

— XYLITOL —

OUR SWEET SALVATION?

Xylitol is not only a safe, natural sweetener without the bad side-effects of sugar and artificial substitutes, it's also good for your teeth, stabilises insulin and hormone levels and promotes good health.

Editor's Note: Several mentions of animal experiments are made in this article. NEXUS does not agree with the practices of animal experimentation and vivisection, but we also don't want to censor the articles we publish.

Americans have a mighty hankering for sugar. It seems that we just can't get enough of the stuff. On average, a half a cup of sugar is consumed per person every day. It is estimated that the average American eats, drinks, slurps, stirs and sprinkles about 150 pounds of it annually. Never in modern history has a culture consumed so much sugar.

Sugar truly does deserve its reputation as a "white poison". Thinking of sugar as a food is really a stretch of the imagination, because it is more a chemical that is difficult for our bodies to utilise and digest. Humans were really not designed to eat large amounts of sugar in whatever form it may take: white and brown, corn syrup, sucrose, dextrose, glucose, fructose, lactose, maltose, barley malt, honey, rice syrup and maple syrup. Sugar is also highly seductive, acting like an addictive drug that lures even the most well-intentioned person back into its sweet clutches.

According to Chinese wisdom, sweetness is one of the flavours necessary for maintaining balance in the body. But regularly eating large amounts of sugar will cause serious harm. Sugar can cause hypoglycaemia and weight gain, leading to diabetes and obesity in both children and adults. It leaches the body of vital minerals and vitamins. It raises blood pressure, triglycerides and the bad cholesterol (LDL), increasing the risk of heart disease. It causes tooth decay and periodontal disease, which leads to tooth loss and systemic infections. It makes it difficult for a child's brain to learn, resulting in a lack of concentration. Both children and adults exhibit disruptive behaviour, learning disorders and forgetfulness from sugar consumption. It initiates auto-immune and immune deficiency disorders such as arthritis, allergies and asthma. It also upsets hormonal imbalance and supports the growth of cancer cells.

So what are we to do? Will our sugar-cravings always hold us hostage, or is there really a way to lick the sugar habit successfully?

Xylitol to the Rescue!

During World War II, Finland was suffering from an acute sugar shortage. With no domestic supply of sugar, the Finns searched for an alternative. It was then that the Finnish scientists re-discovered *xylitol*, a low-calorie sugar made from birch bark. It had, in fact, been known to the world of organic chemistry since it was first manufactured in 1891 by a German chemist.

By 1930, xylitol had been purified, but it wasn't until World War II that the sugar shortages forced researchers to look at alternative sweeteners. It was only when xylitol was stabilised that it became a viable sweetener in foods. It was also during this time that researchers discovered xylitol's insulin-independent nature (it metabolises in the body without using insulin).

By the 1960s, xylitol was being used in Germany, Switzerland, the Soviet Union and Japan as a preferred sweetener in diabetic diets and as an energy source for infusion therapy in patients with impaired glucose tolerance and insulin resistance. Since then, many other countries including Italy and China have been producing xylitol for use in their domestic markets—and with remarkable health benefits. It has been relatively

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