

# Breaking the Sugar Addiction

**Sugar used to be considered a “treat” but now it seems it’s universal in our food, and we don’t always realize that we are eating it.**

Sugar is identified as a major contributor of many diseases, including fatty liver disease, the most common liver disease in Canada affecting 20% of Canadians.

Although, no one is recommending a completely sugar-less diet (since there are naturally occurring sugars in fruits and vegetables), cutting back on unnecessary added sugars would be a good idea for everyone.

Easier said than done? Here are a few tips:

**Make water your drink of choice** – Pop, juice and sports drinks are some of the largest contributors to daily sugar consumption.

**Read labels and choose low sugar or no-sugar added products whenever possible** – Condiments like ketchup and many breakfast cereals contain significant amounts of sugar per serving. Compare products before you buy and choose the one with the lowest sugar content and the highest nutritional value.

**Prepare your own food from scratch** – Cooking or baking at home allows you to control the amount of sugar you add and to substitute healthier alternatives (i.e. unsweetened apple sauce, honey) when sweetening is desired.

**Try sugar substitutes** – Try using flavourful spices like cinnamon, cardamom or cloves to replace the sugar content. Adding fresh fruits to your unflavoured yogurts will liven up the taste of these foods without all that extra sugar.

**Introduce more protein in your diet** – Avoid the cravings that come when your blood sugar drops by eating more high-protein foods such as fish, eggs, poultry, nuts and seeds. These foods take longer to digest and will maintain your energy levels.

The key is to reduce the sources of “added sugar” in your diet wherever possible, and the more you learn about what’s in your food, the better choices you’ll be able to make.

Reducing your sugar consumption is not easy but if you cut back over time, your body will eventually lose the craving...and your liver (and the rest of your body) will thank you for it!