



SUGAR: THE SWEETEST POISON

By Helen Cannington

Pure white, deliciously sweet and nutritionally useless. Sugar in the morning, sugar in the evening, sugar at supper time. As a chemical, sugar is poison for the body and the cause behind numerous ailments. We're addicted to its taste and find it impossible to avoid... but as we will see later in this article, safe and healthy alternatives are becoming available.

As we pass through the supermarket aisles perpetuating another generation of dental decay, obesity, weakened bones, diabetes, hyperactivity, emotional imbalance and dysfunctional immune systems, we must ask ourselves the compelling question of why we consume sugar, and especially, why we give sugar to children.

In Australia we eat about 65 kilograms of the stuff a year or 35 teaspoons a day. And it's in everything — chicken soup, pickles, pork and beans, peanut butter, bread, macaroni and cheese, sauce, mustard and relish, jam, yogurt, canned fruit and vegetables, salad dressings, not to mention the endless list of desserts, jam packed and stuffed to capacity with sugar.

The white crystalline substance we know of as sugar is an unnatural substance produced by industrial processes (mostly from sugar cane or sugar beets) by refining it down to pure sucrose, after stripping away all the vitamins, minerals, proteins, enzymes and other beneficial nutrients.

What is left is more like a drug than food, a concentrated unnatural substance which the human body is not able to handle, at least not in anywhere near the quantities now ingested in today's accepted lifestyles.

It quickly passes through the stom-

ach wall causing blood sugar levels to rise, then plummet. First, the blood sugar level skyrockets and causes the pancreas to secrete insulin to compensate for the excess blood sugar. Afterward, the blood sugar level drops below normal. This state has been coined the sugar blues. The downside of the sugar blues is a state of depression, lethargy and irritability.

Why is sugar so devastating to our health? Sugar is pure chemical and (like heroin) through refining has been stripped of all the natural food nutrition it originally had in the plant itself.

The biggest reason sugar does more damage than any other poison, drug or narcotic is twofold:

(a) It is considered a "food" and ingested in such massive quantities, and

(b) The damaging effects begin early, from the day a baby is born and is fed sugar in its formula. Even mother's milk is contaminated with it if the mother eats sugar, and

(c) Practically 95% of people are addicted to it to some degree or other.

It has been said the criteria as to whether a substance is harmful or medically beneficial is the quantity used in the human body. To point to a dramatic illustration: we all know the venom of a rattlesnake, cobra, water moccasin, coral, and other venomous snake is deadly to

the human system. There are some snakes whose bite is so deadly it can cause death within a matter of seconds. Nevertheless, even snake venom, deadly as it is, has been used for therapeutic, medical purposes when used in minute quantities.

History of Sugar

Whereas sugar had been around in minute quantities for several thousand years, it was practically unknown and formed an insignificant part of the average diet in the Classical civilisations of Egypt, Greece and Rome. The Greeks (who had a word for nearly everything) did not even have a word for it. Even in medieval Europe it was practically unknown and then only a rare delicacy in the royal courts.

During the last major Crusade that ended in 1204, some of the Christian Crusaders were introduced to sugar used by the Saracens. The Moors when invading and colonising the southern part of Spain grew sugar cane on Spanish soil and refined sugar. When Spain drove out the Moors, it inherited some of the cane plantations. It was during this time that Christendom took its first big bite of the forbidden fruit and liked it.

An Unnatural Chemical

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Heroin and sugar are arrived at by very similar processes of refinement. In producing heroin, the opium is first extracted from the poppy. The opium is then refined into morphine. The chemists then work on the morphine and fur-



ther refined it into heroin. This discovery, they proclaimed, was a wonderful new non-addictive pain-killer. So they said.

Similarly, sugar is first pressed as a juice from the cane (or beet) and refined into molasses. Then it is refined into brown sugar, and finally into strange white crystals $C_{12}H_{22}O_{11}$, which is an alien chemical to the human system.

A second reason why sugar harms is its addictiveness. Starting with sugar in the baby formula, people not only develop a strong taste for sugar but an insatiable craving that never recedes.

A third reason is the slow and insidious damage caused by sugar.

A fourth reason is the outrageous amounts of sugar consumed by countries like Australia and the United States. Westerners in particular are told how they are the best fed and best nourished people on the face of the Earth. If we are talking about processed junk food – this is true.

If you examine the “foods” in any supermarket more closely and start reading labels, you will find just about everything contains sugar. Most of the foods are loaded with it – from cereals, to soups, to sauces, to sausages. Even flue-cured tobacco can contain as much as 20% sugar by weight. Some cereals are as much as 50% sugar.

Damage to the Body

Sugar plays a role in the cause of many modern illnesses and disorders. Most people already suspect its effect on children and adults who exhibit disruptive behaviour and suffer learning disorders.

We have stated sugar is deleterious to your health and it is a long term chemical poison. Just what damage does sugar do to the human body? The list is endless.

* By far the leading cause of dental deterioration – cavities in teeth, bleeding gums, failure of bone structure, and loss of teeth.

* The main cause of diabetes, hyperglycemia and hypoglycemia. Sir Frederick Banting, the co-discoverer of insulin, noticed in 1929 in Panama that, among sugar plantation owners who ate

large amounts of the refined stuff, diabetes was common. Among native cane-cutters, who only got to chew the raw cane, he saw no diabetes.

* It is either a significant or contributory cause of heart disease, arteriosclerosis, mental illness, depression, senility, hypertension, cancer.

* It has an extremely harmful effect in unbalancing the endocrine system and injuring its component glands such as the adrenal glands, pancreas and liver, causing the blood sugar level to fluctuate widely. It has a number of other extremely damaging effects on the human body.

* It initiates auto-immune and immune deficiency disorders such as arthritis, allergies and asthma.



Some of the other effects of sugar on the body are: Increases overgrowth of candida yeast organism; Increases chronic fatigue; Can trigger binge eating in those with bulimia; Increases PMS symptoms; Increases hyperactivity in about 50% of children; Increases anxiety and irritability; Can make it difficult to lose weight because of constantly high insulin levels which causes the body to store excess carbs as fat.

There are a number of books available on the subject, but perhaps one of the most interesting ones is **Sugar Blues** by William Dufty.

Aspartame: A Dangerous Substitute

Unfortunately, the sugar substitute of choice is aspartame (known as NutraSweet™ or Equal™). There is increasing evidence aspartame poses a serious health risk. Eighty-five percent of all complaints to the United States Federal Drug Administration concern aspartame. Adverse reactions include diz-

ziness, memory loss, headaches, blurred vision, insomnia, fatigue, heart palpitations, sugar cravings, and muscle and joint pain.

Aspartame consists of phenylalanine, aspartic acid, and methanol. The first ingredient is an amino acid, but without any balancing neutral amino acids, it can be deadly. In the brain it competes for receptor sites with tryptophan, a serotonin precursor. This leads to reduced serotonin levels in the brains, which can trigger sugar cravings and panic attacks – even rage and violence.

In high concentrations the second ingredient, aspartic acid, negatively affects the central nervous system. Aspartame penetrates the blood brain barrier, deteriorating the neurons of the brain. It has also been known to cause seizures.

The third ingredient, methanol, is wood alcohol. It is toxic to the optic nerve and can cause blindness. It may be no accident that retinopathy is so common in diabetic patients. In the presence of heat (such as 98.6 degrees of the body) it can metabolise into formaldehyde and formic acid, both known carcinogens (causes cancer).

Most people haven't heard about aspartame poisoning because the diet industry is worth trillions of dollars to corporations, and they want to protect profits by keeping the truth behind aspartame's dangers hidden from the public.

After more than twenty years of aspartame use, the number of its victims is rapidly piling up, and people are figuring out for themselves that aspartame is at the root of their health problems. Clearly, aspartame is not a safe alternative to sugar.

Safe Alternatives

One of the best sources of natural sugar is found in raw fruits and vegetables. These sugars are bound up with essential vitamins, minerals, fiber, oils and enzymes which are present in whole plant foods. These aid in the metabolic process necessary for digestion of the sugars. In addition, the sugars in natural whole foods arrive in the body diluted in a large volume of water to assist in its metabolism.

However, the adoption of a diet high in raw vegetables and fruit is not an option for most people.



Avoiding refined sugar in the modern world is virtually impossible, although cutbacks can be achieved by checking labels at supermarkets and reducing the amount of sugar used in beverages. Families with children also find it extremely difficult to cut sugar from the diet...

There is a safe substitute to refined sugar, a naturally occurring sweetener called xylitol.

Pure xylitol is a white, crystalline, natural substance that looks and tastes like sugar. Its sweetness is equal to sugar, but contains 40% fewer calories and 75% fewer carbohydrates than sugar.

Xylitol has been proven in clinical testing to dramatically reduce the incidence of cavities, plaque formation and kills the germs that cause bad breath. The positive effects of xylitol appear to last long.

According to researcher and best-selling author Sherrill Sellman:

"Although xylitol tastes and looks exactly like sugar, that is where the similarities end. Xylitol is sugar's mirror image. While sugar wreaks havoc on the body, xylitol heals and repairs. It also builds immunity, protects against chronic degenerative disease and has anti-aging benefits. Xylitol is considered a five-carbon sugar, which means it is an antimicrobial, preventing the growth of bacteria. While sugar is acid forming, xylitol is alkaline enhancing. All other forms of sugar, including sorbitol, another popular alternative sweetener, are six-carbon sugars which feed dangerous bacteria.

"The FDA has fully approved xylitol and it has no known toxic levels. The only discomfort some sensitive people may initially notice (when large amounts are taken) is mild diarrhea or slight cramping. Since the body makes xylitol, as well as the enzymes to break it down, any discomfort usually disappears within a few days...

"Xylitol is available as crystals and can be used instead of sugar in cooking and baking. It is also made into chewing gum, mints and a nasal spray." ('Xylitol – Our Sweet Salvation', *Nexus Magazine*, December 2002-January 2003)

Xylitol was discovered almost simultaneously by German and French chemists way back in the late 19th century. In the Soviet Union it has been used for

decades as a sweetener for diabetics, and in Germany in solutions for intravenous feeding. In China, xylitol has been used for various medical purposes. Xylitol is recommended for diabetics, since it does not require insulin to be metabolised.

The dental significance of xylitol was discovered in Finland in the early 70's, when scientists at Turku University showed it could prevent cavities.

Xylitol is found, for instance, in berries, fruit, vegetables and mushrooms. The Finnish name for it, "koivusokeri", or "birch sugar", derives from the fact that the best way to make xylitol industrially is from birch, by chopping up and rendering down the structural fibre of the wood, xylan.

Many other countries including Russia, Japan, Germany, Italy and China have been producing xylitol for use in their domestic markets, with remarkable health

benefits. It has been relatively unknown in this country because cheap supplies of cane sugar made the more expensive xylitol less economically viable.

With the public more educated about the dangers of refined sugar, there is an urgent need to replace it with safe alternatives like xylitol, especially given the enormous strain being placed on health care systems.

As Sherrill Sellman points out, "Over 1500 scientific studies have found that the more you use xylitol, the more you can eliminate sugar cravings, reduce insulin levels and alkalise your body. It's a great aid on the way to good health and long life."

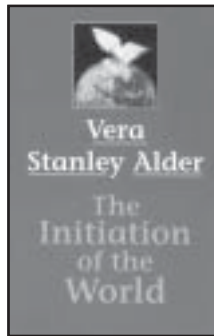
Alternatives like xylitol will help you free your mind and body from the tyranny of sugar and shake off the exhaustion, mental foggiess, and mood swings that sugar dependence causes. ★

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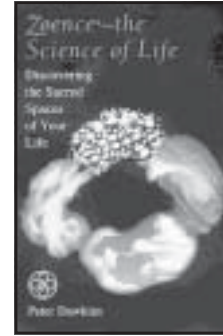
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