

Pointers For Parents

Holiday Sweet Treats Get Doctors' OK

(NAPSA)—There may be sweet news for parents and children this holiday season.

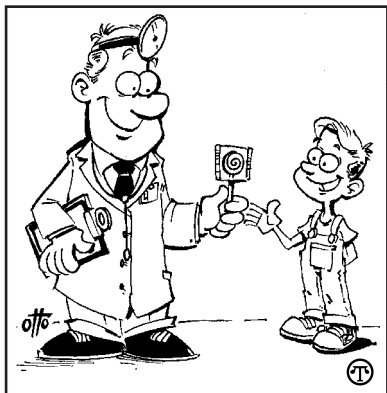
You don't have to worry that visions of sugarplums dancing in your youngsters' heads will affect their brains. That is, scientific studies confirm that sugar consumption is in no way a cause of hyperactivity or Attention Deficit Disorder.

While sugar, like any other nutrient, should be consumed in moderation, researchers now say that it has no effect on a child's mood or ability to pay attention.

Explains Dr. Dean Edell, "Sugar doesn't cause any disease, doesn't make kids 'hyper'; it doesn't make adults 'hyper'. During holiday time kids are eating lots of sugar, and they seem 'hyper' because of the holiday. We've done the double blind studies. It does not affect moods."

The American Psychiatric Association agrees. Its members say no aspect of diet contributes to ADHD symptoms. Those symptoms can include:

- Fidgeting with hands or feet, squirming in a chair.
- Difficulty remaining seated.
- Running about or climbing excessively.
- Difficulty engaging in activities quietly.
- Acting as if driven by a motor.



- Talking excessively.
- Blurting out answers before questions have been completed.
- Difficulty waiting or taking turns.
- Interrupting or intruding upon others.

Any child who exhibits the majority of these symptoms, especially after the age of seven, should be seen by a doctor. A number of treatments are available. Avoiding sugar, however, is not generally considered among them.

So let your youngsters enjoy those holiday cookies, candy canes and chocolate coins—just be sure they brush their teeth afterwards.

You can learn more online from the Sugar Association, at www.sugar.org.