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2008

Diet and Behavior

Is there a relationship of children's so called hyperactive behavior to the consumption of different sweeteners? To date, results of dozens of experiments have given NO convincing evidence that sugar consumption causes a worsening of behavior in almost all children tested. **Most researchers believe there is no cause-effect role of sugar for hyperactive or inattentive behavior in normal or Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) children.**

Surveys reveal that diets, and in particular sugar intake, of hyperactive children and normal children are similar.

Parents and teachers who are concerned about hyperactive behavior should bear in mind that a very small percentage (3 – 15%) of American children actually suffer from chronic hyperactivity. This disorder must be diagnosed by a professional clinician.

Children should eat a well balanced diet, which includes a wide variety of foods. Children should also get 60 minutes of exercise every day.

Sugar Substitutes:

Sugar substitutes known as artificial or non-nutritive sweeteners give food sweet taste without the calories.

Food and Nutrition Services can assist in providing nutrition information. Call 703-813-4800 and ask for a Registered Dietitian.

SUGAR SUBSTITUTES

Sweetener	Product Name (s)	Description
Aspartame	Nutra Sweet Equal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tastes about 160 to 220 times sweeter than sugar. Each gram contains 4 calories but amount needed to sweeten foods is so tiny, very few calories are consumed.
Polyols	Sorbitol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typically called sugar alcohols, polyols contain neither sugar nor alcohol. Contain from 0.2 to 3 calories per gram. Approved by the World Health Organization and used in the United States. Frequently found in sugar-free candy, ice cream, fruit spreads and baked goods. May cause bloating, flatulence and diarrhea.
Saccharin	Sweet 'N Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tastes about 300 to 700 times sweeter than sugar. Contains 0 calories per gram. Approved in the United States.
Sucralose	Splenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> About 600 times sweeter than sugar. Only artificial sweetener made from sugar. Contains 0 calories per gram. Can be used in baking. Approved for use in the United States and many other countries.

Source: Mayo Clinic

Sugar and sugar substitutes facts:

- A teaspoon of refined table sugar contains about 16 calories
- Using sugar substitutes instead of sugar can lower your risk of tooth decay.
- Artificial sweeteners are sweeter than sugar. It generally takes less sugar substitutes than sugar for the same sweetness.
- According to the National Cancer Institute, there is no scientific evidence that any of the artificial sweeteners approved for use in the United States cause cancer.

It is estimated Americans eat about 125 lbs. of added sugar annually.

HIDDEN SOURCES OF SUGAR

Food	Amount	Sugar (tsp.)	Calories
Fruit Drink	12 oz	11	180
Soft Drink	12 oz	9	150
Hard Candy	1 oz	7	110
Chocolate Bar	1 oz	4	150
Ice Cream, vanilla	1 cup	8	270
Chocolate, cupcake	1	7	170
Canned peaches, heavy syrup	½ cup	6	95
Cereal	1 oz	6 ½	110

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Diet and Behavior Outline

- I. To date, studies have not been able to show a relationship between consumption of sugar and hyperactivity in children.
 - Surveys reveal that diets, and in particular sugar intake, of hyperactive and normal children are similar.
 - Most researchers believe there is no cause-effect role of sugar for hyperactive or inattentive behavior in normal or Attention Hyperactive Disorder children.
 - It is estimated that only 3 – 15% of American children actually suffer from chronic hyperactivity as diagnosed by professionals.
- II. Although sugar is not a factor in hyperactivity, it can present health problems.
 - Sugar can lead to obesity, which increases the risk for heart disease, hypertension and diabetes.
 - Sugar can cause tooth decay.
- III. Read ingredient labels for hidden sources of sugar in prepackaged and processed foods.
 - Look for sugars in the list in the form of corn syrup and sucrose.
- IV. Some sources of hidden sugar are:
 - Canned fruits packed in heavy syrup rather than natural juice.
 - Purchased spaghetti sauces.
 - Fruit drinks rather than 100% fruit juices.
 - Presweetened cereals.