Sweet and Insidious: Please Pass the Sugar
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HEALING

Sweet and Insidious: Please Pass the Sugar

Few fully comprehend the serious physical ailments incurred from excessive sugar intake

Devananda Tandavan M. D.

Sugar's effect on our well being is a very controversial subject. Any of the following symptoms may be related to a high intake of simple sugar: anxiety, bed-wetting, tooth decay, depression, diabetes, poor immune response, perspiration, fainting, fatigue, heart disease, hypoglycemia, insomnia, memory loss, obesity, osteoporosis, seizures, skin rashes, itching, rapid heart beat, hoarseness, vaginal itching, weakness, marked irritability and many others.

The causal relationship of these symptoms is rather complex. For instance, a high intake of sugars will produce an elevation of insulin secretion. If the sugar is not all utilized, the insulin will help convert some of the sugar to fats which then are deposited in the arteries, especially the small arteries of the heart. Those people who eat a lot of sweet foods tend to overeat, as the sugars do not satisfy the appetite as well as the more complex carbohydrates. That is, they do not fill us. Since B vitamins are required to help metabolize the sugars,

these are taken from the stored quantities, which can easily be depleted. These factors combined tend to produce not just obesity but hypertension and heart problems.

Usually, by sugar we mean the highly purified, concentrated, white product of sugar beets or sugar cane. Also there are other sugars such as: raw sugar, brown sugar, fruit sugar, milk sugar, honey, sucanat, maple, jaggery, etc. Of these, white sugar is the most processed and contains a singular structure of sucrose. Pure white sugar has zero nutritional value and is only a source of pure energy. The other sugars mentioned contain some contaminates or other plant products that give them some, but minimal, nutritional value. The ideal energy source in our diet is the complex carbohydrates from whole grains, fruits and vegetables.

It has been shown that excess dietary sugar will deplete the stores of copper in the body. There is also a disruption of the calcium/phosphorous ratio, resulting in some degree of bone absorption. Reactive hypoglycemia, the result of sudden increase in blood sugar levels, will manifest as the many psychological types of symptoms mentioned above. This is the most easily treated of conditions--one merely needs to lower the intake of sugars and increase the intake of complex carbohydrates accompanied by high fiber and low protein foods, which are digested more slowly, so that the sudden rise in blood sugar level does not occur.

The biggest hazard to our dietary efficiency is processed foods, for it is very easy to obtain sugars in these without its presence being obvious. Who would think that tomato catsup

is high in sugar? Sugar and salt are both the unsuspected offenders in most processed foods. It is absolutely essential, for health's sake, to become a label reader. It is possible that over 75% of all sugar intake is hidden in the processed foods that are advertised so highly in the media. These are the first things one should eliminate to reducing dietary sugar. If we could eliminate all hidden sources, we could then control our intake and keep it within the reasonable limit of less than 10% of all ingested calories.

We must also note that excessive sugar in the diet is addictive, making us slaves to a habit which may be equally as strong as drug or alcohol addiction.

Dr. Tandavan, 78, retired nuclear physician and hospital staff president, lives in Chicago, where he specializes in alternative healing arts. If you are interested in further articles on health and healing visit his home page.