



SUGAR

- Sugar, as we know it (white table sugar), is a carbohydrate scientifically known as *sucrose*, a compound made up of fructose and glucose. Our cells convert glucose into energy that allows us to do every physical task in our day to day lives.
- Sugar is not a legitimately addictive substance. If it were, speaking gram for gram, we would see people claiming they're equally addicted to mango or bananas (fruits high in natural sugar) as they are to cupcakes and candy - sounds a bit silly, right? In fact, most studies that have been done on sugar's supposedly addictive properties have been performed on mice and rats rather than human subjects. It's safe to say there are some major differences between humans and rodents. While sugar does increase dopamine, a "feel-good" hormone that's part of the addiction pathway, that's only one small part of the cycle, and many other things have been shown to spike dopamine - physical touch, laughter, other foods, watching movies, etc.
 - <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2235907/>
 - <https://www.rachaelhartleynutrition.com/blog/2016/09/reasons-youre-not-addicted-to-sugar>
 - <https://marcird.com/blog/sugar-addiction-summary-science/>
- Some people may have more of a "sweet tooth" than others, but that's simply due to taste preferences. Don't beat yourself up simply because you crave dessert after dinner more often than your spouse or best friend.
- **Fruit** contains high amounts of naturally occurring sugar, which is what makes it so tasty! When eating the whole fruit (rather than fruit juice) you also consume fiber, which keeps you full longer and ensures your blood sugar doesn't spike like it would if you consumed sugar from a soda.
- The "Standard American Diet" does contain sugar in higher quantities, due to greater availability of processed foods with *added* sugars, such as sodas, candy, and packaged desserts. But as long as you're consuming an overall varied diet with components from all of the food groups, sugary foods are nothing to fear. Instead of focusing on avoiding sugar, consider ways to increase intake of fresh foods.
- Eating foods higher in sugar, such as a brownie or slice of cake, is okay and sometimes these delicious foods are exactly what our body wants in order to satisfy us mentally, physically, or both! Sugary treats are often present at celebratory events like parties or weddings, and in these situations they can serve a positive social purpose centered around enjoyment and celebration.