

# ADDICTED TO SUGAR

30

the desserts and sodas today. If a woman should have no more than 24g of added sugar and a man no more than 36g, did your diet stay within these limits? A cup of cereal has between 10g-20g of sugar, a side of coleslaw has 15g of sugar, a serving of salad dressing can have 5g-7g of sugar and a serving of fruit flavored yogurt has 17 g of sugar. This totals 47g to 59g of added sugars! The hidden sugars in food often fool people into thinking they don't eat as much sugar as they do.

(8) With so much hidden sugar everywhere, it might seem impossible to cut out added sugar. However, reading food labels will really begin

to help you identify hidden added sugars. When reading labels, you should do the following things: 1) identify how much sugar is in each serving of food, 2) identify where sugar is located in the ingredients list. Ingredients are listed in the order of their greatest quantities first, so if sugar is one of the first 3 ingredients, you know there's a high sugar content and 3) learn to identify sugar by its different names: sucrose, fructose, high-fructose corn syrup, glucose, lactose, evaporated cane juice, dextrose, brown rice syrup, molasses, and honey. With a little awareness and determination, you can cut down your sugar consumption greatly.

## Article Questions

- 1) List the signs of sugar addiction.  
Signs include: cravings for sugar, loss of control around sugar that leads to overconsumption and withdrawal symptoms when not consuming sugar.(3)
- 2) Explain two ways that the rat study showed that sugar may be more addictive than cocaine or heroin?
  - 1) When given an option to choose between sugar and cocaine or heroin, over 90% of the rats chose the sugar.
  - 2) The rats were pre-addicted to the cocaine or heroin before the sugar was introduced, this means that the desire for sugar had to overcome a pre-existing addiction.(3)
- 3) Describe two reasons why our hunter-gatherer ancestors consumed less sugar than we do now.
  - 1) Fruits were less sweet and less available all year round because agriculture had yet to be developed.
  - 2) There weren't any processed foods containing a lot of added sugars.(4)
- 4) How does sugar affect the brain?  
Sugar creates an intense sensation that triggers the pleasure, reward and habit formation pathways in the brain. This can lead to sugar addiction.(4)
- 5) Where do you find high-fructose corn syrup and how is it different from traditional sugar (cane sugar)?  
HFCS is found in sodas, beverages and other processed foods. It is different from traditional sugar because it is sweeter and more easily absorbed by the body. HFCS gives a quicker pleasure reward to the brain than traditional sugar.(5)
- 6) Next time you pick up a box of cereal and you want to know about its sugar content, what three things should you do?
  - 1) Find out if there's sugar in the cereal by identifying sugar in the ingredients list.
  - 2) Note how close to the beginning of the list that sugar is listed on the ingredients list.
  - 3) Determine how much sugar is in one serving of the cereal.(8)