More Bad News For Sugar – Research Confirms it is a Leading Cause of Heart Disease

(NaturalNews – John Phillip) Just in case you needed yet another reason to stay away from added dietary sugar sources, nutritional scientists now confirm that our obsession with consuming sweets is killing us by dramatically increasing risk of death from cardiovascular disease and heart attack. A host of known risk factors including elevated blood pressure and triglycerides, along with cholesterol abnormalities such as oxidized LDL cholesterol and poor HDL/LDL cholesterol ratios are all attributable to a diet filled with empty calories fueled by sugar consumption. Interestingly, researchers have determined that the increase in cardiovascular risk factors is not attributable to weight gain commonly associated with excess sugar intake; sugar directly raises heart disease risk independent of weight gain.

A research study team from New Zealand's *University of Otago*, publishing in *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, has conducted a review and meta-analysis of a large cohort of dietary studies comparing the effects of higher and lower added sugar consumption on blood pressure and lipids, both of which are important cardiovascular risk determinants. Lead study author, Dr. Lisa Te Morenga and her students have uncovered solid and documented evidence that eating sugar has a direct effect on risk factors for heart disease, and is likely to negatively impact blood pressure and blood lipids. Dr. Te Morenga noted, "Our analysis confirmed that sugars contribute to cardiovascular risk, independent of the effect of sugars on body weight."

Sugar and refined carbohydrates increase risk of hypertension and cholesterol abnormalities

The scientists analyzed a total of 49 nutritional intervention trials conducted between 1965 and 2013. Comparing diets where the only intended differences were the amount of sugars and non-sugar carbohydrates consumed by the participants allowed for the measurement of the effects of these diets on lipids and blood pressure. 37 trials reported the effects of dietary sugars on lipid metabolism while another 12 yielded results on blood pressure. The team then pooled the available data to determine the impact on measurable risk factors that affect human health.

The team noted that some of the data provided by the studies was skewed as the research was funded by the food/sugar industries. When they factored out those biased results, they found a startling pool of data conclusively demonstrating the negative impact of high-sugar diets on cardio-metabolic risk factors. Small increases in blood pressure, as little as 20 mm Hg systolic and diastolic, can double the risk of a heart attack, while changes to cholesterol metabolism can alter the delicate endothelial lining of the arteries affecting plaque formation and blood clotting.

While the food industry and media outlets continue to promote a wide spectrum of processed, sugar packed foods as a means to boost their bottom line profit margins, millions of uninformed people continue to consume 156 pounds of added sugar each year. Recently, sugar has been making news as it has been associated with increased risk of many forms of cancer, as well as stroke and Alzheimer’s dementia. The evidence should be clear to any health-minded individual – eliminate all sources of empty sugar and refined food products in favor of foods in their natural form to dramatically lower the risk of

heart disease and most chronic illnesses.

Sources for this article include:

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