

HOW MUCH SUGAR DO YOU REALLY EAT?

Sugar is necessary for survival. Our cells need glucose for fuel. The problem with sugar is that it's too widely available and overly consumed in our modern society – especially in processed, simple, and artificial forms. This can lead to a myriad of health issues, high blood sugar, and weight gain.

When it comes to sugar consumption, awareness is key. Foods in restaurants and on the grocery store shelves often have so much sugar that the amount of sugar we actually eat creeps up on us. Paying attention to how much sugar you consume in an average day can be an eye opening exercise to see how much sugar you're really eating, versus how much you think you're eating. It's also telling to pay attention to your energy and mood after eating. Our bodies are very intelligent, but we sometimes forget to listen to them.

Below is a chart to record your sugar consumption over the span of a day. Do your best to track and record what you eat, paying attention to sugar content. You may need to do a little research!

After you eat, pay attention to and record your energy level and mood, both 15 minutes and 1 hour and a half after eating. Assign each a number based on a scale from 1-10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest.

For an even more enlightening experience, complete this exercise for an entire week to get a better picture of your average sugar consumption and how you feel after eating sweet foods.

	GRAMS OF SUGAR	ENERGY AND MOOD AFTER 15 MINUTES	ENERGY AND MOOD AFTER 1.5 HOURS
BREAKFAST			
SNACK			
LUNCH			
SNACK			
DINNER			

How did your numbers add up? Were you surprised by the amount of sugar you ate? _____

If you eat a lot of sweets and feel like you can't stop and your mood and energy are often low, you may be addicted to sugar.

Signs can include:

- Regularly experiencing an “afternoon slump” in which your energy hits a peak right after lunch and then crashes.
Note: This is often, but not always, a result of sugar addiction.
- Cravings for sugar and carbohydrates
- Bouts of irritation, annoyance, anxiety, or depression (which often dissipate after eating)
- Yeast or bacterial overgrowth
- Inflammation or joint pain

If you're hooked on sugar, it can be a struggle to break the cycle, but this can be done with diet and lifestyle modifications.

Ways to regain balance include:

- Crowding out sugar with nutrient-dense foods, like high quality protein, vegetables, and healthy fats.
- Getting at least 7-8 hours of sleep every night.
- Pairing the carbohydrates and sugars you eat with fats and/or proteins.