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SCIENTIFIC

PASS ON THE SUGAR

How Sugar Hurts Your Health

Sugar! We all love it, but we also know how detrimental it can be to our health if consumed in high amounts. Countless clinical trials and research studies have shown how



sugar — found in so many packaged, processed foods these days — is harming our bodies. With little nutritional value, sugar takes a toll on major biological processes, including hormone balance, weight management, blood sugar levels, gut integrity, and the critical signaling pathways (AMPK!) that sync our metabolism.

Sugar, AMPK & Your Gut

Fructose, a sugar additive found in many processed and packaged foods, is one of the biggest blockers of AMPK activation. Too much of this simple sugar in your diet will thwart any healthy metabolic changes, not to mention add imbalance to your gut.

Your gut is made up of trillions of microorganisms, including bacteria, viruses, fungi, and yeast. This hard-working system is always in action; it's responsible for the digestion and absorption of key nutrients as well as the signaling pathways between our nervous system and organs.

A high intake of sugar can increase gut dysbiosis, a state that occurs when the equilibrium between good and bad gut bacteria is thrown off balance. This can cause a variety of unwanted symptoms such as fatigue, bloating, increased intestinal permeability, mood changes, and weight gain.

How Some Carbs Act Like Sugar

Your body utilizes macronutrients in the form of protein, fats, and carbohydrates for a multitude of biochemical processes including energy production. But some carbs can harm the body like sugar.

High in fiber and other important vitamins, complex carbs are found in foods like sweet potatoes, leafy greens, and cruciferous vegetables. These support healthy bacteria in the gut and because of their slow-burning attributes work to maintain healthy blood sugar levels.

On the other hand, simple carbohydrates like white bread and pasta are quicker to digest and can actually grow bad bacteria in the gut, creating an imbalance that can lead to a negative inflammatory response in the body. Simple carbs can also trigger a quick spike in blood sugar followed by a “crash.” Yuck.

Sugar & Carb Offsets for Real Life

If you really want to activate fat burning, try intermittent fasting or carb restriction. With no glucose to burn, the body will begin breaking down fat stores and converting them to ketones to be used for your energy. This is one of the fastest ways to shed weight and support AMPK activation.

But let's be realistic. You may enjoy a sweet potato now and then or a starchy vegetable or even creamer in your coffee or tea. If this is the case, it's important to understand the difference between complex and simple carbs.



For example, if you really love your brown rice, you may choose to IF overnight and hold carbs from your meals until dinner, when you can enjoy a moderate amount and still reap the benefits of AMPK activation.

Remember, you are biochemically unique. You get to navigate your nutrition practices and decide what works best for you. Enjoy the exploration and experimentation of fasting and AMPK activation, and take this knowledge with you on your lifelong journey to optimal health.