

Nutrition News And Notes



Sweet News About Sugar

(NAPSA)—If, like many people, you've begun to wonder whether eating sugar affects health, there may be good news for you.

First, you're far from alone. Almost everyone enjoys sugars and the occasional sweet treat. In fact, a fondness for sweet taste is present from birth and liking sweet tastes is in part determined by your genes.

Next, you should know that there are many types of sugars and the terms used to describe sugars can be confusing. Sugars are carbohydrates, which serve as the main energy source for the body. They occur both naturally and as ingredients in many foods. The most familiar sugar is sucrose (what's called "table sugar"), which is made of two simple sugars, fructose and glucose. Fruits and vegetables naturally contain fructose and glucose. Other sugars used in foods include agave nectar, corn syrup, high-fructose corn syrup, honey, invert sugar, lactose (that is, milk sugar) and other syrups.

Research suggests that the body does not distinguish between sugars added to foods (the sugar found in a sweet roll) and naturally occurring sugars (the sugar found in fruit, fruit juice or milk). Regardless of the name or source, sugars contribute about the same 4 calories per gram to the diet as do protein and complex carbohydrates.

Health professionals recommend that people who consume sugar do so in moderation as part



Nutrition professionals say healthful diets can include the occasional sweet treat.

of a healthful diet that provides the appropriate amount of daily calories. For people trying to manage their weight, regular exercise and keeping an eye on calories are essential—and that includes calories from dietary fats, protein and carbohydrates such as sugar. People who are very physically active burn more calories, so they can add more calories to their diet in any form they choose—from dairy products, meats, vegetables, fruits and the occasional sweet treat.

To sum it up, it's generally best to enjoy all things in moderation, including sugar.

Learn More

For more nutrition and food safety information, you can visit the International Food Information Council Foundation's website at www.foodinsight.org.