

BREAK UP WITH SUGAR



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What Needs To Be Said

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Introduction

You are in a one sided relationship with sugar and it is time to even the playing field. Breaking your bond with sugar does not need to imply giving up on the gooey stuff, it just means redefining sweets and treats!

The day you kick sugar out of your life is the day you begin to enjoy living, from the moment you wake up in the morning, full of energy and vitality, until the time you turn in at night for a restful, undisturbed and peaceful sleep.

The amazing benefits of living without a sugar crutch are too plentiful to list completely. Those who take on a sugar-free diet/lifestyle undergo a remarkable transformation that includes reversing the aging clock, glowing skin, sparkling eyes, improved sleep patterns, weight loss, a shifting of body composition, strength, energy, clear-headedness and so much more. Additionally symptoms including digestive distress, depression, allergies, acne and others become all but a faint memory.

If any of the above issues afflict you it is pretty safe to assume that sugar is one of your daily companions. If your goals are to be healthy, to feel good and look your best, the most important thing you can do to achieve your ultimate wellness is banish sugar from your life once and for all.

To begin, this means going up against an element that will fight, with all its strength, to remain a relevant part of your life!

How Sugar Keeps Its Hold Over You

Everyone knows someone who, after the end of a meal, searches high and low for something sweet, at this point anything will do—even a stale, who knows how old, semi-melted, foil-stuck mint. Anything to halt the need to satisfy that need for a sugar fix is up for grabs.

Undoubtedly, distancing yourself from sugar is not easy! The insidious effects that sugar has on you make it extremely difficult to crush the sugar rush. No matter how addicted you may be (and, incidentally, most of us are), you can beat this affliction! You can distance yourself. You can break up with sugar. There is no need to let sugar take you down. I have seen successes time and time again where regular people, just like you and me, do indeed outsmart the sinister stuff, no matter where it may be hiding.

How do you know if you're addicted to sugar?

Right now it is possible you are thinking this does not apply directly to you. You are not addicted to anything right? Are you sure?

A sure sign is if eating sugar makes all of your symptoms magically disappear for a while (as sweet symptoms so often do), or you struggle to go for long periods of time without sugar, unfortunately, you are most probably addicted. There is, however, good news: With a little concentrated investigation and some white knuckling, you can crush this addiction in minimal time.

Why is sugar so terrible?

First off, sugar causes aging. If you want to know how to look fresh and age defying, make sure your body is creating strong, healthy cells. Think of a baby at birth. They smell fresh and new. This is because they are alkaline. As opposed to a banana when it ages, oxidizing and turns brown, alkaline implies new, bright and just right. Sugar causes us to age like a

banana; it oxidizes us, breaks us down and ages all of the structures and functions of the body.

Next, sugar behaves like shards of broken glass in your blood. It causes a lot of inflammation, which is now known to be the backstory behind just about every disease. Inflammation also makes you tired, achy and old. I am willing to bet this is not your idea of how you want to live your life!

Sugar consumption goes on to create a myriad of blood-sugar issues, making you moody, sick and fat. You probably know by now that diabetes and pre-diabetic issues have reached pandemic levels. The effects are pretty nasty. If you are already dealing with any of those issues, ridding your body of sugar is exactly what is needed to get you moving in the right direction! Sugar creates many additional negative effects.

The bottom line: Sugar plugs up your body and creates a toxic environment. Your cells despise this. They cannot, do not and will not thrive in an environment gummed up with sugar and its residue. You cannot thrive in this type of environment either.

Something to consider: Where there is waste in the body, there is weight. Where there is weight, there is disease.

I am going to help you discover how to outsmart Sugar and banish it from your life for good. It will take some sleuthing and a little effort, but trust me, you can do it! You will become acutely attuned to and aware of what is going on in your body at this time, and how deleterious the effects of sugar truly are.

I have broken the process down into 7 steps. For each step along the way I have created a 'make this work' element. This will provide you with super-easy tips. I know that if the process is not simple and practical, it will not get done. In the modern world with all its complications, I provide you with simple, practical ideas to be successful.

When you follow these steps, you stop the aging clock, lose weight, become stronger and increase your vitality. New cells created from healthy material will make you radiant!

What's In It For You?

- **Loosening up:** Your clothes are going to start fitting a little differently; your pants may feel a little loose around the waist, or you may need to tighten your belt an extra notch. Reducing the inflammation in the body causes marked physical shifts, reducing bloating and losing excess body fat.
- **Glowing skin and bright eyes:** This is one of the most obvious effects of detoxing from sugar. Your skin will feel smooth and start to glow; your eyes start to sparkle.
- **Renewed energy:** After your initial few days you will notice that you wake up feeling refreshed and energized and that these feelings are relatively consistent throughout the day, no more energy swings and shifts. Your workout routines will benefit and you will begin to notice that you recover from strenuous activity quicker than you have in a long time.
- **Elevated mood:** You just might find yourself feeling inexplicably happy. This is the result of stable blood sugar and increased availability to quality fuel. The daily ups and downs of life will become less bothersome and previous stressors may not affect you quite as profoundly. Concentration will be sharper, longer and more consistent and you will find yourself functioning at a higher cognitive level.
- **Alleviation of certain health concerns:** Former digestive distress, allergies and skin issues and inconsistencies begin to disappear. If you have long-standing health issues, you will notice them begin to lessen and alleviate. The changes are often dramatic as you begin to feel your body heal and grow strong.



Step 1: Commit to 21 Days

As a famous brand once stated: 'Just do it!' Commit to it, make it happen.

As with starting anything worth doing, committing to the process or action is the first step. How badly do you want this? Make the decision to through fully. Schedule it into your calendar just like you would anything that is important to you. Reality ensues when you have actually scheduled something. This is what transforms it from a thought or idea into an actual plan.

Once the scheduling is taken care of, move forward. Get organized. Tell those around you what you are planning and start building a support network. Prepare yourself mentally and get ready to obliterate that hold sugar has on you!



Step 2: Clean Out Your Kitchen

Kick the sugar out of all its hiding places: your pantry, your refrigerator and your freezer. Replace it with better choices and options; crowd the sugar out with 'yes' foods.

Cleaning Out Your Cabinets and Pantry

The best and most efficient way to do this is like removing a 'Band-Aid', swiftly. The less the sugar laden foods are in plain sight, the less you will be reaching for them to satisfy hunger, cravings, boredom or other emotional reasons people reach for food.

Your cabinets and pantry are a good place to begin. Go through everything, read every label. Many seemingly safe items will contain additives and sugars. Decide what, if anything is up to par and can be salvaged. Unfortunately in all likelihood, most of it will need to go. Remove all of the following:

- Agave syrup
- Breakfast cereal, granola and oatmeal
- Candy
- Canned tuna that contains soy
- Canned chili, soups and stews
- Commercial sauces and condiments that contain any starchy or sugary ingredients
- Condiments such as mayonnaise, ketchup and other sauces
- Corn starch
- Crackers and salty snack items
- Flour (white, brown, whole-wheat, rice)
- Fruit and vegetable juices
- Fruits packed in syrup, juices or containing sweeteners
- Jams and jellies
- Microwave meals
- Rice
- Pasta

- Potato chips
- Salad dressings
- Soy sauce
- White and brown sugar
- Vegetable oils (canola, corn, peanut, safflower, etc.)

No need to get too alarmed. Less-processed, natural sweeteners like raw honey and pure maple syrup can stay but should not be consumed during your 21 day commitment to conquer your cravings.

Detox the Refrigerator

Next up is the refrigerator. You might be tempted to hold onto open jars and containers, possibly to finish their contents before embarking on your program. Resist that temptation and discard all packaged, processed items. In reality if you eat it because it will only do you harm. Rather than thinking of it as wasted food, try to view this purge as your first step toward taking control of your new life, free of the shackles of sugar. The following will need to be removed:

- Butter
- Cheese
- Commercial sauces and condiments that contain any starchy or sugary ingredients
- Cream
- Deli meats that contain nitrates or added sweeteners
- Fruit and vegetable juices
- Half and half
- Jams and jellies
- Leftovers that contain sugary, starchy ingredients
- Margarine
- Milk
- Salad dressing
- Sausages that contains nitrates and/or sweeteners
- Soy sauce
- Sausage that contains nitrates and/or sweeteners
- Tofu and vegetarian “meats”
- Yogurt

Cleaning Out The Freezer

The freezer is the last stop in your kitchen cleanup tour. Family favourites like ice cream and frozen meals might be hard to banish to the garbage bin, but again, resist the temptation to hang on to these foods that conflict with the new lifestyle you are committed to creating. The following must be removed:

- Frozen yogurt
- Frozen meals and pizzas
- Frozen yogurt
- Homemade foods that contain sugary, starchy ingredients
- Ice cream
- Popsicles and frozen fruit bars that contain sweeteners

Special arrangements: Dealing with family, roommates, and others sharing your living space who may not be joining you on your 21 day mission can be challenging. If others in your household are not up to conquering their cravings just yet, you

may be left with no option other than sharing your kitchen space with sugar-laden, refined and processed foods. As tough as this may seem, you can prevail. Designate a shelf of the refrigerator, a cabinet, and one area of the freezer where you can store your foods, separated from your unwanted choices. This will help you to avoid coming in contact with foods in other areas minimizing your discomfort and possibility for temptation. There is always the possibility that your new habits will eventually rub off on your companions and your whole kitchen will soon become free of the all temptation.

Restocking Your Un-Sugared Kitchen

The following foods will be your staples for the duration of your 21 days. You may have such success through your challenge that you choose to continue using them as such once your 21 days are over.

Protein

Animal protein will be the basis of your meals — you should buy the highest quality meat, poultry, eggs and fish you can afford. Vegetarians or vegans are able to conquer their sugar addictions too. Beating sugar is not only reserved for meat eaters.

If your budget can support it, the optimal choice for animal protein is meat from organic, grass-fed, pastured or free-range animals. Factory farming is damaging to the environment and creates animals that are less healthy than humanely raised animals.

Beef: Your best bets are all cuts of grass-fed beef, preferably organic and definitely antibiotic-free. Consider organ meats for their high nutritional value and cost effectiveness.

Pork: Look for pastured pork or wild boar to avoid the negative impact of the high omega-6 fatty acid ratios found in factory-farmed pork. If conventionally raised pork is your only option, remove all visible fat and do not eat sausage or bacon from factory farmed pigs. Bacon from pastured pigs is acceptable as the sugar in the cure has very little impact on the final product. Just be sure not to include bacon with added sugars and flavourings.

Lamb: All cuts of pastured lamb are a healthy choice and, once again, organ meats are delicious, nutritious and extremely affordable.

Poultry: Look for organic, pastured, anti-biotic free chicken. All cuts and organs (livers, hearts and giblets) are good choices, and even the skin from these chickens can be enjoyed.

Game meats: Game meats such as elk, venison, moose, wild boar and bison are naturally low in fat and high in protein. Look for pastured, organic, antibiotic-free brands, or better yet, choose a wild option.

Eggs: Egg labelling is particularly confusing. The best choices for eggs are free-run, organic and pastured. This way you can be assured that the chickens raised in humane and healthy conditions. Avoid “United Egg Producers Certified,” which supports factory farming practices. Vague terms including ‘vegetarian fed’, ‘farm-fresh’ and ‘natural’ have no bearing on the quality of the eggs.

Fish and seafood: Wild-caught fish, seafood, and shellfish are more nutritious and environmentally friendly than farm-raised varieties. All farmed fish and seafood need to be avoided in order to ensure that the fish you are eating has consumed its healthy, natural diet. For specifics about the wisest choices both for the environment and your health, visit the Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch. <http://www.monereybayaquarium.org/cr/seafoodwatch.aspx>

By this point you are probably experiencing some budgetary concerns regarding these protein choices as they tend to be higher priced than factory or feed-lot farmed, conventionally raised proteins. If your grocery budget has minimal room for investing in the highest quality proteins, know you are not alone and committing to a cleaner, healthier eating program is still achievable. You will still be improving your health, and the quality of the food you consume simply by eliminating processed foods and focusing on animal protein, vegetables, fruits and high-quality fats. If you must buy conventionally raised meat, these cooking tips can help improve its healthfulness:

- Buy the leanest cuts of red meat and pork you can find.
- Remove excess fat from red meat and pork, and the skin from poultry, before cooking

- Drain excess fat after cooking
- Chill soups and stews after cooking, then remove and discard congealed fat from the surface before eating.

Craving-Crushing Produce

It is practically impossible for you to eat too many vegetables. The produce department is the place to get adventurous. Choose a wide variety of vegetables in a rainbow of colors. Vegetables are an economical way to satisfy hunger, diffuse the need and want for sugar and improve your health.

Moderate fruit intake is also an excellent source of nutrient-dense calories. This serves as a great alternative to something sweet or a desert after a meal.

For both fruits and vegetables, the freshest, most nutritious options are always those which are in season. Frozen fruits and vegetables are a solid, nutritious alternative when your favourite is not available fresh. This produce is flash frozen right after picking to maintain as much of the nutrient density as possible.

Let your senses guide you as you peruse your local farmer's market or the produce section in the grocery store. Here are a few suggestions:

Leafy greens: High in fiber, vitamins and minerals, leafy greens are some of the best vegetables to pile your plate. Try beet greens, Bok Choy, collard greens, kale, mustard greens, Napa cabbage, spinach, Swiss chard and turnip greens.

Salad vegetables: Fresh, crisp and filling, a salad can be a meal in itself or a perfect side or compliment. Toss in alfalfa sprouts, arugula, bell peppers, celery, cucumber, jicama, lettuce, mushrooms, radicchio, radishes, red cabbage, sunflower sprouts, tomatoes and watercress.

Heartier vegetables: Dig into artichokes, asparagus, beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, carrots, eggplant, fennel, onion, parsnips, spaghetti squash, summer squash, turnips and zucchini. Try these choices roasted, sautéed, grilled or steamed to vary their taste, flavour and texture.

Starchy vegetables: Carbohydrate-dense vegetables play an important role in helping you recover from exercise and stress. Roast some summer squash such as acorn or butternut, sauté some parsnips, celery root or turnips or bake some sweet potatoes and yams.

Legumes in a pod: Although these vegetables are technically legumes, they consist of more pod than bean and are green! Snap into green beans, string beans, snap peas, snow peas, and wax beans.

Fresh herbs: Leafy herbs like basil, cilantro, dill, garlic, ginger, mint, oregano, parsley, rosemary, and thyme add different and unique flavours to any meal.

Fruits: Eaten whole or chopped up, raw or cooked, fruits are a wonderful source of vitamins. They will also often satisfy your taste for sweet once your taste for sweet. Enjoy a variety of fruits and challenge yourself to try something new. Again, it needs to be stated that fruits need to be eaten in moderation, one or two pieces a day will suffice, preferably along with some protein and good fat.

An invaluable source when deciding what to purchase organic and where your vigilance is not as necessary is the Dirty Dozen/Clean Fifteen list from the Environmental Working at ewg.org.

Good-For-You Fats

High quality fats are age busters! The two of best things you can do to combat the signs and symptoms of aging are increase your muscle mass and eat good quality fats! Furthermore, these fats are essential for optimal health, make your food taste even better and provide a high level of satiety after a meal.

Coconut fats: Coconuts may be consumed in a number of ways and are an excellent source of saturated fat. Try incorporating some coconut oil (best for cooking), coconut butter, coconut flakes and coconut milk into your daily meal plans.

Olives and avocados: Both olives and avocados are renowned and favoured sources of monounsaturated fats. Eating whole olives and avocados is a great way to add these fats to your diet. Use both olive oil and avocado oil for salads.

Animal fats: I need to reiterate the importance of animal fats coming from organic, grass-fed, pastured animals that have been treated humanely. That being said, animal fats are an excellent choice for cooking. You can use lard, beef tallow, ghee, duck fat and others to roast or saute your vegetables for an added taste treat!

Nuts, nut oils and nut butters: Nuts, seeds and their butters are tasty options to add fat to meals, snacks and deserts. Nut oils are a nice way to add unexpected flavors to salads and cold preparations, but are not recommended for cooking or heated options.

Naturally occurring fats are always a healthy choice. It is important to ensure all oils are naturally sourced and cold pressed to ensure their benefits and should be stored in dark, cool places to prevent rancidity.

When Good Fats Go Rogue

Cooking at high heat can damage the composition of certain fats; causing oxidation. This can cause otherwise healthy oils to produce inflammation in the body.

Avoid cooking with extra-virgin olive oil, nut and seed oils. These oils should be primarily used to toss on salads or drizzle over cooked food. For high-heat cooking, on the stovetop or grill, or in the oven, use saturated (solid at room temperature) fats from animals or coconut. These fats are more stable and their tendency to oxidize is very low.

Pantry Staples and Spices

Now that your cabinets are free of starchy sugars and processed foods, those empty spaces can be filled with the flavor enhancers that will help ensure your meals are as tasty and varied, as they are nutritious.

Pantry Palate Pleasers

A well-stocked pantry can mean the difference between enjoying an appetizing meal and a desperate phone call to your local meal delivery restaurant of choice.

These are the essential items to keep on hand:

Broths and stocks: Most varieties contain soy, hidden sugars and processed vegetable oils. It is important to review labels carefully. Broths and stocks can be used in place of water or wine to give added flavour to sauces, soups, stews and sautés.

Canned fish: Wild tuna, salmon, sardines and kipper snacks stored in water or olive oil are all good choices. Be wary of flavoured options and examine all labels for soy, vegetable oils and additives

Canned chilies: Mild green, jalapenos or chipotle add spice, flare and heat to mundane ingredients. Be sure to check labels for unwanted additives and preservatives

Coconut aminos: A solid substitute for soy sauce, and often preferred over it once tasted.

Coconut oil: Choose unrefined, virgin, organic coconut oil. Use it for sautéing, roasting and baking in place of vegetable oils and shortening.

Unsweetened coconut: Keep a few varieties on hand. Flakes make a great snack and shredded coconut adds good fats and sweetness to curries, salads and desserts.

Coconut milk: Use the full fat canned variety of coconut milk only, avoid the cartons as they have the highest amount of additives. Most brands of coconut milk do contain some type of stabilizer (although, if you check ingredients carefully, you will find some that contain coconut and water only), the least obnoxious of stabilizers is guar gum. Coconut milk can be substituted for yogurt and cream in recipes, splashed into coffee instead of cream and processed cream substitutes, used as your milk option in smoothies and whipped up for a delicious dip or desert topping.

Curry paste: Examine labels for soy and added sugar. This paste, available in various degrees of spice and heat is great to have on hand to make a quick meal with coconut milk, protein and veggies.

Extra-virgin olive oil: Use on salads or drizzled over cooked vegetables and proteins.

Jarred salsas: These are great for dips and sauce bases. Examine the label ingredients carefully in order to avoid preservatives, sugar, corn and wheat.

Olives: Look for packaged olives that contain only water, olives, and salt. Avoid chemical additives and stabilizers. Use them in salads and cooked foods to add a salty flavour and healthy fat, or just eat whole as part of a snack.

Nuts: Raw nuts are your best bet. For optimal digestion and nutrient absorption, soak nuts overnight, then drain and dry in a low oven before eating. Nuts are wonderful added cooked foods for crunch, or enjoyed a small snack.

Nut butters: Many varieties contain added sugars, stabilizers and vegetable oils. Examine labels carefully before enjoying. Nut butters serve well as great for snacks, and provide added flavour to sauces and desserts.

Pickles: Always ensure the jarred pickles are free of additives, stabilizers and erroneous chemicals before enjoying as a crunchy addition to any meal or snack.

Tomato products: Use tomato paste to add depth of flavor to sauces, soups and stews. Canned tomatoes can be used to make a quick tomato sauce for some vegetables or protein, or added to soups and stews for body and extra flavour.

The Spice of Life

Spices are an effective way to create variety and flavour nuances in your meals. This list can feel intimidating if you are not accustomed to using herbs and spices. Do not feel the need to buy and try everything all at once. Your spice cabinet is a collection that will grow over time as you expand your palate and recipe adventures. A new spice can open up a whole new world of flavor and you just might find some new favorites. Challenge yourself to try a new herb, spice or flavour combination once or twice a week. As with other packaged foods, be sure to check ingredients for unwanted, sneaky additives, preservatives and stabilizers.

Bay leaf: Used in soups, stews, and braises, especially in Mediterranean cuisine.

Cardamom: An essential component in Indian curries.

Cayenne pepper: Adds a hit of heat to foods.

Chives: Used in French and Swedish cooking, chives add a light oniony flavor.

Cinnamon: A kitchen essential for both sweet and savory foods.

Cloves: Used in Indian, Vietnamese, Mexican and Dutch cooking for sweets and savory dishes.

Cocoa: Unsweetened cocoa adds richness and depth to tomato-based dishes and sweets. Many cultures consider cocoa powder a spice rather than a sweet treat.

Coriander: Used in Middle Eastern, Asian, Mediterranean, Indian, Mexican, Latin American, African and Scandinavian foods. Coriander is the seed of the cilantro plant.

Cumin: Earthy flavor used in North African, Middle Eastern, Mexican and some Chinese dishes. Adds smoky nuances.

Garlic powder: A good substitute for fresh garlic when you're in a hurry. Granulated garlic is your best option

Ginger: Essential for Indian curries and Asian dishes.

Mint: A key ingredient in Middle Eastern and Mediterranean cooking. Can be used in savoury and sweet preparations.

Mustard, ground: Used in homemade mayo, salad dressings and spice blends. Mustard powder also adds flavour and body to sauces, soups and stews.

Oregano: Used extensively in Italian, Greek and Mexican foods.

Paprika: Can be purchased mild, hot and smoked. Paprika rings a peppery bite and pleasing color to Moroccan, Middle Eastern and Eastern European recipes.

Pepper: Black and white, fresh ground will add the most flavour to any and all dishes.

Salt: Highlights the flavor of food. Look for a clean sourced sea salt. Fine salt works best in dishes, where coarser varieties are good for grinding or sprinkling on top of foods.

Thyme: Used in Middle Eastern, Indian, Italian, French, Spanish, Greek, Caribbean and Turkish cuisines.

Spice blends are a great choice when looking for specific flavour profiles. Just be sure to carefully review the ingredient list to ensure no nasty additives, preservatives and stabilizers have been snuck into the mix. Below are some of the readily available options to add international flair to proteins and vegetable dishes and can provide an exciting new addition to your repertoire:

- Chili powder
- Chinese five spice
- Curry powder
- Herbs de Provence
- Italian herb blend
- Za'atar

Items to Avoid

To review, the following need to be avoided for your 21 days of craving crushing:

- Alcoholic beverages
- Dairy
- Beans and legumes (hard to digest and starchy)
- All sugar (after the 30 days, some natural sugars allowed)
- Sweet beverages
- All processed oils not listed under “Good for You Fats”
- All gluten
- All grains
- All whole grains
- All refined packaged snacks

Unwanted ingredients can be particularly sneaky. When perusing through the grocery store it is imperative you become a ‘food detective’ and scrutinize labels with an extra-large magnifying glass.

Your best bet is to steer clear of almost anything that wears a barcode, using real, whole, fresh foods to get, and keep you on an un-sugared path.

Step 3: Stay the Course, as Your Cells Thrive on a Real Food Diet



You just discovered the sugar crushing foods, essential to your success during your 21 day program. To truly heal your body, you do need strength and resolve - grit your teeth for three weeks, which may seem like an eternity but think of your reward, your goal. There are no grey areas here. If you really want the outcome, you have to be consistent for the entire duration. If the program is not adhered to, inflammation will continue and your body will not have the allotted time required to clear out toxins, repair damage and restore optimal function. No treats, no cheats, no slip-ups. You can do this. In the grand scheme of things, 21 days is a drop in the ocean.

Your intestinal cells generate new cells every 20 - 30 days. This gives you an opportunity to create healthy cells. These 21 days are about giving those cells the right raw material and to flush out the arbitrary, damaging elements not needed. This, in turn, will have a tremendous effect on quieting your cravings. The only way to rid your body of inflammation is to commit to 21 consecutive days. Inflammation causes weight gain, pre-mature aging and bad health in exponential quantities.

The worst thing you can do to alleviate a sugar craving is to give in and eat sugar. If you feed the sugar demon, defeating it becomes impossible. If cravings begin to get the better of you, have a handful of healthy fats such as coconut flakes or nuts. Fatty foods often will satisfy cravings.



Step 4: Sugar Shifts

It is amazing what a big impact some small shifts and swaps can make. Here are some simple ways to begin to remove sugar and its companion foods from your life:

- Exchange traditional wheat flour for coconut meal or almond or hazelnut flour.
- Choose honey or maple syrup over agave (Agave is NOT a health food, its effects on the liver are particularly harmful)
- Coconut sugar is a better option to white sugar.
- Exchange pasta for zucchini noodles or spaghetti squash. If you own a spiralizer, any vegetable can become a noodle switch.
- Make some cauliflower rice instead of regular rice.



Step 5: Information is a Powerful Motivator

You are about to turn off the steady stream of sugar your brain and body are used to. When this happens, you may feel a bit uneasy, possibly even a little crazy. It usually takes four to seven days for the effects to begin. You may feel a little off kilter, not quite right. Your body has no ability differentiate what you have eaten once it has been chewed and swallowed. The sugar in a candy bar becomes the same as a bowl of whole-wheat pasta or brown rice. Once you chew the food and its sugar moves into your digestive system, it is identified as sugar. You may consider your diet as 'healthy', but you are likely consuming more sugar than you need. Your body will react when that source of sugar is removed. Your symptoms may include:

Exhaustion

Your energy levels may feel a bit depleted during the first week of your 21 days. Be assured that this is completely normal. Challenge yourself to be patient during this time. Do your best not to rely on caffeine or fruit to help you through those mid-afternoon dips. If necessary, reduce the intensity of your workouts during this time. Take a nap or rest if you have the time or opportunity. Make an effort to get to bed an hour earlier this week so your body can rest, restore and adapt. Your body is beginning its transition from using sugar as its primary source of fuel to burning fat. Ultimately, using fat for your primary energy source is far more effective than relying on the swings of sugar metabolism.

Flu-Like Symptoms

If you have been regularly consuming a diet high in processed carbohydrates, ready-to-eat meals and fast food, you may experience cold and/or flu-like symptoms during your initial week. This is more evidence of your body making the transition from sugar burning to fat utilization. Tiredness, a foggy head or the sniffles should not alarm you. Those are signs (and they are very temporary) that the 21 day, sugar-crushing program is working and things are shifting in the direction they are meant to.

Moodiness

Feeling short-tempered, moody or excessively aggressive for little or no reason is your brain giving you signals about its unhappiness and distaste for you removing its favourite go-to foods – your evening glass of wine, your post dinner

cookies, your regular snack of cheese and crackers. Be patient. In a few days this will all pass. Do not give up by giving in to your cravings or your unpleasant mood. Remember your goal of making it past your reliance on these sugary, grain-laden foods. The moodiness is directly correlated to blood-sugar regulation. Eating quality foods will slowly create more stable regulation of your blood sugar, having you smiling again.

Detox Side Effects

Other odd symptoms may be experienced through this process. These are brought on by your body adapting to the new diet and healing from the effects of the old one. You may have to deal with digestive distress, apparent allergies or skin conditions including acne/blemishes. Occasionally these may get a little worse before they get better. They will, however, improve and clear up. This generally occurs by the 2nd week of your 21 day program. Remember that this is your body healing and is a little unhappy by the sudden changes.

After your body has communicated its disappointment, the changes become remarkable. The inches go, the years are wiped away and you feel totally energized! You will appreciate the effort you initially put in.



Step 6: Deal with Portion Distortion

Portion distortion is a common occurrence. It may take some time to reconnect with the natural body signals of hunger and satiety. As the blood sugar becomes regulated, sugar cycles are broken and toxins begin leaving your body, understanding your personal body signals becomes effortless, second nature.

The amount of food you choose to eat every day is determined by three variables:

- Your hunger level
- Your energy level
- Your exercise/activity level

To build each meal it is important to take each one of these variables into account. You need to fill your plate with the appropriate portions for your variables. There is no need for scales, measuring cups, sized spoons or calorie counting devices. Portions can be determined by a simple glance. You can use guidelines based on familiar objects to estimate good portion sizes with just your eyes and imagination.

This makes sticking to your 21 day program attainable and sustainable whether eating in a restaurant, traveling for work or pleasure, or dining with friends. No need to pull out a cumbersome, annoying and sometimes embarrassing tool. This begins the development of a useful lifetime skill that will help you quickly eyeball how much food to put on your plate.

This is how to begin to determine how much you need to eat:

Protein

Each meal should include at least one serving of protein. A serving of meat, fish or poultry for you is about the size and thickness of your palm. (This translates to approximately three to four ounces for women, five to six ounces for men). A serving of eggs is as many as you can easily hold in your hand. (This translates to approximately two or three for women, three or four for men). Eat the whole egg, the yolk is extremely nutritious and tasty, providing many essential nutrients.

Fat

Each meal should include one or two servings of fat. A serving of liquid fat should be about the size of your 2 thumbs put together. (This translates to approximately 1 tablespoon). A serving of nuts, seeds, coconut flakes, and olives is about one closed handful. A serving of avocado is one-quarter to one-half of the avocado. A serving of coconut milk is one-third to one-half of the can.

Non-Starchy Vegetables (vegetables that grow above the ground)

It is very difficult to eat too many non-starchy vegetables, so fill your plate. Try to have at least two varieties of these vegetables per meal.

Starchy Vegetables (vegetables that grow below the ground, pumpkin and winter squashes).

Try to get a maximum of 1 serving per meal, depending on your activity level. A serving is about the size of a closed fist for women. (This translates to approximately 1 cup). A serving is about the size of 1 – 2 closed fists for men. (This translates to approximately 1 – 2 cups). Portions are based on activity level. Starchy vegetables are the perfect recovery food after an intense workout or if you are feeling a little energy depleted.

Fruit

Fruit should be limited to a maximum of 2 servings per day, preferably distributed over your meals and snacks to distribute your intake of sugars. (Naturally occurring sugars are still sugars). Eating multiple servings at one time creates greater spikes in blood sugar than if the servings are broken up throughout the day. A serving of fruit is half an individual piece (for example, ½ an apple or ½ an orange) or a tennis ball-size serving of berries, grapes, or tropical fruits. (This translates to approximately ½ cup.)

Snacks

Individual needs vary. Some people do really well on just three meals a day, others need a small snack to get them through the morning or afternoon. Be flexible enough to support whatever your body needs throughout the day. Your snacks should be about half the size of your meals and should always include protein and fat.

If you are particularly active, you may want to consider incorporating one or two snacks into your daily routine. These should be eaten in addition to your regular meals.

Some portable, quick and easy snack ideas include:

- Canned wild salmon or tuna
- Dehydrated vegetables or home-made vegetable chips
- Grass fed nitrite-free beef jerky (check ingredients)
- Hard cooked eggs
- Hard-boiled eggs
- Nuts
- Nut butter
- Smoked salmon (wild, check ingredients)
- Trail mix, home-made with nuts, coconut flakes and a few dried berries.

Pre-Exercise

For your strongest, most efficient workout, consume a small snack of protein and fat 30 to 90 minutes before the activity. Avoiding carbohydrate immediately prior to exercising helps your body tap into stored fat as fuel during your workout.

Post-Exercise

Refueling with nutrient dense carbohydrates like sweet potato or butternut squash, along with lean protein like eggs, chicken or salmon is at its most useful within 30 minutes of completing your work out. Fat slows the absorption of food in your digestive system which is beneficial most of the time. Post-exercise is the one time when you want to minimize fat ensuring your muscles quickly absorb the carbohydrates they need to recover from your activity.

The graphic consists of two overlapping circles, one orange and one black, positioned to the left of the text.

Step 7: Take Note of Everything

Understanding the connection between food, mood and how it makes you physically feel is one of the most valuable tools you can cultivate. This is the key to successfully committing to a long-term, whole foods program. Journaling about your 21 day experience will highlight what it took for you to conquer your sugar cravings successfully. It will allow you to identify the challenges or concerns specific to you and your body, allowing you to make adjustments and corrections specific to you. This is also one of the best assessment tools for you to really evaluate how much food you need.

The journal can help you remember what you ate, so you can repeat the meals that leave you feeling energized, comfortable and clear, identify the foods that created better sleeping patterns and highlight the foods that may be the cause of intestinal discomfort.

Bottom line: A journal will give you the guidance on how to proceed when completed you 21 sugar-less days and are ready to resume your regular patterns.

When journaling, concentrate on a few topics:

The Food: Document what and when you decide to put something in your mouth, especially if you are snacking and eating in between meals. This will help you identify the triggers that may ignite your appetite and cravings, compelling you to eat, even if you are not hungry. It can also be helpful to make note of the quantities you eat, at least in the beginning. Knowing how much food you consume will aid in determining the connections between your intake and your hunger.

The Place And The Company: Mindfulness and a focus on savoring your food play a significant role in appetite control and satiety. Note the differences in how you feel when sitting down and eating a meal versus eating on the run. Do you eat more or less when dining with others? This information is useful in creating productive, positive new habits.

Your Cravings: During the first week of your 21 days, you will probably experience some cravings for specific foods. Your journal can be an effective tool in helping you overcome those cravings. Not surrendering to your cravings is essential to your long term success, during and after your initial 21 days. Noting and describing the craving in your journal along with a further distraction like grabbing a glass of water, getting out of the room or calling a supportive friend will allow you the time and space to rationally overcome the feelings of the moment. Cravings do pass. If you are experiencing a craving due to hunger, a small snack containing protein and fat will help get you through to the next meal.

Sleep Patterns: Sleep is imperative to your health and well-being. It is often impacted by the foods you eat. Keep track of the time you go to bed, when you wake up, the overall quality of your sleep and how you feel in the morning. You may discover that certain foods have a marked influence on your sleep patterns.

Your Activity Level: Tracking your activities (walking, running, a fitness class, yoga, strength training, sports, gardening, playing with children or pets) provides valuable insight into your energy levels and needs.

Your mood: Food has an extremely powerful influence over mood. You will begin to feel differently when you begin to move from a diet filled with highly processed goods to one containing clean, whole, real foods. Use your journal to note of when you feel upbeat, positive and energetic, or cranky, stressed, anxious or moody. At a later point this will give you the information to draw conclusions about how certain foods affect you. These will play a role in influencing your eating, exercise and sleep habits moving forward.

This 21 day program gives you everything you need to lose weight, fight aging, heal illness, get your skin glowing and break up with sugar for good. Your body and your life will be transformed.

Once your dependence on sugar has been conquered and obliterated you will discover a more liberating, fulfilling and rewarding life.

Removing toxins from your body, driving your sugar demon into oblivion and nourishing your cells with high quality whole foods, will make you feel as if you have undergone the ultimate make-over. No pills, potions, special shakes, Spanx, or surgery were required.

Once your dependence on sugar has been conquered and obliterated you will discover a more liberating, fulfilling and rewarding life. Once completed, it is imperative to celebrate your accomplishment with a special event. You exhibited great mental and physical strength, and you deserve to be rewarded. Treat yourself to a non-food related indulgence and acknowledge the hurdle you have overcome.

If you happen to go a little wild and get back on the sugar wagon, you can simply recover by returning to your original 21 day protocol foods for about three to seven days. Listen to your body, it knows what it needs. Water, rest and nutrient dense, craving crushing foods are the best prescription when you feel the effects of over-indulgence.

