Sugar Is Your Enemy – Just Learn to Dominate It

It is Halloween in our subdivision. My young girls love it and we have prepared for the event with the usual candy and chocolate single serving, multi-pack, shopping spree. They have been bought weeks in advance, because advertising starts earlier each year for such celebrations. You are encouraged to buy your candies by September nowadays. Good excuse for all of us, because the big bags in the closet have been opened, and candy is disappearing mysteriously before the big splurge day. Especially my favorites, the Reese’s® peanut butter cups.

What is going on in that closet? The large size and depth of the bag is very welcome. It hides the multiple thefts. I take a few when I go to work. I take a few when I come home. Yet, I forbid my kids to steal anything. But they are smart and excited, and tempted too. They are checking the not so secret stash. They complain it has been opened and candy is disappearing.

I am secretly eating the candies. The single mini serving is a diabolical invention because it gives you permission to pretend you only eat small portions. You can eat them everywhere. And you can hide the addiction because you are stashing it so easily, hidden in your pocket or hand. And one mouthful is so easily swallowed. Even that can be done secretly in front of a full room. I remember eating one on my way to the TV room, on my way up the stairs, and even in the bathroom! I call them the “in-betweener,” or the mini sugar breaks. Much easier managed than a piece of cake or even a cookie that requires too many bites and is too visible. It is so easy to be sneaky with mini snacks nowadays.

On Halloween night things get even more out of control. Each time the bell rings I open the door and dip for myself into the bowl. I am feeling sick. I have chocolate nausea and my mouth is sore—from all the sugar and the preservatives combined. I realize I must have eaten 20 mini bites in one day. This is almost 600 to 1,000 calories of pure processed sugar, and bad fats, or more than half my nutritional need in calories. Veronique, please; what are you doing?

This is sick. When I think about the past, I wonder how I could inflict this upon myself. What was the real pleasure? Once you start you can’t stop, you are like the hamster on the wheel. One candy after the other, like a curse. Not a surprise the pants were cracking at the seams. And the belly got like jellyfish. I remember being ashamed of myself, yet powerless at breaking the curse. I am so glad I got out of this cycle. And if you follow my guidance, you can too.

If you are a sugar addict you know all the tricks, the hiding places, the deception, the games, the excuses, the before and after, the highs and the lows. You have stashed candy in your bras, in your shoes, in your car, in the garage. I bet you have been very resourceful. One of my daughters had hidden a private stash at home, after Halloween, not very smartly between her mattress and her bed board. We had an incredible chocolate Labrador called Zapper who was obsessed with food. We found Barbie® shoes, wrappers, and kids’ latex balloons in her poop frequently.
Well, she found the bag and ate all the chocolates, with the wrappers. She was not even sick and we found the wrappers in her poop too!

Sugar is a cheap and available drug, with multiple flavors, sizes and shapes. I am a marketer by training. Food companies have flavor and texture engineers, consumer tasting focus panels, market research and all the necessary tools to target and hit the right consumer with the right product.

Do you prefer chewy, crunchy, salty, gooey, cold, creamy, chocolaty or peanut buttery? Maybe a combination... why not add some fizziness! That’s how they hook you. They engage all your senses, including with advertising.

Cogni-Game:

Take a piece of candy or chocolate and analyze the label. How many natural ingredients are there? Now if you can, what are they saying in their ads?

And then you can add the three Starbucks® or Dunkin’ Donuts® that are located near your home, your office, on your way to school or near your local shopping center. They are waiting for you with open arms. They can feed your caffeine and whipped cream addiction on top of everything. They are part of your daily ritual. They are a habit too, these liquid little treats.

Is this chapter going to be a lecture on sugar? I will try not to make it one. But I will share a few facts that are part of what I consider a mountain of damning evidence that should help you start to look at sugar with a very different eye. I will also offer you some solutions that you will mostly learn via our little experiments. I also recommend the very recently published book from Professor Robert H. Lustig, MD, called “The Hacking of the American Mind” (visit his website: Robert. H. Lustig UCSF).

The CogniDiet® first session curriculum is all about sugar. Eliminate the sugar and you will lose weight fast. Sugar or carbohydrates are a source of energy. It is the fuel of your body. But it needs to be “burned” with activity. So guess what happens when you eat three cookies and then stay on a couch for three hours?
There are five facts I would like you to know about sugar:

1. **All carbohydrates end up as glucose in your blood.**

   Some carbohydrates trigger very brutal spikes, usually the “white stuff,” or pure sugar. Some, because there is fiber and some fat (think real whole grain bread where you can still see the oily kernels, or oatmeal) have a slower uptake. Remember that even vegetables and fruits, especially non-starchy vegetables, are carbohydrates, but as you will see later, with much less sugar content,

   Each time there is too much glucose in your blood, insulin is pumped from your pancreas to deal with the extra glucose and extract it from your blood. If there is too much glucose in the blood it leads to diabetes, heart disease and more. As a strange result of having too much glucose in your blood, your body goes overprotective and takes it out. Your glucose level drops dramatically and triggers a new craving for refueling. This is the vicious circle of sugar.

**Sugar Release Patterns**

This is how you create never ending sugar cravings.

All fruits, vegetables, flours and starches have a glycemic index that measures the rapidity at which sugar is released as glucose in your blood. You will notice most of the non-starchy vegetables have low indexes or none! It can be as fast as 10 minutes.
## Glycemic Index of Carbohydrates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Type – All 15g Carbohydrates</th>
<th>Glycemic Index (GI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-starchy vegetables:</strong></td>
<td>GI is 0 (zero) when raw, sometimes cooking can increase the glycemic index slightly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artichoke (1/4 cup), asparagus (1 cup), avocado (1/3 cup), bean sprouts (3/4 cup), bok choy (1 cup), broccoli (1 cup), Brussels sprouts (3/4 cup), cabbage (1 cup), cauliflower (1 cup), celery (4 stalks), cucumber (1 medium), eggplant (1 cup), fennel (3/4 cup), green beans (1/2 cup), mushrooms (2 cups), peppers (1/2 to 3/4 cups), all salads (2 to 3 cups), snow peas (1 cup), spinach (4 cups), tomato (1 medium of 1 cup), turnip (1 cup), zucchini (1 cup)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Starchy vegetables:</strong></td>
<td>Between 30 and 75 (highest is white potatoes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans in general, lentils, chickpeas, hummus, beets, butternut squash, corn, parsnips cooked, peas cooked, all potatoes, pumpkin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fruits:</strong></td>
<td>Lowest are raspberries at zero, but usually in the high 30s and 40s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lowest:</strong> apple (small), grapefruit (small), orange (medium), peach (large), pear (1/2 of a large), plums (2), raspberries (1 cup), strawberries (1 1/4 cup)</td>
<td>Highest is 75 (watermelon) to lowest mango (51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Highest:</strong> banana, apricots, cantaloupe, black cherries, grapes, mango, papaya, pineapple, raisins, watermelon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>White or whole carbohydrates:</strong></td>
<td>Between 40 and 70, more likely around 60.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bread (1 slice), rice and pasta, (usually a 1/3 to 1/2 cup cooked)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Ideally, the body can only process 30g of carbohydrates every 2 hours.\(^2\)

This is what your pancreas is able to handle with insulin. Yes, even the good carbohydrates (except most of the vegetables, which are very low in sugar). Learn to picture what 15g of carbohydrates represent. It is essential to become a master at that, because this will be the number one reason you will be able to lose weight besides portion control.

The numbers below are approximate numbers. Some foods can be 16g or 13g, but I decided to simplify things for the sake of your learning journey. All sources are from MyFitnessPal\(^\circ\), the app that I use regularly to check my calories:

**1 Serving = 15g Carbohydrates (Rounded)**

- 1 slice bread, 1/4 bagel, 3/4 cup cooked oatmeal
- 1/3 to 1/2 cup rice, 1/3 cup pasta, 1/2 cup corn
- 1/2 cup cooked potatoes, 3/4 cup of fries (half a small portion)
- 1-2 cups cooked or 2-3 cups uncooked vegetables
- 1 small apple, 1/2 medium banana, 1 to 3/4 cup any berries
- 5.2 oz wine glass: 2g sugar + 15g alcohol
- 1/2 cup vanilla ice cream or a small cookie

3. If not burnt within 2 hours\(^2\) (15 to 30 minutes for rapid releasing sugars such as pure sugary/white carbohydrate treats or alcohol) insulin transports the extra glucose out of your blood to be stored as fat.

Extra glucose beyond acceptable safe levels cannot stay in your blood. It destroys your organs. However, having 40g of carbohydrates or more at a meal is not too bad if you burn the fuel after the meal. Even your body at rest burns sugar for all the activities going on like digestion or your heart beating. And then normal activities such as walking, getting up the stairs, vacuuming or just being moderately active will burn this sugar. You don’t have to jump on your elliptical.

2: “The Insulin Resistance Diet” by Cheryle R. Hart, MD and Mary Kay Grossman, R.D.
Chapter Two: I Am Getting Rid of Sugar!

I am trying to say that being a couch potato or being glued to your computer after having a cake are not ideal situations! Because this is what glucose’s role is in your body. You need to be active, go walking, or exercise to burn it off. This is why we strongly recommend TO NOT EAT STARCHY CARBS and SUGAR for dinner. You will always burn carbohydrates even at rest but at a slow pace and especially when you sleep!

**Cogni-Tip:**

Eliminate sugar and starchy carbs for a few days at dinner and you will be very pleased with your weight loss!

Insulin is a fat storing machine. Both sugar and carbohydrates make you fat—very rapidly. And fruits are carbohydrates! The only exception is non-starchy vegetables; they behave differently and do not trigger high glucose spikes (see in previous Glycemic index table).

**T**OO MUCH **SUGAR** + **NOT MOVING** = **FAT CREATION**

1 cookie = 15g or 60 calories of carbohydrates to burn

It is not just fat that makes you fat, it is too much glucose!

4. All sugars are sugars, honey!

There is no GOOD sugar. No, honey is not OK if you consume too much of it. Some sugars are just worse than others at creating even higher glucose peaks. One example is industrial corn syrup which bears many new names to fool you, and is added to almost every processed food nowadays including hams, meats, condiments, bread. The list is endless and the industry keeps on coming up with new names to hide it. A new one is “inverted sugar.” In fact, yet again, it is corn based sugar.

**Cogni-Game:**

Become a label detective. Find the hidden sugars!
Are artificial sweeteners OK? The research has now officially linked them to many health issues and the ability to still trigger sugar cravings and trigger insulin spikes.

The next question will be: “Is stevia OK?” Stevia is a plant. It grows in New Jersey. It is bitter. The powder however has been engineered to be pure, without aftertaste. It may be combined with other sweeteners. It has undergone a chemical process. Therefore, I am not interested.

Although some nutritional experts may disagree with me, I believe everything should be eaten as close as possible to their natural form. I will not condemn sugar totally. But I will suggest that if you can’t live without it, try good raw and organic honey or raw sugar in moderation, added to your cup of coffee, instead of any other sweeteners. Do we know what stevia will do in the long run to your body? Not yet.

Cogni-Tip:
My recommendation: Learn to live without added sugar. If you want some, choose a natural and trusted source.

Sugar Is Sugar, Read Your Labels!
- Beet sugar
- Cane sugar
- Agave syrup
- Honey—yes, honey is sugar!
- Fruit juices (even if it comes from a natural source, it is added sugar) and fruit extracts
- Molasses (viscous by-product from the refining of sugar cane or beets)
- Maple syrup and more
- All the “ol” sugars like mannitol and erythritol are sugars even if the food industry can claim there is zero sugar when they are added. They have a lesser glycemic index but promote gas

The worst:
- Corn syrup or fructose or high fructose corn syrup (re-engineered sugar extracted from corn starch)
- High maltose corn syrup (a new way to trick us, but it is also made of re-engineered corn-based starch)
- Dextrose (another name for sugar)
- Inverted sugar (a new way to fool you) = glucose + fructose
5. Last but not least, sugar and white processed carbohydrates (including in drinks) create inflammation in your body. They trigger all sorts of diseases beyond weight gain, such as Type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, elevated cholesterol, and even fatty livers.

We have all heard and read about the multiple nefarious effects of sugar. It is even linked to cognitive degeneration and some call Alzheimer’s disease the Diabetes Type 3 disease. I want to speak about something that is getting more attention now. Something new.

Fatty liver is like French “foie gras,” only you are the goose. The geese are fed high corn meal diets. Corn starches deliver glucose/fructose based sugars. These engineered sugars (even real sugar when too much is eaten) are too much to handle for the liver. The liver starts to create extra fat. Ensues a form of liver engorgement that leads to cirrhosis, only not triggered by alcohol. The end is liver transplant. Remember alcohol is also sugar, by the way.

This disease is now seen in children as well, and affects, silently, 70-90 million of Americans. This is because we eat too many processed foods and drinks containing mostly corn syrup, and too much sugar in general. The corn based sugar is the deadliest because it contains fructose, the most dangerous for the liver. The outcome of this is not only a fatty liver, but also cardiovascular disease, and it goes hand in hand with obesity and diabetes.

Now, you are totally depressed and guilty and feeling powerless because I just hit you with all these facts. But you need to know, you need to become aware of how much sugar you eat. You need to know what sugar does to you. If you do not like what you see here my friends, close the book and ask for a refund.

I am not telling you to stop eating sugar, or avoid all ice cream or little pleasures, I am begging you TO CONTROL and LIMIT. And try to choose good sources, as unprocessed as possible.

I am asking you to control your intake, not just for your weight loss, which cannot, and will not occur without cutting sugar. I am asking you to cut sugar for your health. You all know sugar is the Number 1 reason we have an obesity and diabetes epidemic in the U.S.

3: “Modeling the epidemic of non alcoholic fatty liver disease demonstrates an exponential increase in burden of disease” by Chris Estes et al, Hepatology, doi:10.1002/hep.29466
Weight will, for sure, 100% guaranteed, come back with a vengeance when sugar creeps back in. And by the way, a salted pretzel addiction is a sugar addiction. White flour in all its glory is a white carbohydrate and is like cocaine, as shown in studies with rats. This white powder gets you addicted.

There is no miracle pill, no special trick, and no secret sauce. You must eliminate sugar to lose and keep weight gain at bay.

THE ESSENTIAL FIVE COGNI-RULES –

Apply them and win your battle with sugar:

Rule #1. Always add a fat when eating a carbohydrate.

It will slow down the release of glucose and limit blood spikes, which trigger new cravings. Good fat, which we will cover in another chapter, is making a comeback. Eating good fat can help you lose weight. Yes that is an interesting truth, and will make you feel more satisfied, longer.
Examples:

• A fruit with a few (8) almonds or nut butter
• A whole grain cracker with some cheese (not an ideal snack but at least you combined)
• Oatmeal (slow carbohydrate) with some 2% fat yogurt
• A protein shake with some 2% dairy or almond milk, veggies and fruits

Rule #2: Always add a protein when eating a carbohydrate.

Linking protein with carbohydrates and fat allows for lower insulin needs, therefore less fat storing. Protein will also help you feel satisfied longer and maintain your muscle mass. Again this is a very important principle I learned from “The Insulin Resistance Diet” by Cheryle R. Hart, MD and Mary Kay Grossman, R.D. The snacks here above also contain protein. It is usually recommended to follow the 1 to 2 ratio or 1g of protein for every 2g of carbohydrates.

Rule #3: Favor vegetables and slow release whole carbohydrates to white carbohydrates.

Vegetable snacks will eliminate cravings because of their water and fiber content. You will feel full, yet you will not create glucose spikes that in turn will trigger new cravings. This is why you see these new recipes now using cauliflower crusts for pizzas, spiralized zucchini instead of pasta, almond flour based pastries and more. You know by now vegetables have a zero to very low glycemic index.
Rule #4: Try to limit carbohydrates to 100 to 150g NET a day to lose and maintain weight-loss.

This is approximately 400 to 600 calories in your daily intake. If you want to accelerate weight loss go between slightly under 100mg and favor vegetables, which only pack a few calories a cup as seen on previous table. And remember avoid starchy carbs and sugar at dinner. The so called low carbohydrate-high fat (LCHF) or ketogenic diet advocates as low as 20g of carbohydrates a day and an amazing amount of fat. The premise is that the body will burn fat as fuel if deprived of glucose. I do not recommend this diet unless you are very severely addicted and health impaired by starchy carbohydrates and sugar.

It is important to subtract fiber, which passes through yours system unchanged, with no calories, out of your carbohydrates count. You will see this on labels. The net impact of carbohydrates is for instance:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Total carbohydrates} &= 36g \\
\text{Fiber} &= 10g \\
\text{Net carbs} &= (36-10) = 26g.
\end{align*}
\]

Fiber is very important for your health. Most fiber-rich foods are vegetables, fruits, legumes and whole grains. Real whole grains. It can be insoluble, like these strings of fiber you see in celery stalks or avocados. The soluble fiber on the other hand forms a gelatinous mass. Chia seeds or flax seeds when soaked form a gelatinous mass. You can observe the same with oats when cooked. That is soluble fiber. **We need 25-30g of fiber a day** and the benefits of fiber besides lowering cholesterol and making you feel full, is that it acts as the carwash of your digestive tract. They are the cleaners and help you get rid of toxins.

Rule #5: Play with distractions or use a few tricks.

When the craving occurs and you want to keep it at bay, you can learn some calming techniques later in Chapter seven covering stress. However there are other quick short term solutions like engaging in another activity such as giving a call, going for a walk, or really putting your mind into something else. There are also some nutritional strategies:
• Drink a glass of water. Thirst can be perceived as hunger
• Chew a mint flavored gum or even better, drink a mint tea
• Get a bitters spray (a company called Moonshiner sells them on line). It will trick your brain with a bitter taste that may make your brain forget about sugar
• Take a Chromium piccolinate tablet (go to Chapter 10)
• Have a fat bomb! By that I mean something that is high in fat, will satisfy you and will curb your cravings. For instance a few scoops of avocado or a full fat sugar free yogurt, or a few nuts
• Have a whiff of some essential oils like peppermint oil, or citrusy smells

This concludes this chapter, one of the toughest ones, because it addresses the root cause of why your waist is expanding every year. Eating fresh vegetables, and a lot of them, and limited whole grains, is the key to maintaining a steady level of glucose in your blood to avoid cravings, and changing your body and your health. Think about your ancestors running in the forest, hunting and eating berries and roots. There were no coffee shops, ice cream parlors or restaurants.

I now want to share the story of my dear and beautiful Sharon. She is the first person who called me in 2013 after she heard me speak somewhere about my program. Sharon is a beautiful 65-year-old redhead who had been a teacher her entire career. A devastating budget cut in New Jersey forced her to retire in 2013. She was angry, and believe me, you do not mess with Sharon. She had been a sugar addict all her life and was even a member of Overeaters Anonymous for many years. She lost almost 20 pounds when she attended our pilot program. She came back after one year to do it again, and combined with intensive training with a personal coach, she lost another 20 pounds. We are now in 2017 and she still has not regained these 40 pounds.

How did she do it? The first thing to realize here is that you can lose 40 pounds at age 62. It is never too late. You can also start to exercise and build muscles. You also can get rid of a lifetime of habits at 62! You just have to put yourself first and make your transformation a life goal. Sharon did it with bravery, steel resolve and grace.

Sharon’s Story: How to Get Rid of a Sweet Tooth!

Sharon became completely in control of her own destiny, even while living with the biggest saboteur possible, her sugar addict husband. I remember she told me that her husband was eating
candy in their bed while she was trying to eliminate sugar. He still offered her cookies while she was openly on the program, and she kept on saying NO. She designed a special kitchen-drawer for his foods and forbade him to exhibit them on the kitchen counter.

She traveled to Disney by car with her family for their yearly trip and for the first time in 20 years, she brought coolers with her with as much of her own food as she could for the one week trip. She mapped her restaurant choices, she asked for special foods, she told her husband and two daughters to let her live her life. She came back five pounds lighter and confessed that every year she went to Disney she usually came back with an extra 10 pounds.

On Christmas, she had to visit family members who were sugar confectioners. Their home was a fairytale landscape of sugary treats. But she felt she had entered hell. She resisted. She told me than more than once she disappeared in the restroom where she used mindful meditation techniques to visualize herself healthy and fit.

Her secret method to resist sugar was to:

- Learn what sugar was doing to her body.
- “X-ray” all sugary foods, crossing them off her list mentally with a big red X. Or visualize the word POISON or TOXIC written on it.
- Change her eating habits. Adding more slow carbohydrates and vegetables, link foods and never compromise. Even at weddings or parties, she chose the healthier options or called in advance to make sure there were special meals. She told me “every day counts.”
- Eliminate certain restaurants and swipe her house out of temptations. Even her husband had to hide his stash.

In the process of doing these steps, Sharon also found a new career as an Adjunct Professor at Penn State University. She is training future teachers with passion and expertise. She chuckled as she told me how over the past years, while she maintained her weight loss, her girlfriends yo-yoed up and down. They always ask her for her secret, hoping there is a magic pill. She answers that she just decided once and for all to be in charge. She shared her PAT:

“I am the boss of myself, the only one.
Nobody can tell me what to eat!”
Now, let’s introduce our first Experiments Series, for the body and mind that will allow you, over the course of this book, to self-discover and transform your life every week!

**Experiment #1 – Experience cravings**

This is the most important experiment. It will enlighten you on how sensitive you are to white carbohydrates. It will allow you to apply the Rule #1 and Rule #2 of the CogniDiet® Sugar Control Plan. I want you to feel for yourself what happens when you start the day with different breakfasts.

- **Day 1:** Have a high sugar breakfast. Start with one or two slices of white bread, bagel or croissant or muffin, with jam or honey, plus a fruit or a fruit juice (freshly squeezed or from a bottle). You could replace the toast with cereals and milk.
- **Day 2:** Have a source of protein such as an egg or two, or a slice of ham, tofu, or cheese with a slice of bread. You can add a fruit (no juices). Or have a cup of 1 to 2% fat yogurt (no sugar nor fruits added) with a real fruit, like berries.
- **Day 3:** Try a slow release good carbohydrate such as a half cup of cooked oatmeal with 1 to 2% fat dairy source (or other liquid such as water or almond milk). You can add an egg or a protein source. You could also try a half cup of breakfast chili, mixing beans/lentils with a protein.

Notice your energy, brain power and sugar cravings within the next hours. How long can you go without a need for more food? And what type of food?

The Day 1 breakfast is very high in fast releasing sugars. The other breakfasts are combining fat and protein, and slow release carbohydrates.

**Experiment #2 – Become a label sleuth**

Go to the grocery store or shop in your kitchen, and look at labels. Select cereals, ice creams, cookies, tomato sauce, frozen dinners, breads, breads, and yes dressings!

How many carbohydrates do you see on the label?
• What is a real serving? The calories announced are only per serving.
• Is there added sugar? Look at the list of ingredients. Some foods contain natural sugar, like lactose in milk or dairy, but they may also have extra sugar added.
• Do you see the difference between carbohydrates, sugar and fiber? It does not add up. Look at the label information below. I remember a client telling me she was a good girl because she bought a no sugar added muffin. She forgot to count flour as a source of glucose.

One 4 oz. muffin – Plain
No added chocolate chips, nuts, fruits, etc.

Nutrition Facts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Calories: 240</th>
<th>Calories from fat: 15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Daily Value</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Fat</td>
<td>2g</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat Fat</td>
<td>0g</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans Fat</td>
<td>0g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cholesterol</td>
<td>0mg</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium</td>
<td>400mg</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Carbs</td>
<td>50g</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dietary Fiber</td>
<td>2g</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugars</td>
<td>2g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Calorie King website/Calories counter

Missing 46g of flour
**Experiment #3 – Know how many carbohydrates you eat**

Assess how many carbohydrates you ate yesterday, or on a typical day, using the table below. Use one of the apps we recommend later in this chapter. Then for fun transform the grams (except non-starchy vegetables) in mountains of sugar.

*To simplify the game, imagine that 4g of carbs = 4 grams of sugar = 1 teaspoon of sugar. Remember to count Net Carbs.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meal – include alcohol and sugary drinks</th>
<th>Grams of carbohydrates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dinner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snacks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL teaspoons of sugar</strong></td>
<td>Except for non-starchy vegetables, transform all carbohydrates in mountains of sugar.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What are your insights? Do you realize how quickly it accumulates? How much of these carbohydrates are really fresh vegetables? You should be eating at least 5 to 7 cups a day (cooked or uncooked). YES, you should!

**Experiment #4 – Eliminate certain foods**

Write a plan of action for SUGAR elimination. What are the foods you can eliminate or decide to substitute healthier options with?
• What is in your cabinets at home? Get rid of what you do not want anymore
• Create a stash of healthy snacks at your desk, at the office or where you know you are most vulnerable and most likely to go to the “vending machine”
• Make it a priority to find new healthier snacks that will replace older, more sugary or processed snacks

Go without any sugar, including fruits, for one day. Try to stick to vegetables and little slow release carbohydrates such as oatmeal for breakfast. This is one step further than the breakfast experiment. Write down your craving level, feelings, emotions, energy level and mood. If you can try to continue for a few more days and again, write down how you feel. See how you transform.

**Experiment #5 – Create your list of benefits being sugar-free**

Create the list of all your personal benefits for eliminating sugar—this is the cognitive behavioral aspect of this program. The previous experiments should help you find out more about how you feel. Please write full sentences in your diary. And always start with the word “I.” Examples:

• I do not have cheap ice cream buckets in my freezer anymore. It created a bad habit of splurging every night in front of the TV. I now treat myself to an excellent, locally made and organic ice cream once a week that I eat very mindfully
• I have “Feng shui-ed” my kitchen from all the sugar laden condiments, dressing and drinks. I feel liberated. I realized I got rid of 4,000g of sugar. I calculated that all these products together represented 1,000 teaspoons of sugar or 16,000 calories!
• I cut my sugar intake by 50% this week and I feel so much better. I lost 10 pounds, wow, this is how I feel now:
   ✓ More energetic
   ✓ Sharper
   ✓ Less tired
   ✓ Less puffy
   ✓ I slept better
✓ More optimistic
✓ I walk faster and work longer hours
✓ I did not look for sweets every 2 hours as usual

• I have made a list of all the impact this sugar cutting has had on my health and I can’t wait to see the new blood data:

  ✓ I will lower my body fat
  ✓ I will lower my blood pressure and cholesterol numbers
  ✓ I will lower my risk for diabetes – I am borderline pre-diabetic

CogniDiet® Book Club Discussion Guide

This week you have plenty to do with the five experiments. I recommend that you perform all the experiments. It is crucial to do Experiment #1, because this will show you what sugar does to you.

The group members who really cut white and starchy carbs and sugar this week will have the most impressive weight loss results. If you have sophisticated scales, you may also be able to notice how much water you lost.

• Discuss how you notice changes within your group (physical and energetic changes). It is always very good to hear compliments from or be inspired by your friends.
• How was Experiment #1?
• How did you feel this week after eliminating sugar and carbs? How did you feel on the first days?
• Cook with a carb substitute if you have dinner or lunch together
• What have you discovered about sugar in general?
• What have you learned with the experiments?
• If somebody keeps on finding excuses, push them to commit!

You may now have a winner already! Or some of you need encouragement. Have a list of actions after the meeting.