

Kicking the Sugar Habit

Did you indulge in too many goodies over the holidays? Did you gain a few extra pounds and do you crave sweets or carbs more than ever?

It is never too late to kick the sugar habit! Getting rid of the craving is a major milestone in this process. The hardest part is giving up sugar or foods that are converted to sugar completely for at least two weeks.

Why do we have sugar cravings? In a sugar-based diet, once the insulin has balanced out the blood sugar, the body thinks it needs more. It is no wonder we have a diabetic epidemic! Recently I have been seeing articles talking about losing weight by choosing the right foods instead of working to a particular diet. I think this very possibly could be the answer. If you eliminate “white” from your diet, you will see the corresponding weight loss. By eliminating “white” you will eliminate anything with sugar or corn syrup, white flour and white rice. You can substitute whole grains, fruit and brown rice.

Why foods made with white flour? Because white flour (and white rice) are converted to sugar in the bloodstream which causes the body to produce insulin to balance out the sugar. If we eliminate the foods that are sugar or are converted to sugar from our choices we should look to protein, vegetables and fruits.

Try this when you feel the urge to reach for something sweet. Substitute an apple or some grapes and a piece of cheese. This combination will help your body to feel satisfied. Base your meals on meats and vegetables. Steam vegetables are easy to prepare or eat them raw in salads. Enjoy a broiled or grilled steak, salmon or chicken breast. Your body may revolt in the beginning by making you feel like you have the flu. This is usually very short-lived and then you will find energy you didn't know you had.

Let's talk about the steps that could help you “kick the sugar habit”:

1. Stock your kitchen with vegetables, meat, cheese and fruit.
2. Get rid of everything that has any kind of sugar in it. That includes high-fructose corn syrup. Read the labels. Give it away or throw it away.
3. Simplify your meals. An example would be: A burger with cheese – no bun, a crisp green salad with lots of raw vegetables, a piece or 2 of fresh fruit for dessert with no extra sweetener.
4. If you crave sweets eat fresh fruit (not the canned variety). Once you kick the craving, fruit is plenty sweet enough.
5. Decide to do this as a gift to yourself and place an image in your “minds eye” of how you will look and feel when you have successfully kicked the sugar habit. When you have that image, write it down and keep it where you can see it everyday. The idea is to ‘brainwash’ your mind to accept this healthy change.
6. If a sugar craving hits you, have a piece of fruit and/or some protein. An apple with natural, no sugar added peanut butter is a great snack.
7. Vegetables (raw or steamed), fruits, protein in lean meats, cheese and nuts can all be used as snacks and meals.
8. Have several smaller meals during the day. Stay feeling satisfied.
9. Drink plenty of water. Sometimes we think we are hungry when our body actually needs water. If you don't like to drink plain water—there are sparkling mineral waters with natural flavors available.
10. Kick the habit with a partner. This is so much easier when you share the experience!
YOU CAN DO THIS!!

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