



Health Advice # 9 SUGAR

Blood sugar can be anyone's problem. High-normal levels are often overlooked, but can harm your health.

The average American consumes more than 1 pound of refined sugar a week. It sounds unbelievable until you realize that sugar goes by more than 50 names and is an ingredient in virtually all processed foods, from your morning doughnut to the ketchup on your burger. Eat it (along with excess fat and calories), sit around, and you'll gain weight. It's the average American way of life, and it deserves a new warning label: Practicing this lifestyle could send another sugar — your blood sugar — into the **danger zone**. Your body's primary source of fuel, blood sugar plays a vital role in physical and mental well-being. But when it rises even slightly above normal — thanks to excess body fat, lack of exercise, and/or genetics — your health, your energy levels, and your weight-loss efforts are jeopardized.

Overlooked by doctors

High-normal blood sugar is anything but normal. Too high to be healthy yet too low to be called diabetes, high-normal blood sugar has long been overlooked by doctors and their patients alike. Yet an estimated 16 million Americans have it — including tens of thousands of children and teens. The rise of the high-normal blood sugar epidemic is the direct result of the rise in overweight and obesity in the United States. Our lifestyles have changed; our bodies haven't caught up. "Our bodies are essentially the same as they were 40,000 years ago, but our eating and exercise habits have changed tremendously," says Bryant Stamford, Ph.D., director of the Health Promotion and Wellness Center at the University of Louisville in Kentucky. "The same number of calories it might have taken our prehistoric ancestors an entire day to hunt and gather, we can now have brought to our door with a phone call. We simply eat too much and exercise too little," says Stamford. The result: high blood sugar.

The danger: More and more research links even "slightly" high blood sugar to food cravings, mood swings, and overweight, as well as pregnancy and fertility problems, heart attacks, stroke, full-blown type 2 diabetes, and even, early evidence suggests, some forms of cancer.

**To your health! Anima Sana in Corpore Sano (a healthy mind in a healthy body)
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