OPTIONS CENTER
NUTRITION TOPIC

Sugar Sensitivity—What Is It?

Some people have a more complex problem with sugar than the average person with a sweet craving. These people have a unique biochemical and physiological response to sugar and become addicted to it. Mood, energy, and brain chemistry are involved, and specific steps need to be taken to keep biochemistry balanced when these people withdraw from sugar. In the same way an alcoholic needs to refrain from alcohol, sugar-sensitive people must avoid all refined sugar and refined carbohydrates, or the addiction process is re-engaged.

The Short Test

Imagine yourself walking into your neighbor's kitchen and smelling the aroma of fresh-baked _____ cookies (fill in your cookie of choice). The pan of cookies, fresh from the oven, is offered to you. You are not particularly hungry. Do you:

1. Say, "Thanks, but I'll wait until later."
2. Eat one to be polite.
3. Eat them regardless of not being hungry and be unable to stop with just one.
4. Eat the entire pan-full immediately.

If you answered "Yes" to 3 or 4, you are probably sugar sensitive.

The Longer Test

See the *Sugar Sensitivity Questionnaire at the end of this document.*

Understanding the Problem

How do sugars and refined carbohydrates affect our health?

- The process of refining removes all vitamins, minerals, and fiber from sugar and carbohydrates.
- Without fiber these substances are absorbed into the blood stream too quickly.
- Too much sugar in the blood is very toxic and damaging and the body responds by releasing a surge of insulin from the pancreas.
- Insulin removes the sugar from the blood and the body immediately converts the excess sugar to fat. Yes, fat. Saturated fat (triglycerides).
- Being devoid of its own vitamins and minerals, refined products must rob body reserves of these substances, causing deficiencies over time.
- Forced to continually surge insulin into the blood stream and robbed of necessary vitamins and minerals, the pancreas eventually malfunctions.
- When the cells are constantly overexposed to these unnatural insulin surges, they become "insulin resistant" and even more insulin must be produced to clean up the blood sugar.
- With continued intake of refined sugar and carbohydrates the body goes into a state of *hyperinsulinism* (too much insulin production) trying to cope with the toxic effects of too much sugar in the blood.

- Hyperinsulinism causes high blood triglycerides and low HDL cholesterol, two major markers of cardiovascular disease.
- Hyperinsulinism causes abdominal obesity and hypertension.
- Hyperinsulinism leads to declining blood sugar stability swinging us into periods of fluctuating high and then low blood sugar.
- Hyperinsulinism causes sugar cravings.
- Low blood sugar causes fatigue, lethargy, and depression.
- Excess sugar in the blood causes widespread tissue damage, especially in the heart, blood vessels, nerves, kidneys, and eyes.
- Excess sugar in the blood promotes infections because germs and yeast love sugar.
- Sugar is sticky and will attach to proteins and cause them to cross-link, creating advanced glycosylation end-products (AGEs), which do just that, *age us* prematurely by interfering with a multitude of body functions.
- Over time this scenario will lead to diabetes and heart disease.
- Sugar competes with and obstructs the function of vitamin C as they both use the same transport system in the body.
- This whole scenario is preventable by what we choose to put in our mouths.

Insulin

Insulin resistance:

- Is brought on by a diet high in refined sugars and carbohydrates and made even worse with low protein and fat intake.
- 75% of the American population is affected to some degree.
- Is a main component in syndrome X–insulin resistance, high insulin levels, high blood pressure, glucose intolerance, low HDL, high triglycerides, and upper body/abdominal obesity.
- Ultimately leads to diabetes.
- Increases free radical production.
- Causes premature aging.

High insulin levels in the blood are a major cause of cardiovascular disease because they:

1. Stimulate smooth muscle growth of arterial walls causing them to thicken.
2. Stimulate the growth of fibrous connective tissue involved in plaquing.
3. Promote the oxidation of LDL involved in plaquing.
4. Increase the production of fibrinogen and so increase blood clotting.
5. Drive the kidneys to waste magnesium and potassium and retain sodium and water.
6. Cause blood vessels to constrict.
7. Stimulate increased blood pressure.
8. Promote excess fat storage causing weight gain.

Reversing insulin resistance and its effects is possible. It requires:

1. A diet restricting carbohydrate intake.
2. Appropriate supplementation.
3. Exercise.
4. Intake of good protein and fat.

Source: Information taken from: Janet Lang, *Lang Nutritional Seminars*

Offered at Options

Options, provides nutritional assistance for sugar sensitive people.

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See Sugar Sensitivity Questionnaire at the very end of this topic. Scroll Down.

Sugar Sensitivity Questionnaire

As a child, how much did you like sugar? (Rate yourself on a scale of 0-9) _____			
What kind of sugar foods did you eat when you were a child?	How many times a day?	How many days each week?	How much did you eat each time?
Candy			
Soda			
Dessert			
Ice cream			
Straight sugar (from the bowl, cubes, honey, jelly, etc.)			
Other kinds of sweet foods (indicate which ones):			
		Yes	No
As a child, did you ever hide candy?			
As a child, did you ever steal anyone else's candy?			
As a child, did you ever steal money to buy sugar foods?			
Did you especially like the sugar and milk at the bottom of your cereal bowl?			
As an adult, how much do you like sugar? (Rate yourself on a scale of 0-9) _____			
Rate yourself for the time you were using sugar the most often as an adult	How many times a day?	How many days each week?	How much did you eat each time?
Candy			
Soda			
Dessert			
In coffee or tea			
Ice cream/frozen yogurt			
Do you eat/drink the following? (Use the time of most frequent use as an adult).	How many times a day?	How many days each week?	How much did you eat each time?
Fruit			
Juice			
Coffee or tea with sugar			
Alcohol			
Milk			

White breads or pastry			
Cereal			
		Yes	No
Have you ever lied about how much sweet food you ate?			
Have you ever keep a supply of sweet food on hand?			
Have you ever gotten upset if someone else ate your supply of sweet food?			
Have you ever hidden your supply from others?			
Have you ever gone out of your way to get something sweet to eat?			
Have you ever lied about how much bread you were eating?			
Have you ever hidden your supply from others?			
Have you ever gotten upset if someone else ate your supply of bread?			
Have you ever lied about how much cereal you were eating?			
Have you ever hidden your supply from others?			
Have you ever gotten upset if someone else at your supply of cereal?			
Do you consider yourself an alcoholic?			
If so, rate the level of your alcoholism on a scale of 0-9.			
Do you ever think of sugar as "love"?			
Do you think of yourself as being addicted to sugar?			
If so, rate your sugar addiction on a scale of 0-9.			

If you would like, print this page, fill it out, and bring it with you to your next appointment with Helen at Options Center.

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