

Your Brain on Sugar

OUR BRAIN ON SUGAR...

- Fuzzy thinking or foggy mind.
- Fatigue or sleepiness after meals.
- Gas, bloating or extended stomach after meals.
- Headache.
- Joint pain.
- Constipation.
- Diarrhea.
- Skin problems.

Do you relate to any of these? Let's take a look at your sugar intake and the effects it has on your brain and body.

Eating too much sugar causes many symptoms known as classic metabolic syndrome. These include weight gain, abdominal obesity, decreased HDL and increased LDL, elevated blood sugar, elevated triglycerides, and high blood pressure and more. It also weakens our immune system, creates tooth decay, and some research even states behavioral issues.

Whenever we eat food dopamine is released in the brain. However after eating the same food time after time, the dopamine levels begin to even out and we no longer find the dish as satisfying as we once did. This is because the human brain evolved to motivate us to eat a wider variety of food. This evolutionary tactic ensures that humans both receive a balanced amount of vitamins and minerals, while also helping us to steer away from dangerous rotting food. But, no matter how much sugar a person consumes, the dopamine levels will never even out enough to motivate and discourage an individual from eating more sugar.



In order to best control your sugar intake, it would probably be wise to know what exactly sugar is. Sugar is actually a carbohydrate. The white stuff we add to our tea and coffee is sucrose, a complex sugar comprised of two simpler sugars: fructose and glucose. Foods in the grocery store don't always clearly label their sugar content so when reviewing nutrition labels it's important to be aware that words such as glucose, sucrose, lactose, maltose, dextrose, starch, corn syrup, fruit juice, raw sugar, and honey. Sugar is also added to ketchup, yogurt, and flavored water just to name a few.

Recommended sugar intake according to the American Heart Association:

Men...150 calories per day (37.5 grams or 9 teaspoons).

Women...100 calories per day (25 grams or 6 teaspoons).

Preschoolers...170 calories per day (20 grams or 4 teaspoons)

Ages 4-8...130 calories per day (15 grams or 3 teaspoons)

Pre-teen and teen...(25-40 grams or 5-8 teaspoons)

Want to better your brain and body?

Try limiting to eliminating sugar for 2 weeks and see how you feel. This does not mean to take out natural sugars such as fruit. Read labels and try to shop the perimeter of the store. Focus on fruits, vegetables, protein, and grains that do not come in "crinkly packages".

Besides possible weight loss, glowing skin, mental clarity, and more energy, your food will start to taste better. We are meant to enjoy our food. When we have too much sugar it inhibits us from tasting the natural sweetness in fruits and other foods