

5-DAY SUGAR-FREE CHALLENGE

So Whats the Problem With Sugar

SO WHAT'S THE PROBLEM WITH SUGAR?

You probably haven't spent a ton of time wondering what happens to your body after you eat something sugary – it goes in there with all the rest of the food you consume and keeps you alive – end of story. Well, sugar is definitely needed to stay alive. Carbohydrates are the primary source of energy and play an important role in the functioning of the internal organs, the nervous system, and the muscles, but our systems do not need sugar in the quantity that we are used to.

Before food processing, when sugar was mainly obtained from fruits and vegetables, people consumed about 30 grams per day of it. Today, an average American consumes 76 grams a day, which is about 19 teaspoons. That adds up to 96 pounds of sugar yearly (40 lbs. of which is high fructose corn syrup).

Canadians consume slightly lower amounts at 88 pounds. The World Health Organization would like to see the number get down to 25 grams a day for both men and women (6¼ teaspoons).

High amounts of sugar can wreak havoc on our immune systems, hormones, and digestion. Some of the negative effects are premature aging, weight gain, fatigue, bone loss, mental fatigue, depression and it is a major contributing factor to diabetes, heart disease, and cancer.

HOW MUCH SUGAR DO YOU CONSUME IN A DAY?

At first thought, you probably think, “not that much.” Let's have a look, starting with breakfast. For example, you begin your day with a bagel with peanut butter and a small strawberry yogurt - for a total of 33 grams of sugar. At mid-morning you have a large cup of coffee from your favorite coffee shop (double/ double) - 34 grams of sugar. For lunch you decide to go easy on the calories, so you have a salad with Italian vinaigrette and a slice of whole wheat bread - that's another 14 grams of sugar. For an afternoon pick-me-up, you have a can of pop - 39 grams of sugar. And then for dinner, you have some pasta with grilled chicken and store-bought tomato sauce - that's 9 grams for the sauce and about 2 grams from the noodles.

The GRAND TOTAL: 131 grams of sugar or 32 teaspoons (roughly ¾ of a cup)!

That's an eye-opener for sure.

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Sugar is labeled as an addiction because it stimulates the brain in a way that is similar to cocaine and alcohol, causing the release of the feel-good chemicals dopamine and serotonin.

When sugar is consumed in large quantities it has several effects:

- It causes people to eat it, despite the negative consequences like weight gain, fatigue, and moodiness
- Tolerance will develop, and more will be needed for the same effect, this equals cravings
- Some people have trouble functioning without it and have a “stash” available when their energy plummets
- Upon quitting sugar withdrawal, symptoms may appear

This last one is why this is “a challenge,” as it may be difficult to stay on track when the cravings hit – but we have provided emergency fixes and a very detailed and easy to follow meal plan and recipes. With some advanced planning, a trip to the grocery store and a positive attitude, you will come out the other side feeling great!