

Cutting Calories: How Sweet It Can Be

(NAPSA)—If you're a dieter with a sweet tooth, you may not have to swear off sweets to shed extra pounds. Instead, experts say you can still hit the sweet spot by finding more calorie-conscious ways to satisfy your cravings. That may mean carefully choosing where you'll "spend" your calories when temptation strikes. Beverages sweetened with low-calorie sweeteners can be a great way to do a little calorie budgeting. The following facts—surprising to some and far from sugarcoated—may serve as a helpful guide:

- **A little low-calorie sweetener can go a long way.** Most low-calorie sweeteners, such as aspartame, are several hundred times sweeter than table sugar, which is why they can make excellent sugar substitutes in beverages. Using just a small amount of low-cal sweetener can replace a much larger amount of sugar, without adding any calories.

- **Aspartame has been proven safe in more than 200 scientific studies.** Aspartame is one of the most thoroughly studied food ingredients. The sweetener has been approved for use in more than 100 countries and is found in over 6,000 products around the world.

- **Low-cal sweeteners can play an important role in weight management.** Studies indicate that when low-cal sweeteners in beverages such as Diet Coke are used consistently as substitutes for caloric sweeteners, such as high fructose corn syrup or sugar (each provides the same amount of calories) as part of a balanced and sensible diet, they have the potential to support weight management.

- **The latest no-cal sweetener is also a natural sweetener.** Truvia is the brand name for rebiana, a natural, zero-calorie, high-purity extract of the stevia leaf. It is purified during production, and the finished ingredient contains nothing artificial or synthetic. You can find it in

Weight-Management Tips

Cutting out favorite foods and beverages doesn't usually work as a long-term strategy. Try these ideas from the experts:

- **Plan Ahead**—Knowing what, where and how much you're going to eat at meals and snacks every day can help head off high-calorie snacking overload.
- **Shop Smart**—Check food labels for calories per serving, serving size and the number of servings. Choosing foods and beverages with low-calorie sweeteners and smaller package sizes can help control calories.
- **Break It Up**—Split the 60 minutes of physical activity recommended each day for weight management into short, 10- to 15-minute sessions. Be sure to count the time doing physical jobs like cleaning the house or gardening.
- **Intensity is Important**—Experts agree at least 30 minutes or more a day of your physical activity should be either of moderate- or vigorous-intensity.

For more specific guidance and information see Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans at <http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/guidelines/default.aspx>. 

sparkling beverages such as Sprite Green.

- **All calories count, no matter where they come from.** Extra pounds are gained when you take in more calories than you expend. It's important that people make informed, sensible dietary choices, making sure the overall diet fulfills one's nutritional needs without exceeding their individual daily calorie budget. Most nutrition experts agree that people should consume a variety of foods and beverages, manage calories to maintain a healthy weight and be physically active every day.

You can learn more about beverages and sweeteners by visiting www.beverageinstitute.org or calling 1-800-GET-COKE (800) 438-2653).