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### **Limiting Sugar Intake to Preserve Health**

#### **Abstract**

This paper will discuss and search for answers regarding the issue of sugar and how it is related to a person's health. A majority of recent documentaries have been produced about foods high in fat and sugar being bad for you, but I focused only on sugar for this paper. Through literature review, this paper will describe why sugar is not only bad for your overall health but also can lead to weight gain in people.

#### **Objectives**

The objective of this paper was to discuss a health message that is commonly known in our culture; The message I discussed was that sugar is bad for a person's health. This was to fulfill the assignment for Short Paper 2.

#### **Disclaimer**

the purpose of the writing is to fulfill course requirements for BBH 411W and to stand as a personal writing sample, but the findings should not be treated as generalizable research

The Health Message I will be discussing is the assertion that people should limit their sugar intake in order to benefit a person's health. The American Heart Association and World Health Organization both endorse this message, as articles can be found on their website discussing the impact of sugar on the body and how much a person's daily intake should be<sup>1</sup>.

While not all sugar is bad for you, with some fruits and vegetables containing it, added sweeteners in processed food are dangerous to a person's cardiovascular health. Since 1977, the average amount of calories consumed from sugar has increased significantly in the average American's diet. The diet of almost 12,000 U.S. adults were studied from 1988-2006, with researchers finding a significant positive correlation between added sugar intake and cardiovascular mortality<sup>2</sup>.

Another article that was used for this research discusses a vast amount of factors leading to cardiovascular disease from sugar, such as defining types of sugars and how they impact the body's functioning. This review discusses recent research that has continued to support the negative effect of excess sugar intake on body fat and diseases such as obesity and diabetes, along with cardiovascular mortality. After conducting a cross sectional study of 2100 teen participants from 1999 to 2004, researchers found that diets with a higher consumption of added sugars led to more risk factors for cardiovascular disease<sup>3</sup>.

A meta-analysis review discussed that one of the biggest factors to heart disease is ectopic fat, which is fat deposits that are in unordinary places such as around muscles, leading to serious cardiovascular problems when surrounding the heart. Through the use of random control trials conducted on mice, researchers have shown that a high amount of added sugar intake is associated with higher ectopic fat deposits, which could potentially lead to heart disease<sup>4</sup>.

A narrative review discussing the impacts of saturated fat and sugar on coronary heart disease found that sugar was an increasingly bigger issue than that of saturated fat. It states that sugar leads to a rise in LDL's or 'bad cholesterol', which is more heavily associated with coronary heart problems<sup>5</sup>.

As a nurse practitioner, one has to be professional and stern when discussing serious health issues, but also show a friendly aspect so the patient trusts you. In a physician's office, you often interact with patients or their guardians, and due to having the patient's medical records, I would be able to view things like weight, cholesterol, height, and eating habits. I feel like after discussing these things, reviewing healthier habits that could decrease a patient's weight would come to the forefront.

Andrew: "after viewing your charts and seeing you possess risk factors for future heart problems, I recommend you decrease your sugar intake, especially added sugars in processed foods."

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<sup>1</sup> "Added Sugars Add to Your Risk of Dying from Heart Disease." *Added Sugars Add to Your Risk of Dying from Heart Disease*. American Heart Association, n.d. Web. 29 Feb. 2016. [AHA](#).

<sup>2</sup> Yang, Quanhe. "Get It!" *Get It!* JAMA Internal Medicine, n.d. Web. 29 Feb. 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Welsh, Jean. "Consumption of Added Sugars and Indicators of Cardiovascular Disease Risk Among US Adolescents." *Ovid*. Ovid, n.d. Web. 29 Feb. 2016. [CVD Health and sugar](#)

<sup>4</sup> Nutrition Reviews. "Penn State Secure Login:." Oxford University Press, 29 Oct. 2015. Web. 29 Feb. 2016. <http://nutritionreviews.oxfordjournals.org.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/content/74/1/18>

<sup>5</sup> DiNicolantonio, JJ. "Result Filters." *National Center for Biotechnology Information*. U.S. National Library of Medicine, n.d. Web. 29 Feb. 2016. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26586275>

Patient: "I know I'm a little overweight but I feel healthy, and I need some sugar every day to keep me up, I work 2 jobs so I need to stay awake."

A: "Well sugar increases the amount of LDL's in your blood, which are often called bad cholesterol. These LDL's eventually will weaken your heart, and greatly increase the risk of heart disease, and we don't want that. If you're looking for healthy alternatives, fruits like apples and grapes have naturally occurring sugars, that could give you the sugar you need."

In a large family, you get to see many different situations. My uncle is currently overweight and knowing my major and classes I take, asked if I had any tips to help him get healthier. I could always see he needed help due to his weight, but never wanted to impose.

Uncle: "drew I'm trying to lose some weight and get a little healthier, would you mind helping me out or give me some tips?"

Andrew: "Well I know you like to get those big sodas and even though they're diet, they still have tons of sugar, if you cut out all that added sugar and just drink water, you would be helping yourself a lot."

My roommate drinks a gallon of iced tea every few days. Because he is an economics major, he doesn't know about the harmful effects all that added sugar is doing to his body. At this age, the signs or symptoms might not always be visible, but you could always bring it up in conversation to see how he feels.

Andrew: "Listen, I know it doesn't look or feel like it's bad now, but if you keep drinking all that iced tea, you're gonna have problems later in life. I'm not trying to make you feel bad, I'm just looking out."

Roommate: "Yea thanks for being concerned but it's not a big deal cause we're only 20 and I go to the gym a lot."

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