



ECHOES BY
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TOO MUCH SUGAR IS NOT SWEET

A friend drinks three cups of tea daily with two teaspoons of sugar in each cup. Six teaspoons contains 24 gms of sugar. He also drinks one 12 ounce (368 ml) can of a cola. The can of cola contains 33 gms of sugar. Each day he consumes 24+33=57 gms of sugar. In a year, your friend consumes 20.80 kgs of sugar from his daily tea and one can of cola alone. Your friend also consumes many other foods.



Two of your friends work out. After the workout, one friend receives 12 oranges to eat. The other friend receives 1 litre of freshly pressed orange juice to drink that was made from 12 oranges with no added sugar. The first friend eats four oranges and stops. The second friend finishes all the orange juice. If you're wondering what happened, the first friend ate whole oranges which contain fibre, sugar and water. The second friend drank only the sugar and the water.

We consume far more sugar than we should and less than what we think we burn out.

Why do we crave for sugar? We never had enough of it. Refined sugar was either not available or it was a luxury of the rich and the powerful. Sources of sweet were fruits which were available only in seasons, or honey and molasses, which depended if bees, sugarcane and beetroot were available. Synthesised sugar (saccharine) was unheard of. This is why from ancient times sweet food was not only a delicacy, sweets also entered rhymes and songs that were passed down for centuries.

Today, we don't have time to cook. Living in the fast lane makes us dependent on fast food, processed or semi-processed food. Eating out was a luxury one generation ago. Today it's becoming a necessity.

A bowl of instant noodles contains 9½ teaspoons of sugar (38 gms). A non-

sugary bowl of cereal contains 3 teaspoons (12 gms). A bowl of tomato soup has 2 ½ teaspoons (10 gms). A 500 ml bottle of sport drink contains 15 teaspoons of sugar (60 gms).

with pleasure. This means, our brain doesn't easily send us signals to stop taking more like it does with hot, sour, and bitter foods. We are biologically wired to sugar and sweet. Sugar in itself isn't

consumed over time increases the possibility of Type II Diabetes. One generation ago, it would have been impossible to hear of a child having diabetes. Today, even in Bangladesh, this is no longer a rarity. Now, let's do the math.

The World Health Organization (WHO) advises 6-12 teaspoons of sugar (24-48 gms) each day. Go back and look at the food items and see how much sugar each of them has. Food companies are required to mention how much sugar one unit of their product contains. The food companies are not required to tell us how much sugar we consume from their products over time. The worries aren't over. If you're working out to burn extra calories, then re-think. The fruit juice and sport drinks you take afterwards balance out all your hard work.

Historically and biologically, we are tempted to sugar and sweet foods. It's difficult to keep temptation in moderation. Next time you have food or drink that contains sugar, ask yourself: How much sugar will this have if I consume it for one year? Will I have 24 hours in a day to burn it out?

Source: BBC Horizon: The Truth About Sugar.

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