**Sugar Substitutes**

**Types of Sweeteners**

**Nutritive Sweeteners (Sugars)**
- sucrose
- glucose
- fructose
- lactose
- dextrose
- honey
- corn syrup
- molasses
- agave nectar
- etc.

- 4 calories per 1 gram
- Count as carbohydrate in meal plan
- Strong glycemic impact (Strongly affects blood sugar level)

**Low-Calorie Sugar (Newer Category)**
- Naturally occurring simple sugars (monosaccharide); may be listed as Allulose in ingredient list
- Behaves like ordinary sugar, but 1/10 the calories; no carbohydrates to count
- No glycemic impact
- Talk with health care team before use if using fast-acting insulin

**Non-Nutritive Sweeteners (Sugar Substitutes or Artificial Sweeteners)**
- Alone or blended with cane sugars or other fillers
- Low-calorie, minimal calories or no calories
- Often strong sweeteners
- Glycemic impact varies – Read food labels for carbohydrates

**Sugar Alcohols**
- 2 calories per 1 gram
- Count as carbohydrate in meal plan
- Lower glycemic impact than sugar; digested slowly
- Warning: Do not overuse

**Official Positions on Sugar Substitutes**

**Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics**

- Non-nutritive sweeteners (sugar substitutes), when used in place of “nutritive” or “caloric” sweeteners (sugars), may help cut carbohydrate and energy intake to help people manage blood sugar levels or weight.
- When added to a person’s diet, sugar substitutes have shown to help with some weight loss and, as part of a weight-control program, may help with long-term health management and weight loss.
- When used in place of caloric sweeteners, sugar substitutes can help people reduce calories, as long as other foods are not added in as “compensation.”

**American Heart Association and American Diabetes Association**

- Using sugar substitutes in place of sugars in foods and drinks may help people reach and maintain a healthy body weight, as long as the substitution does not lead to eating more later.
- For people with diabetes, sugar substitutes—when used appropriately in foods and drinks—are an option to help with blood glucose (sugar) control.

**2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee (USDA and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)**

- Short-term clinical trials with children and adults show low-calorie sugar substitutes reduce calorie intake, body weight and body fat.
- Sugar substitutes used to replace sugar can help short-term weight loss. But there is not enough evidence to support using sugar substitutes for long-term weight loss or for maintaining a person’s weight.

**Recommendation:** Since the long-term effects of sugar substitutes are not known, they should not be used as a primary replacement for added sugars to foods and drinks.

**Recommendation:** Added sugars should be reduced in a person’s diet and not replaced with low-calorie sugar substitutes. Instead, replace sugary foods and drinks with healthy options, such as drinking water instead of sugar-sweetened juices or sodas.

**There Is More Information on the Back of this Sheet.**
U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-Approved Low-Calorie Sweeteners (Sugar Substitutes)

- Saccharin
- Acesulfame-K
- Luo Han Guo/Monk Fruit
- Aspartame
- Sucralose
- Advantame
- Neotame
- Stevia (95% high purity extracts)
- Allulose (very sweet!)

PROHIBITED: Cyclamates • Whole leaf and crude Stavia

Key Takeaways about Sugar Substitutes

- Sugar substitutes can help you cut back on your carbohydrates. They also might help you control your weight.
- Ask yourself: Will the sweetener significantly improve or affect my glycemic (blood sugar) response? You may want to talk with your health care team about sugar substitutes.
- Make sure the sugar substitutes you use are FDA-approved.
- Read the nutrition facts/food labels on all your grocery purchases. You may or may not have to adjust your carbohydrates based on what the label says.
- Always “do the math” to figure out your Acceptable Daily Intake (ADI) for sweeteners. You can over do it if you are not careful.
- Low-calorie sugars is a newer “sweetener” category. They are usually very sweet, so very little is needed. One low-calorie sugar you may want to learn more about is Allulose.
- Think about healthy options instead of using sugar substitutes in foods and beverages. Is there something you can eat or drink that does not have sugar or need sugar substitutes?
- Sugar is found in different forms and names, such as honey or corn syrup. Even if a food or drink claims to have “natural” sweeteners, pay attention to what the label says about the number of calories and carbohydrates it has per serving.
