



Is It Time to Say Goodbye to Sugar?

You might not think a 90-minute video would get many hits on YouTube™. But Dr. Robert Lustig's video has more than a million hits. Who is Dr. Lustig, and what is so special about his video?

Lustig teaches at the University of California, San Francisco School of Medicine. He is a doctor who spots diseases that change the way our bodies make hormones. He's also an expert on things that make kids overweight.

In his YouTube™ video, "Sugar: The Bitter Truth," Lustig states that too much sugar and not enough fiber are the main reasons why many people, including children, are overweight. Lustig's research focuses on two types of sugar: sucrose (table sugar) and high fructose corn syrup (HFCS). Eating too much of either kind of sugar can harm your health. Here's why: Sugar seems to fool your brain into thinking you need more to eat than you do. It blocks the normal



hormones the body produces (like leptin) to tell the brain you've had enough to eat.

Eating a lot of sugar also causes your liver to produce fat, which ends up in your blood, in your liver, and around your middle. This means that most of the sugar you eat is changed into fat. This extra fat makes it more likely that people will be obese and have type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and cancer.

You don't need to get rid of all sugar in your diet, nor would you want to. For example, apples and bananas contain sugar. But they're fine to eat because they are naturally wrapped

up with lots of fiber, which means the sugar is absorbed more slowly.

Added sugars are what cause the problems. And because HFCS is cheap, it is added to all kinds of refined foods – especially low-fat foods that would "taste like cardboard" without it.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture says that eating some added sugar is okay – but no more than 10 teaspoons of it a day. The American Heart Association says men should keep it down to 9 teaspoons of sugar, and women should limit themselves to no more than 6 teaspoons of sugar. The average American eats 22.2 teaspoons of sugar a day.

*U.S. Department of Agriculture.
Lustig. Sugar: The Bitter Truth.
American Heart Association.*

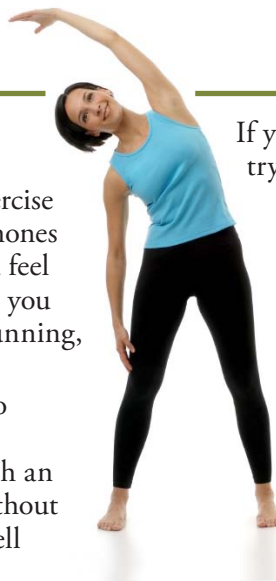
Watch Dr. Lustig's video, "Sugar: The Bitter Truth" on YouTube™
<http://tinyurl.com/lDgu9k>

Work Out – Feel Great!

People who exercise often say that exercise makes them happier. It's true. Exercise also helps you relax and handle stress better. Exercise makes your body release endorphins – hormones that help you deal with stress and make you feel excited and happy. They are produced when you do exercises that make you sweat, such as running, jogging, walking, and swimming.

Exercise may feel like a hard thing to fit into your busy and stressful life. You might find yourself skipping a workout in order to finish an important task or catch up on sleep. But without exercise, you can't work as well or deal as well with stress as you should.

Exercise is the key to health and happiness. And it doesn't have to be a chore. Just 20–30 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise is usually all it takes to trigger those endorphins. Exercising longer – for at least 45 minutes – usually brings even more benefit.



If you're getting bored with a traditional gym workout, try these alternatives:

- Bike or walk to work, and leave the car at home.
- Go for a run or a walk on your lunch break.
- Play tennis or racquetball with a friend.
- Try water aerobics.

One study showed that people who exercise in groups produce more endorphins than those who exercise alone. The researchers aren't sure why. But they think it has to do with the sense of teamwork and social interaction in a group.

If you want to be happier, exercise – alone, with an exercise buddy, or with a group.

*Florida State University.
Group exercise boosts happiness. BBC News.*

Get the Skinny on Fiber

Do you have a growing waistline? If you do, you're not alone. Nearly 2 out of every 3 U.S. adults weigh too much. Eating more fiber every day could help your waistline.

Fiber is the part of a plant that is not digested. Different plants vary in how much and which kind of fiber they have. But both kinds of fiber help reduce bad cholesterol levels, keep intestines healthy, and keep your stools soft. This can prevent constipation.

In a large 6-year study in Europe, people who ate a lot of fiber daily were much less likely to gain weight compared to those who ate very little fiber daily. The fiber in whole grains was best for keeping the pounds off.

High-fiber foods can help you feel full sooner – and longer – than refined foods will. Fiber in your diet can also:

- Keep your blood sugar level lower.



- Slow down digestion, which gives your intestines more time to make the hormones that help you feel full.
 - Help you naturally maintain your weight.
 - Lower your risk for diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and (in men) cancer.
- In a new 9-year study, fiber-rich foods lowered the risk of death from cardiovascular, infectious, and respiratory diseases. Eat a variety of high-fiber foods for best health!

American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

Archives of Internal Medicine.

Colorado State University Extension.

Learn more about fiber from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention:

www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/carbs.html

High-Fiber Foods

Whole grains are a good source of fiber – whole-wheat bread, breakfast cereals (look for cereals with at least 5 grams of fiber per serving), brown rice, oats, and whole-grain pasta. Aim for at least 3 servings of whole grains every day.

Legumes are very rich in fiber – peas, beans, lentils, garbanzos, split peas, soy, and pintos.



Fruits are the next highest in fiber – berries, pears, prunes, bananas, apples, oranges, etc. Aim for at least 2 cups daily. Even pure fruit juices have some fiber compared to soft drinks, which have none.

Vegetables – especially leafy greens, cabbage, asparagus, carrots, and eggplant. All vegetables are good. Aim for 2-3 cups of vegetables daily.

Nuts are also a good source of fiber. But since they are high in calories, eat them only in moderate amounts.

Just When You Thought It Was Safe to Get Back in the Water...



Swimming is fun, popular, and a good way to get regular aerobic physical activity. But remember: When you go swimming you share the water – and the germs in it – with everyone else in the pool.

How do those germs get there? If you don't shower before getting in a pool, the germs on your body are rinsed off as you swim and play in the water. Just one person who has diarrhea can easily contaminate the water in a large pool or water park with millions of germs.

In the past 20 years, there has been an increase in recreational water illnesses such as diarrhea. But there are ways to keep you and your family safer.

- Don't swim when you have diarrhea.
- Shower with soap before swimming, and wash your hands after using the toilet or changing diapers.
- Don't swallow pool water, and avoid getting water in your mouth.
- If you have kids, take them on bathroom breaks or check diapers often. Waiting to hear "I have to go" may mean that it's too late.
- Change diapers in a bathroom or a diaper-changing area far away from the water.

While all this talk about germs might sound scary, it shouldn't keep you out

of the water. Exercising in water is good for your body and mind. Just be sure to protect yourself and others.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

ASK THE WELLNESS DOCTOR

Q: I think I might be depressed because I cry a lot. Is it okay to cry often?

A: Go to www.wellspring.com/ask-criing.pdf to read the answer from Don Hall, DrPH, CHES.

To ask your question, email: paulaw@wellspring.com, subject line: Ask the Wellness Doctor. Emails with any other subject line will be directed to the spam folder.

Health Challenge: "Protect Your Skin in the Sun" available at: www.wellspring.com/wn/hc-skin.pdf. Avoid the direct sun during the hottest part of the day when possible. Wear sunscreen and a hat with a wide rim when you do go out in the sun.