Healthy Sugar Alternatives & More

Understanding both healthy & not so healthy sugars with their Glycemic Index & Load

Is there such a thing as healthy sugar?

Our body needs sugar to survive. But what we don’t need is refined sugars. Anyone suffering from an overabundance of Candida should limit their fruits, choose them wisely, and forget about sweets in general until the Candida is under control. This goes for those suffering from diabetes and any fungal, viral, or bacterial infection as well. If you do suffer from Candida problems we recommend Thorne SF722. It kills Candida better than anything we know of. A good probiotic to help rebuild the healthy gut flora is recommended too.

(Click here to scroll to table)

In nature, we didn’t eat a lot of sugar, and none of it was refined. In fact, just to get an idea of how easy it is for us to ingest more sugar than we would have ever done in nature, consider the fact that our fruit has grown in size and has become sweeter and easier to eat. One good example is the banana. Just google “wild banana.” Check out the pictures.

Sugar is wrecking havoc on our bodies in a few different ways. It’s hard on the pancreas, the liver, and it feeds fungus, bacteria, viruses, and other parasites that stress the whole body. Consuming refined sugars radically lowers the body’s immune system and leads to allergies, both seasonal and food allergies.

Note: If you've been eating too much sugar (and this includes those known as "healthier sugars," check out *How to Kill Candida and Balance the Inner Ecosystem*. For a better understanding of how sugar interacts with the body, check out *Gluten, Candida, Leaky Gut Syndrome, and Autoimmune Diseases.*

Many people consider themselves healthy but suffer from certain ailments due to their sugar intake. In many cases, these people do not realize that the alternative healthier sugar choices they make still contribute to health problems. Sugars like brown rice syrup, honey, coconut palm sugar, and apple juice are still refined sugars and should be used sparingly. Maple syrup and dates are other sweeteners that, depending on your definition are not necessarily refined, but still are sugars none the less and need to be limited as well. If you or someone you know suffers from seasonal allergies or chronic Candida overgrowth, give up the honey, the brown rice syrup, the agave, and any other sweetener, save stevia, completely for a week and see what happens. We bet the results will surprise you.

The reality is that junk food, whether made with healthier sugar substitutes or high fructose corn syrup is still junk food. Healthy foods are whole foods, and whole foods should be the foundation of anyone's diet.

Glucose

Glucose is the simple sugar made by the body through digestion of carbohydrates. It is the body's chief source of energy. Sometimes glucose is called dextrose.

Sucrose

Sucrose is what we commonly refer to as table sugar. It is made from highly processed sugar cane or sugar beets. The composition of sucrose is a combination of glucose and fructose, which separates during digestion. Pure sucrose is devoid of any nutrients.

Fructose

Fructose, commonly called fruit sugar, is a simple sugar found in honey, tree fruits, berries, and melons. But don’t be fooled into thinking fructose on a label means you are eating fruit sugar. Pure crystalline fructose comes from two sources: corn or sucrose (table sugar). Corn starch is processed to release fructose. Sucrose (table sugar) is enzymatically hydrolyzed to separate into glucose and fructose. Crystalline fructose is pure fructose from one of these two sources.

High Fructose Syrups

High Fructose Corn Syrup is made from starches like corn, wheat, and rice. High fructose syrups contain nearly equal amounts of glucose and fructose, a composition nearly identical to sucrose (table sugar). The reason high fructose corn syrup is so abundant in our processed food is simple-it’s cheaper than sugar. Because we highly subsidize corn and place tariffs on sugar imports, high fructose corn syrup is much less expensive.

Pure fructose is 1.2-1.8 times sweeter than sucrose so less is needed for the same level of sweetness. It is low on the glycemic index, therefore it does not lead to peaks and dips in the body’s glucose levels. But fructose is processed in the liver. When too much fructose enters the liver at once, the liver can’t process fructose as a sugar. Instead, the liver turns excess fructose into fats-triglycerides. When you incorporate these fats into our bodies cells (the cell membranes) triglycerides cause these cells to be insulin resistant. This is the reason that high fructose corn syrup leads to diabetes. Fructose is linked to significant increases of both cholesterol and triglycerides. And remember-fructose, like sucrose-is a highly refined processed sugar devoid of any nutrition.

Maltose

Maltose, also known as malt sugar, is half as sweet as sucrose (table sugar). It is produced from starch (barley, wheat, rice or other grains). It has been produced in China since 200 B.C. We use it in making beer and as an additive to some processed foods.

In our bodies, maltose is formed as the first step in digestion of starchy foods. It is then broken down into glucose.

Lactose

Lactose is the sugar found naturally in milk.

Date Sugar

Date sugar is 100% dehydrated dates ground into small pieces. It is a whole food, high in fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Date sugar can be substituted for granulated sugar or brown sugar cup for cup, but it does not dissolve in liquids. Most alternative health practitioners consider Date Sugar to be a healthy sugar alternative.

Sugar Alcohols or Polyols

Maltitol, maltitol syrup, sorbitol, mannitol, xylitol, lactitol, lakanto, erythritol, and **isomalt** are examples of sugar alcohols. They occur naturally in plants but are usually manufactured from sugars and starches. Sugar alcohols have fewer calories than sugars because they are not completely absorbed by the body. They can ferment in the intestines and cause gas, bloating, and diarrhea.

Information on Xylitol from Natural News:

Health Claims

It is obvious to me, as it might be to you, that xylitol, in addition to killing bacteria, will probably kill just about anything. This clearly explains why it is only recommended to be used in small doses. Yet if you go to a health food store, you will see larger sized bags of xylitol on the shelf, promoting its many health uses.

Health Concerns

In lab tests, xylitol will kill a rat 50% of the time in a dosage of 16.5 grams of xylitol for every 1000 grams of rat. Medium rats weigh 100-120 grams, or say .25 pounds. That means, to kill a 100-gram rat, you need only to get the rat to consume, 1.65 grams of xylitol.

A typical xylitol piece of gum contains .7 – 1 gram of xylitol. About half the amount needed to kill a rat. I read of a study stating that humans consumed up to 400 grams of xylitol per day without any ill health effects. I find that hard to believe that such a study is accurate in comparison to the lab tests done as indicated on the material safety data sheets. If 1.65 grams can kill a rat, consuming 400 grams would be highly toxic to humans.

Glycemic Index

When carbohydrates are digested, glucose is released into the bloodstream. The **glycemic index** is a comparative measurement of the amount of glucose released by a particular food over a two to three-hour period.

Foods that rapidly release glucose rate high on the **glycemic index** (GI). Foods that slowly release glucose are low on the **glycemic index**. Mixing high and low GI foods can result in a moderate glucose release.

But the GI rating alone does not give you all of the information you need to determine a food’s effect on your blood sugar. It only tells you how quickly the carbs in a food should turn into sugar in your blood. The glycemic load or GL tells you how much of that carb the food contains. And of course the amount you eat of that particular food is also a huge factor in the rise of your blood sugar.

Foods ranked low on the GI scale release glucose slowly and steadily without a sudden spike of glucose in the blood. A spike in glucose results in a large insulin release, which is more likely to store glucose as fat rather than use it as fuel. Plus a high release of insulin often results in a rapid drop in blood sugar, causing hunger. So you eat candy. Your blood sugar spikes. Insulin is released. Your blood sugar drops. You eat more candy. The sugar rollercoaster ride begins.

It is important to remember that the GI scale is simply a comparative scale; it compares one food's blood glucose response to another. There are many other factors to consider when choosing your food. Start with the basic question. Is this food dense with nutrients?

The Best Sugars

When baking, or for coffee and teas, honey would not be used since the heat destroys the natural benefits. Stevia does not bake well and it has a funny aftertaste to most people, but we love it in lemonade and cranberry juice, as well as many teas. If forced to a favorite, sugar cane juice, maple syrup, and coconut palm sugar are our top choices when used sparingly. While we are not a fan of agave, sugar alcohols, or using very much of any refined sugars, a mix of them can be a healthier choice for baking and other recipes that call for sweeteners. Using a little bit of agave, some lactitol, some stevia, and sugar cane juice or coconut palm sugar can be a great way to lessen the adverse effects of any one type of surer while still getting a very nice, well-rounded sweet taste.

Sugars & Substitutes with their Glycemic Index & Load

Glycemic indexes and loads are an average based on a wide variety of sources that base their findings on a glucose scale. These figures are estimates. The accurate glycemic index and the glycemic load for each individual person varies depending on many factors including body composition and other foods that are being digested at the same time.

If you know of some good glycemic load resources for sweeteners please leave us a comment, as they are lacking on the internet. If you want to see other sugars on this list, comment for that as well, we’ll get them added.

Be sure to look at the recommended reading below.

Please note that the glycemic index numbers here are estimates. There are many variables that help determine how quickly a sugar is absorbed. These numbers represent an average of many different respected studies. In addition, it is very important to note that the glycemic index and the glycemic load do not define what is a healthy sugar and what is an unhealthy sugar. There are many other variables.

If you’ve been eating too much sugar (and this includes those known as “healthier sugars,” check out *How to Kill Candida and Balance the Inner Ecosystem*. For a better understanding of how sugar interacts with the body, check out *Gluten, Candida, Leaky Gut Syndrome, and Autoimmune Diseases.*

Recommended Reading:

- *Heal Cavities, Gum Disease, Naturally with Organic Oral Care – Toothpaste recipes included*
- *Total Nutrition – Make your own Homemade Multivitamin and Mineral Formula*
- *Still Have Candida? How Mercury Fillings Cause Candida Overgrowth*