

ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS

from DAN'S
HAND



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Since the “low-carb” craze has abated, the new fad seems to be “low sugar.” The funny thing is, they mean essentially the same thing. Just check it out; take a stroll down any of the center aisles at your neighborhood grocery store. About 11% of all packaged foods are now labeled “reduced sugar!”

Buyers Beware

If the calories or sugar have been reduced, then why does the stuff still taste so good? Well, it's probably because the manufacturer has switched to a sugar substitute. Understanding what sweeteners your favorite products are now using will help you make healthier choices.

Splenda is the trade name for a new synthetic sweetener compound called Sucralose. The FDA has approved Splenda to be safe and can be labeled “natural” because their manufacturer Johnson and Johnson claims that it is made from sugar, a claim that the Sugar Association disputes. Here are the facts:

Sucralose is made up of two molecules of sucrose (sugar) and three molecules of chlorine. Since it is synthetic, it is not recognized by the body as food—that's why it has no calories! The problem is, our digestive systems try to clear unrecognizable substances from our systems by digesting them. Absorption does take place and these chlorinated molecules get stored in your fat cells. This will take years to know whether they are influencing your health.

Aspartame (the main ingredient in Equal), NutraSweet, and its cousin Neotame can cause an accumulation of formaldehyde in the brain which is cause for neuropsychiatric concerns. It's been linked with MS, lupus and fibromyalgia, among other central nervous disorders.

Saccharin has been proven to cause bladder cancer in rats; it has fallen near the bottom of the list but is still used in some chewing gums and medicines. Experts agree that sufficient doses of saccharin would have the same effect in humans, but we don't know how much that “sufficient dose” is. Having said this, it's probably a better choice than aspartame; however, it doesn't taste as good.

The Sweet Facts

Basically, artificial sweeteners confuse the brain. The enzymes in your mouth begin a cascade that primes your cell receptors for an insulin surge, and when it doesn't arrive, your brain feels cheated. This is why most diet sodas contain caffeine. So you still feel a jolt. Your body still senses sweetness and releases insulin, storing more calories as fat!

Sugar is OK

I mean real sugar here, but only when consumed with other foods to help slow digestion, or within 30 minutes of a workout. Sugar from fruit consumed within 30 minutes of a workout will not convert to fat; it is simply stored as glycogen, giving you more energy and helping you build more muscle.

Fact – Not one gram of sugar consumed within 30 minutes of a workout is stored as fat.

Eat Well!

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