

Health Bulletin

The Facts About Diabetics And Sugar Intake

(NAPSA)—If you're concerned about diabetes and what causes it, you may be surprised by the latest medical findings. According to leading experts, eating carbohydrates—including sugar—doesn't cause diabetes. Major factors include genetics and lifestyle, especially excessive weight and poor fitness.

According to the American Diabetes Association (ADA), diabetics may enjoy sugar in moderation, provided it's counted like all carbs. When you consume foods like potatoes, carrots, corn, strawberries and watermelon, you're eating what dietitians refer to as "starches and sugars." Your body converts starches and sugars—including the pure, all-natural sugar from your sugar bowl—into glucose, the fuel every body needs to function properly.

Both type 1 and type 2 diabetes are disorders that affect the body's ability to convert glucose into energy. A key piece in the diabetes puzzle is insulin, a hormone produced by the pancreas. In type 1 diabetes, the pancreas is unable to produce insulin. In type 2 diabetes, commonly referred to as adult onset diabetes, the pancreas gradually loses its ability to produce enough insulin to transform blood glucose into energy.

Most important for diabetics to know is how they can incorporate carbohydrates properly into their diet. According to the ADA, blood glucose levels are a direct result of the total amount of carbohydrates in one's diet. So if you're diabetic, you can include sugar in your diet as long as you count it as part of your daily carbohydrate allowance.

The American Diabetes Association offers a good rule of thumb



Current medical research shows that people with diabetes can safely use sugar as a moderate part of their diets.

for how to keep your blood glucose in check without depriving your sweet tooth: control portion size. So long as you're counting, you can swap some of the carbohydrates in your diet with small amounts of sweets.

Currently, diabetes afflicts more than 20 million adult Americans. It is estimated a third of adults with diabetes don't know they're afflicted. Even with today's research technology, scientists still don't know all of the causes of diabetes. A smart, sensible diet is an important safeguard for anyone's health; it becomes even more important once a person is diagnosed with diabetes.

Knowing the truth should strengthen your resolve and enthusiasm for eating a balanced, sensible diet that includes fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins. All-natural sugar, with just 15 calories a teaspoon, can be part of any healthy, active lifestyle. For more information, visit www.sugar.org.