

10 Signs That You Need to Reduce Your Sugar Intake ASAP

Did you know that the average UK adult sugar consumption is a staggering 58.8g each day? That's almost 15 teaspoons each and every day!

I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw this statistic for the first time, and I'm pretty sure you can't either.

However, given the health risks that eating too much sugar brings plus the fact that the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) recommends that we should limit our daily sugar intake to 25g (5% of our daily calories) it looks like we need to make reducing our sugar intake a priority.

But aside from measuring each and every teaspoon of sugar to pass our lips, **how do we know if we're eating too much sugar?**

Turns out there are ten signs you can look for to give you guidance on this, which I'll explain to you here. As you read, ask yourself whether each of these signs apply to you, and if so, make sure you sign up for my **FREE '5 Day Eliminate the Sugar Challenge'** [starting 15th January 2018]

1. You're always feeling tired

If you find yourself low on energy, feeling sluggish and even yawning throughout the day, you're likely to be eating too much sugar. This might sound a little bit odd to you because don't they say that sugar *boosts* energy? That's right- eating a high-sugar treat like a couple of Hobnobs, a Twix or a bag of Skittles will boost your energy. **But only momentarily.**

Because soon after you eat these foods, your blood sugar levels will crash, leading to those familiar feelings of tiredness. This low blood sugar will have you reaching for those sweet treats again, which trigger the very same vicious cycle of:

Eat sugar → Briefly feel good → Feel tired → Eat more sugar → Briefly feel good → Feel tired

2. You often crave sugar

Ever find yourself daydreaming about sinking your teeth into a family-sized Galaxy bar? Or realise you've been pondering for hours about what dessert to buy from the supermarket on the way home? Find yourself stuffing sugary foods when your period is due?

Sugar cravings like these are a sure sign that you're really overdoing it with the treats.

This is because of how our brains respond to sugar. In ancient times, sugar was a rare source of energy, so to keep us looking for the stuff (and therefore help us survive), our brains release a nice big dose of the feel-good hormone dopamine when sugar hit our taste buds. Trouble is, this reaction also gets us hooked, which spells disaster in our modern age where sugar is literally EVERYWHERE.

3. You often feel anxious or depressed

If you often feel 'down in the dumps', stressed out, anxious or even depressed, eating too much sugar could be to blame. You see, how you feel at any given moment is closely linked to your blood sugar levels - when they're stable you feel good, but when they fluctuate, you're likely to feel completely rubbish.

Can you guess what causes them to fluctuate? Yes, that's right- a high sugar intake.

Having a quick munch on Mars bars, Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream, those lovely chunky cookies with chocolate pieces, or a family-sized bag of jellybeans might leave you feeling treated and emotionally soothed *momentarily*. But they also cause your blood sugar levels to crash and leave you feeling depressed, lethargic, moody and anxious.

4. You're putting on weight

An ever-tightening waistband, or love handles that just keep growing are a sure sign that your sugar intake is getting out of hand and that you need to start doing something about it.

As we know, sugar is an empty form of calories- it doesn't contain any essential vitamins, minerals or antioxidants, so eating it is akin to nutritional suicide. And

sugar's addictive qualities mean that it can be hard to stop when your sweet tooth is in heaven.

But it's not just the fact that it's high in calories that's to blame for your weight gain. The hormone responsible for getting your blood sugar levels under control, insulin, also encourages more fat storage. Honestly- you can attend all my Pilates classes you like, but if you don't pay attention to your sugar intake, you could be fighting a losing battle.

5. You're always getting sick

Sugar weakens the immune system, potentially reducing the power of those disease-fighting white blood cells, so if you're always coming down with every cold, flu, stomach bug or other virus that's going around, the sweet stuff is likely to be the culprit. Sugar also feeds the growth of bacteria throughout the body, so you'll have a harder time fighting off any invaders and are likely to stay sick for longer.

6. Your skin looks rubbish

If you're suffering from skin problems like acne, psoriasis and eczema, you've probably tried hundreds of creams, pills and other so-called miracle cures which never really work. But perhaps the real reason you're breaking out is your diet.

Sugar is a highly inflammatory food which often triggers skin issues and can disrupt your hormones, leading to embarrassing symptoms like adult acne.

One thing I've also noticed when I eat too much sugar, is how my skin starts to lose its glow and starts looking washed out and lifeless. Definitely not attractive!

7. Your teeth are falling apart

We all know that too much sugar leads to tooth decay. Our parents told us, the dentist keeps telling us, and so do all of the health authorities across the world. So if you're often suffering from toothache, and find yourself saving up for yet more dental treatment instead of that awesome retreat in Bali or a shiny new car, it's time to reduce your sugar intake.

Tooth decay happens because bacteria in your mouth feed on any food stuck between your teeth. This produces acid which literally burns away at your teeth. Eek! If you're eating lots of sugar, this gives the bacteria an even better meal, helps them breed and makes the problem even worse.

8. You have frequent headaches

I used to think that my headaches were caused by my shifting hormones or from starting at a computer screen for too long. However, as I explored my food intolerances, I soon realised there was probably one primary cause- too much sugar.

As you can imagine, that left me feeling bereft- I LOVE to give myself the occasional treat and didn't welcome the idea of giving it up. But when I started paying attention to how much sugar I was eating, and took steps to reduce it, the headaches vanished.

9. You have high blood pressure

According to a study published in the Open Heart Journal, sugar is even worse for your blood pressure than salt. Apparently, this is because of the link between sugar and metabolic syndrome and also the link between your insulin levels and your blood pressure.

So if your doctor has warned you about your blood pressure or you have a family history of heart issues or diabetes, it's worth keeping your sugar intake in check, in addition to cutting back on salt.

10. Nothing tastes sweet anymore!

Don't you just hate the way that the 10th bite of chocolate tastes nowhere near as good as the first? There's a reason for that - the more sugar you eat, the more your taste-buds get used to the flavour, so you need to eat even more to get the same kick.

But there's good news- all it takes is a month of reducing your sugar intake and your taste buds will soon adjust to the new flavour and enjoy every bite again. *[Join me for my 5 Day Eliminate the Sugar Challenge and we'll get the hardest bit done together]*

As you can see, sugar is responsible for a whole host of health problems and holds you back from ever reaching your full potential.

Did you find yourself nodding your head in agreement as you read through the signs? If so, then I highly recommend you take a look at your sugar intake, and take steps to reduce it in whatever way you can so you can start feeling energetic, strong and glowing with health.

Are you reducing the amount of sugar you're consuming? Do you have tips you'd like to share with other people on the same journey as you? Let us know by commenting below....

P.S. Want more help with getting to grips with your sugar intake? Want a challenge? Sign up here to take part in my brand new '**5- Day Eliminate the Sugar Challenge**' starting on 15th January 2018.