

Sending Chatting with the Good Dr. Laura Shook
A chiropractor who puts the CARE back into Health Care
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They say “Sugar is bad” then they say that “it (sugar) is OK in moderation.” They say “corn syrup is bad” then they say “it is like sugar and OK in moderation”. Moderation, according to The American Heart Association is, for adults, 6-9 teaspoons of added sugar each day. Include honey, agave and maple syrup in that count of teaspoons. Sure honey and maple syrup may have a few more nutrients than white table sugar but as far as your insulin, blood sugar, triglycerides, blood pressure, mood swings and risk of for developing obesity and tooth decay are concerned sugar is sugar whether it comes from a beet, cane, tree, cactus or hive.

Please understand that I am not advocating any of the artificial sweeteners as a substitute for sugar. Aspartame, sorbitol and saccharine all have a long list of possible side effects ranging from digestive distress to perplexing neurological dysfunction and cancer. Stevia seems to be less of a problem but we may change our minds in the next decade or two. A discussion of artificial sweeteners will have to wait for another day. Suffice it to say that artificial sweeteners can be very bad. My advice is to avoid consuming artificial sweeteners and artificial flavorings.

Sugar (corn syrup, honey ...) is not in itself inherently bad or wicked. It is very easy to consume far too much. I'm quite certain that, over the holidays, I consumed far more than my “daily 6-9”. With the holidays behind me, in of my normal day to day life, there is no plate of cookies readily available and I seldom reach for the sugar bowl or honey jar. Why? Because I know that if over consumption of sugar were a part of my daily life my health would suffer.

6-9 teaspoons is equal to 2-3 tablespoons. There are 3 teaspoons in a tablespoon, 2 tablespoons in each ounce and 8 ounces in a cup. Let's do the math, if your pan of brownies has 1 cup of sugar and produces 16 brownies then each brownie is going to contain 3 teaspoons of sugar. Are you going to have more than one brownie? Did you take sugar or honey in your coffee? Do you like your oatmeal sweet? Did you put catsup (full of sugar) on your burger and fries? When was the last time you had a pop tarts, soda pop, energy drink, granola bar, frosted flakes or ice-cream?

Processed foods can be particularly sneaky about sugar. Read food labels and be discriminating if one of the main ingredients is dextrose, glucose, sucrose, maltose, fructose, (notice the “—ose”), fruit juice concentrate, malt syrup or molasses. It is all just another name for sugar, acts upon your body as sugar and must be counted as part of the “daily 6-9”.

So, sing, dance and play. Eat your veggies and some fruit (watch your fructose consumption), drink plenty of clean water and consume sugar in moderation. You will see that life itself can be sweet.

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