

Follow the Chisum Fitness Trail – Lower Sugar

RE: Sugar Intake and Obesity

Last week, I provided an overview of the new research concerning the Atkins Diet. This article will address the newly published data from several sources. They include the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Sugar is found in many different forms within our society. Refined sugar (both brown and white) is the most common. It is found in candies, some cereals, soft drinks, pies, cakes, etc. It does not contain any vitamins or required minerals, therefore void of physiological value to the body. Now, some of you candyaholics may vehemently argue with me! :-)

Other sugars are found in fruits, honey, vegetables, milk, etc. Their effect upon the body has been reported to be different than processed sugar. This new data supports these findings. It appears they do not have the same impact upon obesity.

The percentage of obese and overweight Americans has risen sharply during the past three decades. Depending upon the reporting agency, these figures can be 35%+ and 70%+, respectively. Most figures indicate this periodic rate, for both obesity and overweight, is well over 300%. This health problem is almost exclusively an American phenomenon.

What amount is recommended? This also depends upon the agency. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans state that it should be used in moderation. The Institute of Medicine lists 25%. The new research (WHO and FAO) reports that sugar should be limited to only 10% of the total daily-caloric consumption.

In another report, authored by Rob Stein of the Washington Post, cited information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The data indicates that San Antonio, Texas, was judged to be the fattest City in the United States. The overall figures show that 65% of all their citizens are overweight and 31.1% are obese. The closest data are Charleston, West Virginia (67.8% overweight) and Gary, Indiana (28.8% obese). Conversely, the two lowest rates were recorded in Portland, Maine (49.3% overweight) and Denver (14.2% obesity).

Even the lowest figures from Portland, Maine, are very alarming. About one of every two inhabitants is overweight! The risks associated with being overweight are associated with such illnesses as cancer, diabetes, stroke, heart attacks, etc.

Fernando Guerra, Director of the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District, voiced his concern. He further reported that a large number of these increases are noted within the Hispanic population. He further states that the cause is simply too much junk food, too much television, and not enough exercise.

In conclusion: Atkins is correct on reducing the amount of simple sugars in the diet. A person will lose weight if they are contained to less than 20% of the overall caloric consumption.

Read the labels on the foods you purchase. Canned fruits can contain a significant amount of simple sugars, or a moderate amount, due to the fluid content. Many of the prepared foods will add a significant amount of sugar and salt. Most soft drinks are liquid sugar.

The point is to become consumer wise in purchasing foods. This will have a major impact in any weight management program.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

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