



Kick the Sugar Habit + Boost Your Energy

1. LAY OFF THE SUGAR. Avoid sweetened coffee drinks, candy, cookies, and most desserts. After one sip or bite, your body will want more. Seek out low-sugar alternatives such as 70 percent (or higher) dark chocolate versus milk chocolate.

2. AVOID THE FAKE STUFF. Artificial ingredients affect blood sugar levels and are linked to other serious health problems. If you need to add a sweetener, use just a small amount of natural sugar, local honey, dates or 100% maple syrup. Limit caffeine and say no to soda.

3. FIND THE SNEAKY SUGAR. Most of the added sugar Americans eat comes from processed foods like bread, salad dressings, peanut butter, and pasta sauce. To avoid this sneaky sugar, avoid anything that comes in a package and focus on eating real food.

4. BE A LABEL READER. Sugar has over 250 aliases, including *high-fructose corn syrup* and many words that end in *-ose*, like *lactose*, *fructose*, and *maltose*. Look for and avoid these in processed foods.

5. LISTEN TO YOUR CRAVINGS. Trust your body and listen to your cravings as your new BFF. We may crave certain foods such as sugar when we are dissatisfied with a relationship, feel bored, stressed, or uninspired. Do you need a hug, a good walk, a glass of water, or an apple with almond butter? Listen to your body as it tells you what you actually need. 😊

6. FEEL THE DIFFERENCE IN WHAT YOU EAT. We think differently when we eat meat versus a donut or a sprig of broccoli. Feel the difference in the moods that prompt you to eat certain kinds of foods. What is your mood craving?



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7. DRINK MORE WATER. Did you know that one of the first signs of dehydration is feeling tired or exhausted? Hydration is your best ally! Drink a full glass of water the moment you have a craving or feeling tired. Keep drinking water all day.

8. GIVE YOURSELF A BREAK & DISTRACT YOURSELF. Be patient and wait 20 minutes to evaluate what you are truly craving. It may not be food! Do something active to distract your brain and those crazy cravings, like taking a walk, playing a game, or cleaning.

9. VEG OUT. We crave more because our body is starved for vitamins and minerals. Getting regular helpings of dark green leafy vegetables high in magnesium can help keep your energy constant. Add one or two servings of vegetables at each meal. The vegetables will “crowd out” your cravings for unhealthy foods, just like that!

10. SQUASH THEM. Provide your body with the sweetness it needs by regularly eating naturally sweet foods such as squash, sweet potatoes, carrots or fresh fruit. Yum....

11. EAT – DO NOT SKIP MEALS. Enjoy breakfast, lunch, and dinner to keep your metabolism working efficiently. Avoid overeating -- eat to satisfy, not to be full. Chew your food and fully taste what you are eating. (Really, enjoy each bite.)

12. BALANCE YOUR MEALS. Foods like meat, milk, sugar, and salt have extreme effects on the body. Seek out less extreme and healthier alternatives (like vegetables) to satisfy you. Adding protein (quinoa, beans, nuts, greens, fish, and meat) to your meals and snacks will help keep blood sugar levels steady and reduce sugar cravings.

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13. CONTROL YOUR STRESS. Stress-induced emotions consume huge amounts of energy. Even low chronic levels of stress erode energy levels, so over time you find yourself doing less and feeling it more. To reduce stress try talking to a friend, going for a walk, reading, practice meditation or yoga.

14. GET MOVING. Engaging in physical activity sends oxygen and nutrients to your body's cells, helping your body work more efficiently and boosting energy levels. Physical activity can help release the physical tension that could be causing sugar cravings. Cravings for sugar or alcohol are signals that you may need to get moving more.

15. HAVE A PLAN. Whether you bring your snacks and lunch to work or planning to go to a restaurant, have a plan for what you will eat and when you will exercise throughout the day to keep you on track.

ACTION PLAN. Now that you know keys to kicking your sugar habit and increasing your energy, what is one thing that you'll plan or commit to doing or eating differently? Or what is your top takeaway from today's class?

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