The Effects of Sugars

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The average American diet has increased the amount of sugar consumption dramatically over the decade. Refined/Added sugar can lead to weight gain, diabetes and heart disease. Those individuals who consume more than 25% of their total calories from added sugar do not consume the adequate amounts of vitamins, minerals and fiber. Sugars are absorbed and digested quickly leaving an individual feeling wiped out and unable to concentrate.

Good sugars vs. bad sugars

There are refined/added sugars (corn syrup or sucrose, white, brown or powered sugar) and natural sugars (lactose in milk or fructose in fruit). Refined and added sugars are found in many processed foods. These refined and added sugars in processed foods do not have any nutritional value; unlike sugar from fruit and milk which are balanced with vitamins and minerals. Additionally, fruits have fiber, which can slow down the absorption and make a person feel fuller longer.

How to lower your intake of sugars

Choose whole foods (non-processed) such as fresh fruit, whole grains, raw nuts and low fat milk products instead of candy bars and soda. Limit the intake of foods high in sugar to special occasions rather than eating sweets daily. Furthermore, use sugar-free syrup when ordering a drink at Starbucks, chose plain water or 100% fruit juice instead of soda and substitute low-fat chocolate milk for those sugar laden energy drinks.

What to substitute summer sweet products with

Fresh fruit with yogurt mixed with whole grain cereal is a delicious and refreshing summertime dessert without the added sugar. Homemade fruit Popsicles with 100% fruit juice and fruit smoothies made with yogurt, milk and fresh fruit.

A recipe or a few healthy choices

Peach Smoothie Recipe

Ingredients:
1 large peach, sliced and unseeded
1/2 cup of peach yogurt
1/2 cup of skim milk
6 ice cubes

Directions:
Blend the peach slices with the ice cubes and milk first until slushy texture is formed. Then add the yogurt blend for another minute on low setting. You may substitute fresh peaches with any fresh fruit or frozen fruit.