most harmful forms.

High fructose corn syrup is a good example. Tariffs and quotas on sugars were introduced in the US in the late 1970's to assist and protect the incomes of domestic farmers. However, this pushed up the cost of domestically produced sugar in the US to twice the global price. Very quickly, food, and especially drinks manufacturers, looked for cheaper sources of sugar and found that a process that had been developed in the 1960s meant that high fructose corn syrup, which could

be produced from domestically grown corn, provided a relatively cheap substitute as the price of corn in the US is kept low through subsidies paid to growers.

By the mid 1980s, this high-fructose corn syrup was widely used as a sweetener in drinks and processed foods. Most of the sugar input to foods and drinks in the US is in this form. The economic incentives are different in most other countries and similarly branded sweet drinks are produced using different sugars in other countries.

This illustrates a number of lessons:

- The sugars in our modern diets is often of the most harmful type;
- We don't usually realize this; and
- We have designed our food production systems to bring this about – even though we know the health dangers.

13 Reasons Sugar Is Bad for You

Let's look at many of the reasons sugar is thought to be bad for you. Some people say it's one of the worst things you can introduce to your system, even above fat.

1. **Your Immune System** – If you consume too much processed sugar you can reduce your ability to kill germs inside your body. It doesn't take much, either. Just two sodas can stop the ability to fight off that flu bug and lead to falling ill. This doesn't mean you shouldn't get vaccines if you don't eat sugar, but when it comes to health, including dental health, avoiding added sugar can boost your immune system considerably.
2. **Mineral Balance** – If you have trouble sleeping at night, are constipated and having other problems, you could be having trouble with your mineral balance. If you eat a lot of sugar, you are likely depleting your magnesium stores to process it. Plus, you will lose more chromium through your urine if you eat a lot of sugar.
3. **Behavior Problems** – Every parent on the planet will tell you that sugar and lack of sugar can affect their child's behavior. If a child is hungry and their blood sugar is low, they will be sleepy and grumpy. If a child has an overdose of sugar, they will become agitated and animated. The key to better behavior is blood sugar balance.
4. **Empty Calories** – The fact is, processed sugar has no health benefits whatsoever. It's simply fooling our taste buds and our brain – which has evolved to think that sugar is good for us – into thinking we are consuming something healthy. Therefore, when you eat sugary meals, you're eating empty calories that will cause weight gain. The fact that sugar is often combined with fat and salt makes the effects even worse. It's better to avoid added sugar when you can.

5. **Elevated Insulin Responses** – When your insulin response is healthy, your cells will release the right amount of insulin. But, if you regularly consume sugar, especially in “overdose” amounts, your body will become confused about when to release insulin and when not to.
6. **Damages Cells and Tissues** – The tissue in your eyes, kidneys, nerves and some other vital organs seem to carry sugar a lot longer than other organs. This means that the body can suffer damage from that remaining sugar because it damages small blood vessels.
7. **Causes High Blood Triglyceride Levels** – There are no symptoms for high blood triglyceride levels. The only way to know if you have high triglycerides is by getting a blood test. It’s usually part of your overall cholesterol test.
8. **Contributes to Hyperactivity** – There are studies that show both results. Sugar does cause hyperactivity and sugar doesn't cause it. You must remember that any drug can affect one human one way, and another human another way. But, parents often report problems with hyperactivity in their child after consuming too much sugar. You can’t ignore the possibility.
9. **Anxiety** – Refined sugars enter the blood stream quickly, and then also leave the blood stream quickly. This process can manifest in more anxiety overall. Even though people who are addicted to sugar often eat to suppress anxiety, it’s just making the problem much worse. It’s best to avoid added sugars in the first place.
10. **Poor Concentration** – Again, the reason sugar may affect concentration is because of the speed by which processed sugar can invade blood cells and then leave them. You need a balanced level of glucose to feed your brain, not short bursts of sugar such as in the form of soft drinks or cereal.
11. **Feeds Some Cancers** – The fact is, cancer cells love sugar. That’s because like most living things they need sugar to grow. But, not all sugars are created equal. Cancer cells love white sugar, white flour, and high fructose corn

syrup. The good thing is that if you simply reduce your consumption of processed sugar, you can cut your cancer risks.

12. **Hypoglycemia** – Low blood sugar happens in people who have a condition called hypoglycemia. This can be a condition on its own, but it can also happen in people who have diabetes and take medications like insulin because their bodies don't produce enough on their own.

13. **Poor Digestion** – Processed sugar is very acidic. The more alkaline you can make your body, the healthier you'll become. If you have an acidic stomach you'll suffer from heartburn, GERD, and other digestion problems.

Each person is affected differently. It's best to look at your own symptoms and health issues and talk to your doctor. But if you have any of these problems, try eliminating processed sugar to see if you notice any changes in your health.

The Surprising Places Sugar Hides

If there's sugar in the product then it will say it on the label. But you might not even notice that the label says there's sugar inside. The fact is, sugar comes in many guises on food labels, including:

- corn sugar
- dextrose
- fructose
- glucose
- high-fructose glucose syrup
- honey
- maple syrup
- agave syrup
- invert sugar
- isoglucose
- levulose
- maltose
- molasses
- sucrose

In terms of the food products, here are the worst offenders where you will find the highest concentrations of processed sugar.

Sugar, preserves and confectionery: A large chunk of the added sugar in our daily diet (up to 27%) comes from table sugar, jams, chocolate and sweets, with chocolate regularly voted Britain's favourite sweet treat. This is a particular problem among children aged 11 to 18 years. The worst offenders include:

- chocolate spread (57.1g of total sugar per 100g)
- plain chocolate (62.6g sugar per 100g)
- fruit pastilles (59.3g sugar per 100g)

Non-alcoholic drinks: Perhaps the most surprising source, just over a fifth (21%) of the added sugar in adult diets comes from soft drinks, fruit juice and other non-alcoholic drinks. The levels are even higher among children aged 11 to 18 years, who get around a third of their added sugar from drinks – mainly soft drinks, such as cola. A 500ml bottle of cola contains the equivalent of 17 cubes of sugar. Perhaps more surprising, 100% pure unsweetened fruit juice is high in the type of sugars we need to cut down on. This is because the juicing process releases the sugars contained in the fruit, meaning they can damage our teeth.

According to the Harvard School of Public Health, sports drinks, fruit punches, sodas and other sweetened drinks are the [single largest source of calories and added sugar](#) in the American diet and “a major contributor to the obesity epidemic.” About half of all adults consume sugary drinks on any given day, although this is [down from roughly 62 percent](#) in 2003. [Large studies](#) have linked these drinks to an increased risk of Type 2 diabetes, heart disease and premature death. But critics point out that obesity rates [have continued to rise](#) even though consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages in America has fallen in the last 16 years as companies have begun to produce many more drinks that have low or no calories. This indicates the importance of other sources of sugar.

That said, fruit juice still contains vitamins and minerals, so 1 glass (150ml) of unsweetened 100% fruit juice counts as 1 of your 5 A Day. Fruit juice is best enjoyed at mealtimes to reduce the risk of tooth decay. Children should avoid sugary drinks and swap to water, lower fat milks, and diet, sugar-free and no-added-sugar drinks. The worst offenders are:

- cola (10.9g sugar per 100ml)
- squash cordials (24.6g sugar per 100ml)
- sweetened fruit juice (9.8g sugar per 100ml)

Biscuits, buns and cakes: Many of us are ‘grazers’ who prefer to fill up on something that's quick and comforting, but often high in sugar and fat, such as buns, pastries, biscuits and other cereal-based foods. While cereal-based products, especially wholegrains, form part of a healthy, balanced diet, try to cut down on varieties high in sugar and fat, which can increase the risk of tooth decay and contribute to weight gain if eaten in excess. Among the worst offenders are:

- iced cakes (54g sugar per 100g)
- chocolate-coated biscuits (45.8g sugar per 100g)
- frosted corn flakes (37g sugar per 100g)

Alcoholic drinks: Many people are unaware of the sugar content in alcohol and do not include booze when calculating their daily calorie intake. Alcohol contains more calories (7kcal/g) than carbohydrates or protein (4kcal/g). This means that a standard glass of wine (175ml, 12% ABV, 126kcal) can contain as many calories as a piece of chocolate. So try to cut down:

- have a few alcohol-free days each week
- try lower alcohol drinks
- have a smaller bottle of beer instead of a can
- use sugar-free mixers
- swap every other drink for a water or sugar-free soft drink

Dairy products: Dairy products like cheese and yoghurt form part of a healthy, balanced diet. But some dairy products, such as flavoured milks, yoghurts and dairy-based desserts like ice cream, contain added sugar. Among the worst offenders are:

- fruit yoghurt (16.6g sugar per 100g)
- fruit fromage frais (13.3g sugar per 100g)
- choc ice (20.5g sugar per 100g)

Savory foods and Condiments: Sugar is also found in surprisingly large amounts in many savoury foods, such as stir-in sauces, ketchup, salad cream, ready meals, marinades, chutneys and crisps. For example:

- tomato ketchup (27.5g sugar per 100g)
- stir-in sweet and sour sauce (20.2g sugar per 100g)
- salad cream (16.7g sugar per 100g)

If you dip your fresh apples or celery into the wrong thing, you may be making matters worse. Instead, make your own condiments or read the labels. Today there are many low-sugar varieties of condiments, including low-sugar ketchup.

But it's the hidden sugar in our diet that is hard to find that can be the most dangerous. You'll may be surprised at the things that have added and often unnecessary sugar inside.

- **Breakfast Cereal** – Most people would have guessed this one, but we're not talking about the sugar in sugary cereal. We're talking about hidden sugar in so-called healthy cereals. Some "healthy" cereals have more than 23 grams of sugar per serving.
- **Asian Food** – Most restaurant-made or packaged Asian food has an enormous amount of sugar in it. Even sushi. The way you make sushi rice includes adding sugar to it. You can make your own Asian food to ensure that the sugar level is not too high.
- **Canned and Packaged Soups and Sauces** – Thankfully, all you have to do is check the labels. Some yogurt has more than 15 grams of sugar. Even spaghetti sauce and gravy can have more sugar than a soda drink. If you want to be sure to eat less sugar, read labels and find no-sugar options or make your own.
- **Frozen Yogurt** – Just because the word yogurt is on the packaging it doesn't mean it's healthy. It's just as sugary as regular ice-cream. Frozen yogurt is a dessert. Treat it as if it's a dessert. Don't use it for a meal, and don't believe

you're eating healthier. If you prefer real ice cream for a snack you are now free to eat it instead, as one is not better than the other when it comes to sugar.

- **Smoothies** – They're all the rage and there are many smoothie shops out there banking on it. But, most smoothie shops use fruit with added sugar which removes any benefits you would have from drinking a smoothie at all. If you make your own, watch it when recipes ask for dried fruit too. Using whole, fresh fruit is much better.
- **Bread** – While most bread good for you, be aware that most mass-produced bread is made with highly refined flour and sugar. Both of these affect blood sugar. Even wheat bread may be high in sugar, so you need to read the labels. Rye and Spelt breads are usually lowest in sugar. Plus, you can make your own to avoid additives and sugar that can harm your health.
- **Canned Beans** – Check the labels on canned beans, especially ones with any type of sauce on them like chili beans or baked beans. These are usually so high in sugar that if you compared it to a cake you wouldn't know which was which just by the amount of sugar.
- **Muffins** – You probably already realize that some muffins are high in sugar, but even the ones that sound healthy are just cakes in muffin form with a healthy flour or healthy name added. They are all high in sugar. There are some recipes for low-sugar muffins, though; just search the net and you're sure to find them. You don't have to do without.
- **Yogurt** – Just like frozen yogurt is high in sugar, so is most sweetened yogurt - including low-fat yogurt. The best way to combat this problem is to make your own yogurt or eat yogurt as a dessert. You can also buy plain yogurt and add your own fruit and stevia to create a low-sugar snack that is healthy due to the probiotics in yogurt.

The lesson is that anything premade and packaged is in danger of having too much sugar. It's best to read the labels and judge for yourself. Keep in mind that the average adult should not consume more than 30 grams, or 5 percent of their total calories, in added sugar daily.

How Much Sugar Is Too Much?

One thing that needs to be clear is that there is a difference between naturally occurring sugars and added sugar. There is sugar in all plant food and plant food is good for you. In fact, most of your plate should make up plant food if you want to be at your optimum health.

As a general rule, adults should not consume more than about 30 grams in total of free sugars each day ([UK government guidelines](#)). This is equivalent to about 7 sugar cubes per day. Children aged 7 to 10 should have no more than 24g of free sugars a day (6 sugar cubes). Children aged 4 to 6 should have no more than 19g of free sugars a day (5 sugar cubes). There's no guideline limit for children under the age of 4, but it's recommended they avoid sugar-sweetened drinks and food with sugar added to it.

Free sugars are the sugars that are added to food or drinks, and those found naturally in honey, syrups, and unsweetened fruit and vegetable juices. Furthermore, these should not make up more than 5% of the energy (calories) you get from food and drink each day. How much of that constitutes added sugar depends on your ideal daily calorie intake.

That means if you eat 1500 calories each day, you can eat 30 grams of free sugar a day. How much of that you want to be processed and added sugar is up to you. But obviously, keeping the amount of added sugar lower is better for your health. This gives you some room to experiment with your health and to have a little fun on your birthday.

When you consider that a cup of grapes has 15 grams of sugar but a can of coke has 39 grams, it makes the choice easier. If you really want a drink, a tall glass of filtered water with a cup of grapes will fill you up longer. The main thing is to find

substitutes that you truly enjoy and like, while not overshooting the sugar allowance you have for each day.

The more natural sugars that you consume within that limit, the healthier you'll feel. And there are many low glycemic choices that you can make. Here's a quick guide to the sugar content of common fruits and vegetables.

Fruit

- Apples – 1 small = 15g
- Apricots – 1 cup = 15g
- Banana – 1 medium = 14g
- Blackberries – 1 cup whole = 7g
- Blueberries – 1 cup whole = 15g
- Cantaloupe melon – 1 cup diced = 12g
- Cranberries – 1 cup whole = 4g
- Grapefruit – 1 cup = 16g
- Guavas – 1 cup = 15g
- Honeydew mellow – 1 cup diced = 14g
- Lemons – 1 wedge = 0.2g
- Limes - 1 wedge = 0.15g
- Papaya – 1 cup 1" cubed = 11g
- Peaches – 1 cup sliced = 13g
- Raspberries – 1 cup whole = 5g
- Rhubarb – 1 cup diced = 1.3g
- Strawberries – 1 cup whole = 7g
- Tomatoes – 1 large whole = 4.8g
- Watermelon – 1 cup diced = 9g

Vegetables

- Artichokes – 1 large = 1.6g
- Asparagus – 1 cup = 2.5g
- Broccoli – 1 cup chopped = 1.5g
- Carrots – 1 medium = 2.9g

- Celery – 1 cup chopped = 1.8g
- Corn – 1 cup = 1.1g
- Cucumber – 1 8-in = 5g
- Green Beans – 1 cup = 3.3g
- Kale – 1 cup chopped = 1.6g
- Lettuce – 1 head = 2.8g
- Soybean sprouts – 1 cup = 0.1g
- Spinach – 1 cup = 0.1g
- Summer squash – 1 cup sliced = 2.5g
- Swiss chard – 1 cup = 0.4g

As you can see, most natural foods don't really have "too much" sugar. If you can eat 30 grams of sugar a day and you choose wisely from the lower sugar fruits and veggies, you'll be surprised at how much you can eat if you avoid added sugars. In truth, you will need to eat a lot of fruit and vegetables to reach the daily limit.

When you consider that one teaspoon of processed sugar is 4.2 grams, you can decide what is best to eat in every given situation. It's a pretty straightforward decision.

Are You Addicted to Sugar?

As you read this report, do you start thinking about ways to get around the 30-gram maximum of sugar that you can have each day? Note that the 30 grams of sugar you can consume per day has nothing to do with how many carbohydrates you eat each day. This is a separate number that you should be tracking.

Here are some common behaviors that predict sugar addiction:

- **You Eat Too Much** – If there are some foods that you just can't stop eating, assume they're likely high in sugar. Sugar doesn't really make you satiated, so it's hard to stop. This is made worse if sugar is combined with sodium and fat. For example, you may be eating donuts which are also high in salt and fat, but would you really eat them without the sugar? Doubtful.
- **You Crave Processed Carbohydrates** – If you're often craving refined carbs like chips, crackers, and bread, then you may just have a problem with sugar. Often, eliminating added sugars can reduce cravings that you're having for high processed carbs over time.
- **You Crave Salty Foods** – With processed foods, salt and sugar go together very well. If you feel like you could lick a salt lick and be happy, you may be addicted to sugar. Look at the amount of sugar in the snacks you normally eat. If they're highly processed, you can bet they have too much added sugar.
- **You Crave Meat** – This might seem strange, but if you crave meat when you really don't need it and aren't really that hungry, you may really be craving the spices that are often on meat such as wing sauce which is very high in sugar.
- **Every Meal Is High in Sugar** – Is your typical meal higher in sugar than it should be? Keep in mind that the maximum of 30 grams of free sugar is a maximum. It doesn't mean you need to eat that much sugar. If you feel bad

and aren't healthy, you can always cut that amount down. The best way to do that is avoid added sugars and only eat sugar that is naturally in plants.

- **You Get Moody without Sugar** – If you find that you are often feeling grumpy and moody, the problem might sugar. If you often suffer dips and rises in blood sugar, when you have a dip you will suffer from grumpy moods. This can be exacerbated by eating sugary things like candy which will provide a fast jump and a quick fall.
- **You Feel Powerless Over Sugar** – Do you ever feel like you don't even want to eat that sugary snack but you do it anyway because you know it'll make you feel better? This is common in people who work long days; students especially. It's true that eating a sugary snack will help temporarily, but you'd do far better eating a fruit snack with only natural sugars and fiber to help slow down the sugar absorption.
- **You Start and End Your Day with Sugar** – Look at your entire day. What do you eat in the morning? What do you eat before bed? What is the first and last thing you eat each day? If you're eating sugar in the morning and at night, especially added processed sugar and not sugar in whole plants, then that is a sign that you may have an addiction to sugar.
- **You Suffer a 3 PM Slump** – If you work in an office, you'll notice this a lot more than if you are retired or work from home. But pay attention if somewhere after lunch you start falling asleep while you're working or feel as if you need a nap. Look at your diet. Are you giving yourself energy for lunch or are you setting yourself up for a sugar crash?

If you are going through any of these issues, it is wise to calculate how much sugar you're eating in any given day. Most people eat double the recommended sugar maximum due to added and processed sugars, including hidden sugars.

Tips for Breaking Your Sugar Habit

Thankfully, you don't need to work that hard to break your sugar addiction. It's only hard if you shoot for zero sugar. That would not be healthy. Instead, first just shoot for a reduction, and then cut it back more and more through solid food choices.

- **Avoid Processed Food** – The biggest culprit when it comes to sugar in food is processed food. Processed food has tons of sugar and if it doesn't, it has tons of chemicals. Avoiding processed food can eliminate almost all of the added sugar you're eating.
- **Get Plenty of Sunshine** – It might seem weird, but one reason people like to eat sugar is serotonin, the feel-good hormone. When you eat a lot of sugar you'll get a spike in serotonin. Of course, you also get a crash. There are better ways to increase serotonin levels; one is the sunshine. Of course, you'll also get vitamin D which can also improve your mood.
- **Get Plenty of Sleep** – If you have trouble sleeping at night, then you need to get to the root cause of why. Avoid sugars, caffeine, and anything stimulating two to three hours before bed. You should go to sleep on an empty stomach for the best sleep.
- **Drink Enough Water** – Staying hydrated is important to avoid any type of cravings, including sugar cravings. When you're born, you have a perfect thirst detector. But, life often causes us to deny our bodies' signals. Therefore, measure your water to ensure that you're drinking a minimum of 64 ounces to 100 ounces of water a day depending upon your weight.
- **Focus on Stability** – You want to try to keep your sugar balanced. One way to do that is to have regular meal times. For you, that may be six meals a day; for others than will end up being the traditional three meals a day. It depends on what works best for you. You should eat when you feel real hunger pangs.

- **Eat Your Greens** – For some reason, when you eat more greens like turnip greens, spinach, kale and so forth, your sweet cravings will go away. So, instead of eating something sweet when you get the craving, try eating a bowl of steamed spinach with good red wine vinegar on it and your cravings will disappear.
- **Incorporate Fermented Foods and Drinks** – Not only are they good to help keep your stomach acid and bacteria balanced, fermented foods and drinks are also great sweet tooth killers. You can buy prepared fermented foods or make your own. Keep in mind a very small amount of sugar is used in fermentation, but that is okay.
- **Meditate** – Sometimes sugar cravings are just a sign that you need to slow down and center yourself. Stress can play a huge part in appetite and cravings. Take the time to meditate, at least 10 minutes per day. If you don't want to meditate, prayer or sitting silently also works.

Incorporating these tips into your day can make a huge difference when you're trying to end sugar cravings and break your sugar habit. Remember that it's not going to happen overnight either. Just focus on adding in good things to your life rather than on what you're eliminating.

How to Fight Sugar Addiction Withdrawal Symptoms

When you first embark on eliminating added sugar from your diet, you're going to experience some withdrawal symptoms - especially if some of your sugary treats included caffeine. You don't want to use a bunch of fake things to sub for sugar, so it's best to try to get over each symptom you have.

- **Depression** – If you notice after giving up added sugar you're feeling depressed, ensure that you are eating some natural sugars like those found in fruit and veggies. You don't want to have zero carbohydrates. Carbohydrates make you feel good. Just eat them without added sugar, oil and fat.
- **A headache** – This is more than likely caused from drinking less caffeine. But, if you do find that you're getting headaches, check your hydration. If you were used to sugary drinks, it can be hard to drink plain water. But, it's imperative that you drink enough water each day.
- **Anxiety** – Anxiety manifests itself in many ways to different people. Some people get a fluttery feeling in their stomach. Others experience shortness of breath or heart palpitations. It can be very severe in some people. If you find that you're experiencing a lot of anxiety, the best thing to do is go to your doctor for a blood test. Some illnesses like hypothyroid which has nothing to do with sugar restriction can cause anxiety. Otherwise, just check your hydration level, sleep level, and ensure that you're eating enough calories for your ideal weight.
- **Irritable Mood** – Feeling moody? When your blood sugar gets too low you can feel moody. This can be remedied by eating more often. Try to balance your meals with the right amounts of protein, fat, and carbohydrates for your personal needs. Don't allow yourself to get too hungry; this is a sure-fire way to end up feeling moody. Keep healthy snacks around like apples and no sugar added peanut butter.

- **Fatigue** – Still feeling that 3 pm slump? Feeling tired and foggy all the time? This is a sign that you're not eating enough carbohydrates. Remember that veggies are good carbs and you should eat them in plentiful amounts. It can also mean that you need to drink more water.
- **Achy Muscles** – This is one of the first signs of dehydration. A lot of people who used to drink sugary drinks for most of their hydration find it difficult to get enough water. Drink at least eight glasses of water a day. For snacks, eat hydrating food like apples, carrots, oranges and other fresh fruit and veggies.
- **Cravings** – When you notice you're getting super-strong sugar cravings, it's time to look at your list of things to do during cravings. You can still eat something sweet, but instead of candy or processed food, pick something fresh like a bowl of berries or sliced apples.

The symptoms of sugar withdrawal are more difficult for some people than others. Be patient with yourself. If you cave in and eat processed sugar, drink extra water, move more, and be prepared next time with a healthy snack. Don't forget to try the greens and vinegar.

Recipe Ideas to Keep Your Sugar Cravings at Bay

One way to avoid eating too much sugar is to be ready. If you're prepared with food to eat when you have a craving, when you're feeling tired, and when you're hungry, you'll do a lot better sticking to your goals.

Frozen Fruit Dessert

This isn't as much of a recipe as an idea. You can use your food processor, high-speed blender, magic bullet or similar gadget. All you do is freeze the fruit you want to use for a while, then feed it through blender or the food processor. It's simple and tastes wonderful. Tip: Use the ripest fruit you can for the sweetest flavor.

Snacks

The best snacks have a good balance of fat and protein. These low-sugar snack ideas will help you if you miss sugar at all.

Apples and Peanut Butter – Skip the bread and just slice up an apple, then spread it with sugar-free peanut butter. The best peanut butter has one ingredient. Peanuts. The fiber in the apple makes the sugar digest slowly. The fat and protein in the peanut butter keep you satiated.

No Sugar Fiber Loaf

Fiber Rich Loaf – Everyone likes bread but it can pack a huge sugar punch. But, you can make your own fiber-rich bread that is low in sugar and healthy for you. You'll need:

1 cup hulled, salt-free raw pumpkin seeds

1/2 cup hemp seeds

1/2 cup raw peeled almonds
1.5 cup rolled oats
2 tbsp chia seeds
3 tbsp psyllium husk powder
1 tsp fine grain sea salt
1 tbsp honey
3 tbsp apple sauce
1.5 cup water

Combine all dry ingredients. Set aside. Combine all wet ingredients in a separate bowl. Then pour the wet ingredients into the dry. Mix until it forms a thick dough. If you notice that it's too dry, you can add more water. Form into a dough and put into a prepared bread pan. You can prepare your bread pan with some oil spread on with a paper towel, or you can line the pan with parchment paper.

Cover pan and dough with a towel and let sit in a warm place for at least two hours. When the dough has risen enough, you'll know because it keeps its shape when you touch it lightly with your finger.

Bake in a 350-degree F oven on the middle rack for about 30 to 40 minutes. Done bread will sound hollow when thumped.

Fermented Veggies

Let's make this simple. You can chop a bunch of veggies, or you can go to the fresh section of your grocery and buy prechopped veggies in bags, or from the salad bar. It's up to you how you do it. But, you'll want to chop them smaller anyway. Probably 1/2 inch pieces will work best.

In addition, you need some glass jars with sealable lids, such as canning jars.

Chop a mixture of veggies that you enjoy. Include at least a couple of apples or carrots due to the sweet flavor they provide. Add some ginger too if you like the flavor. Sprinkle all with salt.

Fill each jar with your mixture of chopped veggies tightly. Leave one inch of space from the top. Smash the veggies into the jar. You want them very tight. Then into each filled jar, put the following mixture into the jar until it's one inch below the top.

To Make the Brine:

4 cups water

1 tbsp sea salt

Mix until the salt is totally dissolved.

Ensure that the veggie mixture always stays under the water in the jar. If you need to, weight the mixture down with a stone or weight. Cover with some cheesecloth and a rubber band. Keep in a warm spot for three to five days.

Check the mixture daily to ensure that everything stays under the brine. You'll know when your fermented veggies are done when your veggies are bubbling. That shows that the fermenting process has completed. Your veggies should also smell a little sour but you should like the smell. They should also taste good. After that has happened, put the normal lids the jars on and put in the fridge.

[Low Sugar Oatmeal and Blueberry Muffins](#)

You're no saint, anymore than the rest of us when it comes to sweet things so there's no point in constant self-denial. So, how about a muffin? A low sugar one? Plus, one that's low fat, easy to make, and easy on the pocket? [Click here to get the recipe](#). With just 6.5g of sugars per muffin you can stay well inside the recommended limits while having one of your 5 per day (fruits that is!).

What Now?

If you really want to rid yourself of sugar cravings, lose weight and get healthier, a good way to do it is to avoid added sugars. Remember, sugar that is found naturally in plants that you eat is usually okay, although you should try to limit super-sweet fruit like dried fruits and dates.

Take it one day at a time. Focus on eating until you're satisfied and not stuffed whenever you're hungry. Get enough hydration, exercise, and sunshine and you'll kick that sugar habit to the curb in no time.

Understand that sugar, even processed sugar, is not bad, in itself. It's our tendency to eat too much of it and the fact that the much of what constitutes the modern diet has too much of the highly processed sugars that makes sugar a problem.

If you have been eating too much sugar, particularly if it is too much of the wrong kinds of sugar, then you need to act. You are hardwired through evolution to seek out and eat sugar. But you are now living in a world with too much sugar presented to you every day.

Being aware of how much sugar you are eating is the first step. Then see how this compares to the recommended daily amounts. Be aware of the adverse health consequences of what you are doing. From this information, develop the will to change your ways.

You don't have to put it all to right at once. And you should not think in terms of no sugar. That's not a good idea. Try to cut down. And try to consume more of the less refined sugars.

And remember: even if you don't achieve all that you should, any progress is a step in the right direction. Get used to the progress you have made and then plan the next step.