New Science Website Reveals the Truth About Sugar

(Dr. Mercola) Low-fat recommendations have led to a dramatic increase in sugar consumption, and excess sugar is a primary dietary factor in countless chronic disease states, including type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and Alzheimer's.

By removing fat and adding sugar, the processed food industry has created a smorgasbord of made-to-order disease. The sugar, processed food, and beverage industries have been extremely reluctant to admit the health hazards associated with their sugar-laden products.

On the contrary, large sums of money have been spent, and scientific integrity has been tossed by the wayside, in order to convince you that sugar is fine, and if you have a weight problem, it's because you're not active enough.

To counter the propaganda provided by profit-driven industry interests, dozens of scientists at three American universities have created a new educational website called SugarScience.org,1 aimed at making independent research available to the public.

Sugar by Any Other Name Is Still Sugar…

The researchers point out that many are unaware of just how much sugar they're consuming, as it's oftentimes hidden under other less familiar names, such as dextrose, maltose, galactose, and maltodextrin.

According to SugarScience.org, added sugars hide in 74 percent of processed foods under more than 60 different names! For a full list, please see SugarScience.org's "Hidden in Plain

Sight" page.2

Mislead by shrewd advertisers, many are also still unaware of how too much sugar can disrupt your health and well-being. As reported by the *New York Times*:3

"The scientists who started SugarScience.org say they have reviewed 8,000 independent clinical research articles on sugar and its role in metabolic conditions that are some of the leading killers of Americans, like heart disease, Type 2 diabetes and liver disease.

The link between sugar and chronic disease has attracted increasing scientific scrutiny in recent years. But many studies have provided conflicting conclusions, and experts say part of the reason is that biased studies have clouded the debate."

Have You Been Mislead by Biased Science?

A report published in *PLOS Medicine* in December 2013 looked at how financial interests influence outcomes in trials aimed to determine the relationship between sugar consumption and obesity.4

The report concluded that industry-funded studies end up reaching *very* different conclusions compared to those done by independent researchers… In all, studies that had financial ties to industry were *five times* more likely to present a conclusion of "no positive association" between sugar and obesity.

One of the researchers involved in the creation of SugarScience.org is Dr. Robert Lustig, a Professor of Clinical Pediatrics in the Division of Endocrinology at UC San Francisco.

He’s been on the forefront of the movement to educate people about the health hazards of sugar (and fructose in particular), for a number of years now. He believes the new website will help empower consumers by providing objective data. Dr. Lustig told the *New York Times*:

“The goal of this is to provide just the unbiased science in a way that the public can come to its own conclusions.”

How Much Sugar Is Too Much?

The American Heart Association and the World Health Organization (WHO) recommend limiting your daily *added* sugar intake to nine teaspoons (38 grams) for men, and six teaspoons (25 grams) for women. The limits for children range from three to six teaspoons (12 – 25 grams) per day, depending on age.

Four grams of sugar is equivalent to about one teaspoon, and I strongly recommend limiting your daily fructose intake to 25 grams or less from *all* sources, including natural sources such as fruit—regardless of whether you’re male or female. That equates to just over six teaspoons of total sugar a day.

If you’re among the 80 percent who have insulin or leptin resistance (overweight, diabetic, have high blood pressure, or taking a statin drug), you’d be wise to restrict your total fructose consumption to as little as 15 grams per day until you’ve normalized your insulin and leptin levels.

The average American consumes around 20 teaspoons of added sugar a day, which is more than three times the recommended amount. There’s simply no doubt that this overconsumption of sugar is fueling the obesity and chronic disease epidemics we’re currently struggling with.

We’re now seeing obesity in infants, strokes in eight-year olds, heart attacks in 20-year olds, and some 30-year olds require renal dialysis to stay alive. Teens are now getting

gastric bypass surgeries. What used to be called “adult onset diabetes” is now more often called “type 2 diabetes,” as it is no longer reserved for adults. What is wrong with this picture? *It’s the food.*

Instead of eating whole foods—*real foods*—the contemporary American diet typically consists mostly of sugar, highly processed grains, and a montage of chemicals that are anything but food. Children are surrounded by these fake foods every day, which have a very different effect on their bodies than real food.

The Processed versus Whole Food Experiment: A Visual Demonstration

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zi_DaJKsCLo
The video above features Stefani Bardin, who collaborated on a study to investigate how your body processes different kinds of foods. Stefani and her Harvard University collaborator swallowed an M2A capsule—a pill-sized recording device capable of recording eight hours’ worth of video as it travels through the intestinal tract. Another pill-sized device measured pressure, pH, and body temperature as it moved through the body. Two types of meals were investigated:

- Processed food meal: blue Gatorade, Ramen Chicken Noodle soup, and some Gummi Bears
- Whole food meal: Hibiscus drink, homemade chicken stock with handmade noodles, pomegranate/cherry juice Gummi Bears

The footage offers an interesting view of what really goes on in your gut when you eat processed food. One of the most obvious differences is that the processed fare takes FAR longer to break down. Processed foods are also loaded with sugars, trans fat, sodium, and various concoctions of chemicals that do not exist in nature—all of which can rapidly

contribute to high blood pressure and deterioration of cardiovascular health, weight gain, and a slew of other symptoms.

Even ‘Health Foods’ Can Contain Shocking Amounts of Sugar

Getting back to the issue of sugar, exceeding the recommended daily amount is far easier than you might think. For example, just *one* 12-ounce can of regular soda may contain as much as 11 teaspoons of sugar.5 Even foods that are typically considered “healthy” can contain shocking amounts of added sugar, typically in the form of high fructose corn syrup (HFCS). Fruit flavored yogurt, for example, can contain upwards of 19 grams of sugar; 12 grams of which is added sugar. For someone with insulin/leptin resistance, this alone will put you over your daily recommended limit for total sugar.

One problem with processed food is that when you look at the label, you have no way of knowing how much of the sugar is natural to the food itself, versus the sugar that was added. According to Dr. Lustig, it’s important to distinguish between natural food-based sugars versus added sugar, because clinical trials have shown that consuming HFCS can increase your risk factors for cardiovascular disease within as little as *two weeks*.

Food-based sugars are far less hazardous. Lactose, for example, which is a natural sugar found in dairy, does not cause any major harm, according to Dr. Lustig. Still, I believe that if you are insulin/leptin resistant, then limiting ALL forms of sugar, including natural food-based sugars, such as lactose, is advisable, until your insulin/leptin resistance has been resolved.

Your Body Can Only Handle a Limited Amount of Sugar

The main problem with sugar, and processed fructose in particular, is the fact that your liver has a very limited capacity to metabolize it. According to Dr. Lustig, you can safely metabolize about six teaspoons of added sugar per day. As mentioned, the average American consumes 20 teaspoons of added sugar a day.6 All that excess sugar is metabolized into *body fat*, and leads to all of the chronic metabolic diseases we struggle with, including but not limited to:

- Type 2 diabetes
- Cardiovascular disease
- Hypertension (high blood pressure)
- Dementia
- Cancer

According to a study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*7 earlier this year, 10 percent of Americans consumed 25 percent or more of their daily calories in the form of added sugars. Most adults (71.4 percent) consumed got at least 10 percent of their daily calories from added sugar. The ramifications of this are significant. In this study, people who consumed 21 percent or more of their daily calories in the form of sugar were TWICE as likely to die from heart disease compared to those who got seven percent or less or their daily calories from added sugar. The risk was nearly TRIPLED among those who consumed 25 percent or more of their daily calories from added sugar. That means at least 10 percent of the US adult population are in this tripled-risk category…

Tips for Reducing Your Added Sugar

Intake

The easiest way to dramatically cut down on your sugar and fructose consumption is to switch to a diet of whole, unprocessed foods, as most of the added sugar you end up with comes from processed fare; not from adding a teaspoon of sugar to your tea or coffee. Other ways to cut down on the sugar in your diet includes:

- Cutting back on the amount of sugar you personally add to your food and drink
- Using Stevia or Luo Han instead of sugar and/or artificial sweeteners. You can learn more about the best and worst of sugar substitutes in my previous article, "Sugar Substitutes—What's Safe and What's Not"
- Using fresh fruit in lieu of canned fruit or sugar for meals or recipes calling for a bit of sweetness
- Using spices instead of sugar to add flavor to your meal

Are You Ready to Take Control of Your Health?

Research coming out of some of America's most respected institutions now confirms that *sugar* is a primary dietary factor driving chronic disease development. So far, scientific studies have linked excessive fructose consumption to about 78 different diseases and health problems,8 including heart disease and cancer. Having this information puts *you* in the driver's seat when it comes to prevention.

As a general rule, a diet that *promotes health* is high in healthful fats and very, very low in sugar and non-vegetable carbohydrates, along with a moderate amount of high-quality protein. For more specifics, please review my free optimized nutrition plan, which also includes exercise recommendations, starting at the beginner's level and going all the way up to

advanced. Organic foods are generally preferable, as this also cuts down on your pesticide and GMO exposure. Many grocery stores now stock a fair amount of organic foods. The following organizations can also help you locate whole foods fresh from your local farm:

- **Local Harvest** – This Web site will help you find farmers' markets, family farms, and other sources of sustainably grown food in your area where you can buy produce, grass-fed meats, and many other goodies.
- **Eat Wild:** With more than 1,400 pasture-based farms, Eat Wild's Directory of Farms is one of the most comprehensive sources for grass-fed meat and dairy products in the United States and Canada.
- **Farmers' Markets** – A national listing of farmers' markets.
- **Eat Well Guide: Wholesome Food from Healthy Animals** – The Eat Well Guide is a free online directory of sustainably raised meat, poultry, dairy, and eggs from farms, stores, restaurants, inns, and hotels, and online outlets in the United States and Canada.
- **FoodRoutes** – The FoodRoutes "Find Good Food" map can help you connect with local farmers to find the freshest, tastiest food possible. On their interactive map, you can find a listing for local farmers, CSAs, and markets near you.

Last but not least, a number of substances in processed food (including sugar) are highly addictive, so if you need help to break free, you may want to consider using a tool such as the Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT). A version of EFT specifically geared toward combating sugar cravings is called Turbo Tapping. For further instructions, please see the article, "Turbo Tapping: How to Get Rid of Your Soda Addiction." The video below with EFT practitioner Julie Schiffman also demonstrates how to use EFT to fight food cravings of all kinds.

http://www.youtube.com/embed/L92oOPJlfyg