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Snack Ideas

to replace those processed, sugary snacks.

Fresh fruit or veggies with nut butters, nuts or cheese

Plain yogurt with fresh fruit and nuts

Cottage cheese

Veggies with hummus or guacamole

Boiled egg

Smoothie made with fresh or frozen fruit and yogurt

Leftovers

Nuts



Maybe it ain't so sweet after all

Refined sugar is the most widely consumed foods, yet considered to be one of the most harmful. Refined sugar is any sugar that is not in its natural form – whole fruit would be in its natural form while white sugar is not naturally grown in crystal form. If you start reading labels, refined sugar is in everything, even ketchup. The average American now consumes about 175 pounds of sugar per year; that is almost a half of a pound per day! The more sugar a person consumes, the more carbohydrates they crave and the vicious cycle of battling extra pounds, blood sugar swings, moodiness, headaches, irritability, energy swings and cravings begins.

Refined sugar contains no fiber, no minerals, no proteins, no fats or enzymes - only empty calories. The body must borrow vital nutrients from healthy cells in order to metabolize the sugar. Many times, so much calcium is used to neutralize the effects of sugar that the bones become "osteoporotic" due to the withdrawn calcium. If sugar consumption is continued, an over-acid condition results, and more minerals are needed from deep in the body to correct the imbalance. If the body is lacking the nutrients used to metabolize sugar, it will not be able to properly handle and rid itself of the poisonous residues, which can lead to degenerative disease.

Excess sugar intake eventually affects every organ in the body because the sugar turns to fat. The fat is distributed throughout the body and amongst active organs, such as the heart and kidneys. These begin to slow down and finally their tissues degenerate. The whole body is affected by their reduced ability and abnormal blood pressure is created. This in turn affects the circulatory and lymphatic systems and the quality of the red blood cells start to change. An overabundance of white cells (those that protect our immunity) then occurs, and the creation of new tissue becomes slower which decreases our immunity. When consuming just one regular, 12 oz. can of soda (roughly 10 teaspoons of sugar or 50 gm), our immune system's ability to defend itself, from the day to day pollutants, germs, viruses, etc. we take in, is reduced by 50% to 90%. This reduction in immunity can last up to six hours. The next time you want to give your immune system a boost and reduce your chances of experiencing cold or flu, avoid the sweets. Or if you struggle with health in general, limiting your sugar consumption can greatly help. The following are just some of the other negative side effects, both short and long-term, from eating too much sugar:



- Hyperactivity, anxiety, difficulty concentrating, and crankiness in children
- A significant rise in triglycerides, a leading cause of heart disease
- Kidney damage
- Leads to cancer of the breast, ovaries, intestines, prostate and rectum; Sugar is cancer's food source!
- The top cause of type II diabetes, as it increases levels of glucose and insulin
- Weakens eyesight and can cause cataracts
- Increased risk of Crohn's Disease and ulcerative colitis
- Changes associated with gastric or duodenal ulcers
- Arthritis
- Asthma
- Gallstones to form
- Multiple sclerosis
- Toxemia during pregnancy
- Eczema in children
- Skin aging by changing the structure of collagen

And if you think you can get around sugar by substituting with artificial sweeteners, WAIT! NutraSweet, otherwise known as aspartame, and Splenda are the most commonly used. Aspartame is made by aspartic acid and phenylalanine, fused together by methanol. Methanol breaks down into formic acid and formaldehyde (yes, embalming fluid). Methanol is a dangerous brain toxin, a known carcinogen, causes retinal damage in the eye, interferes with DNA replication and causes birth defects. Methanol toxicity also mimics multiple sclerosis, which has led to many misdiagnoses. Aspartic acid and phenylalanine can cause headaches/migraines, nausea, abdominal pain, fatigue, sleep disorders, vision problems, anxiety attacks, depression, asthma, seizures, elevated blood plasma, retardation in unborn children, insomnia and severe mood swings.

Splenda, also known as sucralose, is a chlorinated table sugar derivative. Splenda causes shrinkage of the thymus gland (where we make our immunity-enhancing white blood cells) and enlarged liver and kidneys. The chlorine added to sucralose is similar to ingesting tiny amounts of chlorinated pesticides. Though it is not as toxic as aspartame, it is clear from the hazards seen in pre-approval research, and from its chemical structure, that years or decades of use may contribute to serious chronic immunological or neurological disorders. Some better, alternative options for sweetening are:

- Stevia - a very sweet plant derived sweetener
- Licorice root
- Raw honey
- 100% fruit juice added to tea or sparkling water
- Agave nectar
- Unsweetened applesauce can replace sugar, and oil, in cooking
- Rapadura

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