

Nutrition for the Sweet Tooth

Sugar is a carbohydrate.

Carbohydrates stimulate the release of the feel-good brain chemical serotonin. The taste of sugar also releases endorphins that calm and relax us, and offer a natural "high". These hormones and chemicals are the ones responsible for triggering the perpetual cycle of sugar cravings leading to addiction. Kicking the sugar addiction habit has been found to lower risk for several chronic obesity related diseases.

Limit added sugars to about 6 teaspoons per day for women and 9 for men.

Tips on How to Stop Sugar Cravings:

Combine foods= a protein + a carbohydrate. Fill yourself up and satisfy a sugar craving, too. As a beneficial bonus, you'll satisfy a craving and get healthy nutrients from those good-for-you foods.

Grab some gum. If you want to avoid giving in to a sugar craving completely, try chewing a stick of gum,

Reach for fruit. Keep fruit handy for when sugar cravings hit. You'll get fiber and nutrients along with some sweetness.

Get up and go. When a sugar craving hits, walk away.

Choose quality over quantity. If you need a sugar splurge, ^{p+ick} a wonderful, decadent sugary food, but keep it small. Don't swear off favorites -- you'll only come back for greater portions.

Eat regularly. Waiting too long between meals may set you up to choose sugary, fatty foods that cut your hunger.

Skip artificial sweeteners. Artificial sweeteners may sound like a great idea, but they don't lessen cravings for sugar.

Slow down. For one week, focus on your sugar cravings and think about what you're eating.

Plan. Eat what you intend to eat, instead of eating when you're desperate.

Get support. Many people turn to sweet foods when they're stressed, depressed, or angry. But food doesn't solve emotional issues. Consider whether emotions are involved in your sugar cravings and whether you need help to find other solutions to those emotional problems.

Mix it up. You may need more than one strategy to thwart sugar cravings. One week you may find success with one tactic, and another week calls for an alternative approach.

Give in a little. Eat a bit of what you're craving, maybe a small cookie or a fun-size candy bar.

The next time a sugar craving hit, reach for some of these snacks instead:

Yogurt with Fruit

Trail mix with dark chocolate bits and dried fruit

Real fruit sorbet

Avocado Chocolate Pudding

Cereal with unsweetened almond/ cashew milk

Coffee with sugar free flavor additive

Truwhip (like whip cream) with fruit

Frozen Grapes

Frozen fruit smoothie

Fudgecicles

Fruit and chocolate kabobs

Smoothie

Creamy protein shake

PB2- regular or chocolate

Plain roasted almonds with a couple of dark chocolate squares (at least 70% cacao for less sugar) i

Baked apples sprinkled with cinnamon, nutmeg and adding some chopped nuts, granola or oats

Kettle corn will really satisfy those sweet, salty and crunchy cravings