



Active Nutrition

Newsletter September 2012



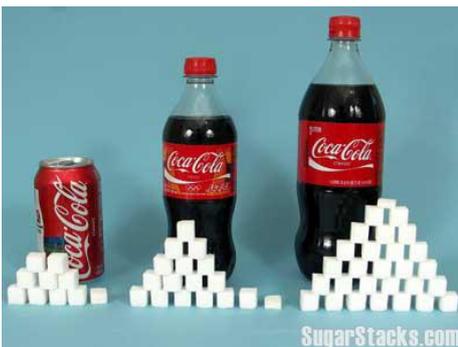
Artificial Sweeteners – should we be using them?

Regular table sugar (sucrose) has been used to sweeten foods for centuries. However, these days manufacturers are looking to other methods of sweetening foods and beverages due to a range of reasons from cost, to offering “healthy options”, to merely extending the range of produce they market. For whatever reason a type of sweetener has been added to produce, consumers need to be aware of what is in processed foods so they can make informed decisions on what they wish to eat or drink. Unfortunately there is a mass of confusing information to wade through before you can even begin to understand what the healthy option is.

High-fructose corn syrup (sometimes listed as corn syrup or corn sugar on produce) is a common sweetener. Manufacturers choose to use the corn syrup as a sweetener because it is a cheap and versatile option. However, recent research shows that consumption of the corn syrup can play havoc with your metabolism, cause weight gain, insulin resistance and increase blood pressure. Properties of the corn syrup are reported to cause the body's leptin (the satisfaction hormone that tells our brain that we have had enough to eat) to miss-function and thus induce us to overeat and so gain weight.



It is not surprising that people looking at weight loss turn to artificial sweeteners to reduce their calorie intake. 1 teaspoon of white sugar is approximately 5 grams which amounts to 20 calories, whereas most artificial sweeteners have few or no calories. However, some research suggests that consuming artificial sweeteners may be associated with increased weight. I have found little evidence of this assumption. Sweeteners do not contribute to tooth decay, nor do most artificial sweeteners raise blood sugars, another positive for those with diabetes. But are these



sweeteners any good for us?

Many research papers link certain artificial sweeteners with health concerns. The following is some of what the research has found:-

Saccharin: appears as “954” in the ingredient listing on packaged foods. It is listed as hazardous to our health as the side effects can include eczema, nausea, diarrhoea and headaches. Lab-tested rats developed bladder cancer when fed saccharin (no clear link to humans), so I advise caution and suggest avoiding this product.

Aspartame: appears as “951” in the ingredient listing on packaged foods. It too has been listed as hazardous to our health and the listed side effects can include headaches, depression, anxiety, asthma, aggression, dizziness, memory loss. Research suggests that aspartame could be linked to lymphomas and leukaemia in lab rats. I advise that we limit our consumption of aspartame.



Sucralose: appears as “955” in the ingredient listing on packaged foods. This has a “caution” when it comes to our health as it has been linked to thymus shrinkage, and kidney and liver enlargement in animal studies. It has not been linked to human health problems.

Stevia: appears as “960” in the ingredient listing on packaged foods. This product comes from processing the leaves of the stevia plant. Research shows conflicting results; those coming from researches employed by the manufacturers praise the product, whilst independent researchers advise moderation as it is a highly processed product and still needs to be proven as a healthy sweetener.



When it comes to making healthy food choices I recommend unprocessed natural products over highly processed and artificial products. The more chemicals your liver needs to process and eliminate from the body the less time it has to process fat and expel that from our bodies – I know what I would rather have my liver doing!



Woman’s Outdoor Fitness Classes

Classes are aimed to improve general fitness, strength and flexibility. The classes are designed so you work at your own level of ability.

There is a strong emphasis on stretching which increases range of movement, reduces stress and helps prevent injury – an important component for everyday living, but especially important for those who do sport and exercise.

Day	Time	Venue	
Tuesday	9.00 am	Meet at Mount Cenotaph	All year
Tuesday	5.30 pm	Tauranga - Kulim Park	During daylight saving
Wednesday	5.30 pm	Meet at Mount Cenotaph	During daylight saving
Thursday	9.00 am	Tauranga - Kulim Park or the Domain	All year
Thursday	5.30 pm	Tauranga - Kulim Park	During daylight saving
Friday	9.00 am	Meet at Mount Cenotaph	All year

Everyone is welcome. If you or you know of anyone who could benefit from exercise within a friendly environment in beautiful locations please let them know.



Would you like further information?

If you wish to come to the outdoor fitness classes, book an appointment for a nutrition consultation or just find out more about what I do, please feel free to contact me.

I am based in Tauranga. However, if you do not live in the Tauranga area this is not a problem with nutrition consultations as I am able to consult via Skype, internet or by telephone. There are no barriers to good information.

Book an appointment or just drop me a line from my web site www.activenutrition.co.nz



Recipe of the Month



Sun-dried Tomato Hummus

Serves 6

100g dried chickpeas**

3 tbsp. tahini

1.5 lemons, juiced

2 tbsp. olive oil

3 cloves garlic, crushed

2 tsp. ground cumin

6 sundried tomatoes

handful fresh basil, torn

Ground black pepper

**Alternately you can use a 400g tin of chickpeas.

Soak the chickpeas overnight, drain and rinse. Cover with cold water, bring to the boil, boil for about 10 minutes, then lower the heat and simmer until tender. (This can take anything up to 1.5 hours). Drain, reserving a little of the liquid, then leave to cool.

Soak the tomatoes for 20 minutes in hot water, then chop into small pieces

Process the cooked chickpeas in a food processor, then add the tahini, lemon juice, olive oil, garlic, cumin, and pepper to taste. Process until smooth, adding a little of the reserved liquid if required. Turn into a bowl and add the chopped tomatoes and basil.