

Tools for Life – Weekly Health & Safety Meeting



Home Healthy - Home Safe

Date: June 2023

Effects of Too Much Sugar

Many people rely on quick, processed foods for meals and snacks. Since these products often contain added sugar, it makes up a large portion of their daily calorie intake. In the US, the average adult consumes an estimated 17 teaspoons of added sugar each day. That accounts for 14% of a total calorie intake in adults following a 2,000-calorie diet. A whopping 75% of Americans eat more sugar than they should, according to US dietary guidelines. The excessive added sugar can lead to many negative health effects.

- **Weight Gain** – Consuming too much added sugar, especially from sugary beverages, increases your risk of weight gain and can lead to visceral fat accumulation.
- **May increase your risk of heart disease**- Added sugar consumption increases heart disease risk factors such as obesity, high blood pressure, and inflammation. High-sugar diets have been linked to and increased risk of heart disease.
- **Linked to Acne** – High-sugar diets can increase androgen secretion, oil production, and inflammation, all of which can raise your risk of developing acne.
- **Increases your risk of type 2 diabetes** – May lead to obesity and insulin resistance, both of which are risk factors for type 2 diabetes.
- **May increase your risk of cancer** – Obesity, insulin resistance, and inflammation, all of which are risk factors for cancer.
- **May increase your risk of depression** – A rich diet in added sugar ultra-processed foods may increase depression risk in both men and women.
- **May accelerate the skin aging process** – Sugary foods can increase the production of advanced glycation end products (AGEs), which can accelerate skin aging and wrinkle formation.
- **Drains your energy** – High-sugar foods can negatively impact your energy levels by causing a spike in blood sugar followed by a crash.
- **Can lead to a fatty liver**- Fructose is almost exclusively broken down by the liver which can lead to nonalcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD).

HEALTHY OR SAFETY REMINDER: Focusing on eating whole, unprocessed foods automatically decreases the amount of sugar in your diet.

Many highly processed foods are convenient and easy however they contain a lot of added sugars which can lead to an increased risk of negative health effects. Focus on a diet of whole unprocessed foods to limit your sugar consumption.

Discussion Points/Quiz Questions:

1. What are some healthy snack options you have to reduce the amount of sugar you consume?
2. How often do you look at nutrition labels to determine the amount of added sugar?
3. How much is too much sugar?