

Break the Sugar Cycle!



A 8-day self-directed activity incentive program
Open to all employees
Program starts February 19 and ends February 26, 2019

Do you love sugar? Are you hooked? Is the “crave and crash” cycle familiar to you? Are you gaining weight? If you answered yes to these questions, this program is for you!

Too much sugar puts us at risk for diabetes, heart disease, reduced brain function and weight gain. After we eat high carbohydrate and sugary foods, we might feel “up” for a short time, but then we often feel lethargic, may get irritable and can have trouble focusing. Break the Sugar Cycle will help you learn how to reduce your sugar intake from obvious and hidden sources. You will feel so much better!

There are 3 steps to complete in order to earn a prize: 1. Participate in the 8-day program to your fullest ability. Complete the log/prize form. 2. Watch BOTH webinars, Break the Sugar Cycle Part One and Break the Sugar Cycle Part Two, and complete the quiz. 3. Return all materials (log/prize form and quiz) to MIIA by March 8. Only MIIA/Blue Cross subscribers are eligible for prizes.

Tips for Reducing Your Sugar Intake

by Sandra J. Sarni, RD, MS, Nutrition Specialist for MIIA WellAware

Added sugars are a source of useless calories: they contribute calories and nothing else. If you are trying to lose weight, eliminating these empty calories is critical to your success and health. New research suggests added sugars also raise bad cholesterol levels and raise triglycerides – both contributing to heart disease risk.

Learning to find and decrease sugar can be tricky, hopefully, some of these suggestions can help!

1. Where's Your Sugar Bowl?

It's easy to mindlessly spoon sugar into coffee, tea, and cereal, out of habit. The first step to finding and eliminating extra sugar in your diet is to become aware of the sugar we add at home. To do this, make the sugar bowl harder to reach, put it out of sight. It will give you a moment to think about how much sugar you're using and maybe use less.

2. Find Sugar on the Label

Many processed foods that we don't expect to contain sugar actually do! Examples include: ketchup, salad dressing, peanut butter, and more! Look on the Nutrition Facts label under carbohydrates. Labels are confusing, as they do not distinguish between naturally occurring sugar and added sugar.

Generally speaking the lower the sugar, the better. Your best bet is to look for sugar in the ingredient list. Manufacturers are required to list ingredients in descending order by weight. Choose products that list sugar toward the end of the ingredient list.

3. Sugar by Another Name

Very few food manufacturers list sugar by its actual name on the label. They often use other terms that are harder to decode. It takes some detective skills to learn other names for sugar. Generally speaking, any word ending in "ose" is a sugar. Remember that all sugar provides 4 calories per gram and although some forms of sugar might be less processed and more "natural" they are calorically identical. The following are terms that manufacturers often use to describe the sugar that has been added to a product:

- Agave nectar
- Brown rice syrup
- Brown sugar
- Cane crystals
- Cane sugar
- Cane sugar juice
- Corn sweetener
- Corn syrup
- Crystalline fructose
- Dextrose
- Evaporated cane juice
- Fructose
- Fruit juice concentrates
- Glucose
- High-fructose corn syrup
- Honey
- Invert sugar
- Lactose
- Maltose
- Malt syrup
- Molasses
- Raw sugar
- Sucrose
- Maple Syrup



4. Cut Down on Products with High Sugar Contents:

- **Sodas, sweetened drinks, and designer coffees** – Much of the sugar we consume each day comes from the beverages we drink! 16 ounces of soda contains 11 teaspoons of sugar, that's 44 grams of sugar! Many designer coffee drinks can contain as much as 39 grams of sugar and over 300 calories. Instead of soda, try drinking seltzer water with 2-3 ounces of 100% fruit juice. Replace designer coffee drinks with coffee and skim milk with stevia (a natural, plant based sweetener).
- **Candy, pastries, cookies, and frozen desserts** – Be sure to check the labels for grams of sugar. Look for foods that have less than 20 grams of sugar per serving. Share desserts with friends and limit your serving size. Try to have ½ cup of ice cream, 1-2 cookies, or 1 ounce of dark chocolate. Instead of desserts try “nature’s candy”....fresh fruit!
- **Fruit juice and “juice” drinks** – Be sure to choose 100% fruit juice and limit juice to 6 ounces, although juice contains many vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants it is still a source of fructose that is a sugar. Avoid juices that include the words “drink”, “cocktail” or “punch”. These tend to contain only 10% of real fruit juice.
- **Energy drinks** - Caffeine isn't the only key ingredient in most energy drinks! The sugar content in energy drinks ranges from 21 grams to 34 grams per 8 ounces, and can come in the form of sucrose, glucose, or high fructose corn syrup. Health professionals are very concerned about the high intake of these drinks, especially in children and teens because of their high levels of caffeine and sugar. Diluting energy drinks for athletes participating in competitive sports is a better option.

5. Control Sugar Cravings To help control sugar cravings try some of these tips:

- **Eat Often Throughout the Day** – Going too long without food, pushes your body to go into starvation mode, holding onto fat stores and increases cravings.
- **Balance Your Snacks and Meals** – Try to include protein and healthy fats in every snack and meal. These foods digest more slowly and help control blood sugar levels. They will also help keep you feeling full longer.
- **Avoid Processed Food** – As much as possible, try to enjoy whole, unprocessed foods which do not have any added sugars in them. Think fruits and vegetables, but also nuts and olives, chickpeas and chicken, plain yogurt with some cinnamon and apples on top for sweetness. When you must eat a processed food, choose one with as few ingredients as possible.
- **Do NOT Switch to Artificial Sweeteners*** – Many people think that switching to artificial sweeteners is the answer for kicking the sugar habit, but there is no research that supports people lose weight while using these sweeteners. Scientists have also demonstrated that these sweeteners ‘trick’ our brain into thinking calories will be coming and then when the calories do not come, our brain tells us to eat more food. There is also research showing potentially damaging health effects from using these sweeteners.
- **Drink Enough Water** – Very often we confuse hunger and thirst, when hungry drink a glass of water first before you eat anything.
- **Plan Ahead** – Plan what you will eat/drink during the day so you don't find yourself at the mercy of whatever is lying around in the break room at work, the vending machine or whatever's quick and easy at a drive-thru. Pack your lunch and snacks for the day and plan what you will have for dinner.

In summary, take baby steps to reduce your sugar intake. It's a process but over time your body will start to respond to less sugar and you'll have more energy, look better and feel better too!

*People with diabetes are the only ones who may need to use artificial sweeteners.



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Log and Prize Form

Please complete the log form in full. Return it to Mary Harrington at mharrington@mma.org or fax to Mary at 617-542-6513 by March 8, 2019. **Be sure you have answered at least 1 yes (from any column) a day for at least 6 out of the 8 program dates, watched the videos, and completed the quiz.**

Date _____ Name: _____ MIIA/BCBS ID#: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Mailing address: _____

Employer: _____

Always consider these 3 CRITICAL DECISION MAKING TIMES when completing your log form:

When choosing or preparing foods/beverages at home • When shopping at any store • When eating away from home

Day	Did you read labels (on packaged, bottled, frozen, canned, boxed foods and beverages) during the times above?	Did you identify sugar sources during the times above?	Did you decline or reduce your serving size of moderate and high sugar items during the times above?
2/19	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A
2/20	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A
2/21	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A
2/22	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A
2/23	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A
2/24	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A
2/25	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A
2/26	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A	____ Yes ____ No ____ N/A

Choose your #1 and #2 choices. If you do not choose, we will make the decision for you. Only MIIA/Blue Cross Blue Shield members are eligible for prizes. You can view the prizes at: emiia.org/well-aware/incentives.

____ Beach towel (zig zag blue or plain blue) Color _____

____ Outdoor Headlamp

____ Bike repair kit

____ Soup to go container

____ Exercise waist belt

____ Napsack with light seat cushion

____ Bamboo cutting board

____ Sports towel in bag

____ Earbuds by SkullCandy

____ Rivage Weekender Tote

____ Boston Mass Transit water bottle

____ Vented umbrella

____ Freezable lunch tote

____ Yoga mat

____ Waterproof picnic blanket

____ Pet carrier for small pets

____ Collapsible cooler

____ Cold weather face mask

Webinar Break the Sugar Cycle Quiz

View Break the Sugar Cycle [Part One](https://vimeo.com/159349509) (https://vimeo.com/159349509) and [Part Two](https://vimeo.com/159382242) (https://vimeo.com/159382242)

Please complete the quiz and return it to Mary Harrington at mharrington@mma.org or fax to Mary at 617-542-6513 by March 8, 2019.

Name: _____ Employer: _____

1. What are the two most valuable things you learned from viewing these webinars?

a. _____

b. _____

2. What is another name for sugar?

___ a. Insoluble fiber

___ b. High fructose corn syrup

___ c. Amino acid

3. Sugar consumption triggers this response in the body:

___ a. A slowing of metabolism

___ b. An increase in blood triglycerides

___ c. The rapid use of fat stores for energy

4. Which processed food is most likely to contain high amounts of added sugar:

___ a. A low-sodium product

___ b. A low-fat product

___ c. An artificially sweetened product

5. When choosing your meals and snacks, try to choose this if you are eating refined sugar to help slow the absorption of the sugar:

___ a. Noncarbonated water

___ b. Carbonated water

___ c. Protein

6. This statement is true about artificial sweeteners:

___ a. Foods sweetened with them are the first choice to turn to when you have a sugar craving

___ b. There is no research that shows people lose weight when using artificial sweeteners

___ c. Artificial sweeteners are recommended for weight loss

7. The average American consumes approximately this much sugar every year:

___ a. 25 pounds

___ b. 57 pounds

___ c. 88 pounds

___ d. 150 pounds

8. Too much added sugar in the form of fructose in your diet can lead to an increase in belly fat (visceral fat).

___ a. True

___ b. False