Save yourself from the harmful effects of refined sugar

*Refined sugar is as harmful as excess salt*

New Delhi, March 18, 2017: Excessive consumption of foods with high glycemic index that is those that quickly affect blood sugar levels significantly raises the risk of obesity and chronic disorders like diabetes and heart disease. Every 150 extra calories consumed from sugar can raise the prevalence of diabetes by 1.1% (1). Sugar has a global effect on the body and not only does it damage the vital organs like liver and pancreas but also has a harmful effect on almost every aspect of the body’s organ system.

Padma Shri Awardee Dr K K Aggarwal, National President Indian Medical Association (IMA) and President Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) and Dr RN Tandon – Honorary Secretary General IMA in a joint statement said, “Excessive sugar consumption can also cause weight gain. Weight gain, combined with sustained high insulin levels, can lead to insulin resistance and diabetes—which further increases your risk of cardiovascular disease. Consuming a diet high in sugar for just a few weeks has been shown to cause numerous abnormalities found in patients with CHD, such as high total cholesterol, triglycerides, LDL, oxidized LDL, uric acid, insulin resistance and abnormal glucose tolerance, low HDL, and altered platelet function.”

Added fructose -- generally in the form of sucrose (table sugar) or high fructose corn syrup (HFCS) in processed foods and beverages seems especially potent for producing harm. Consuming these sugars can lead to resistance in leptin, which is a key hormone in the maintenance of normal body weight. The overconsumption of added fructose undoubtedly increases the risk for obesity, which is also a risk factor for CHD. Sugars occurring naturally in fruits and vegetables pose no increased risk for CHD. The problem is refined sugars -- with ultra-processed foods being of greatest concern. Products with added sugars represent 75% of all packaged foods and beverages”, added Dr Aggarwal.

Following are some global ill effects of refined sugar:

1. Sugar damages the immune system
Research has shown that excessive consumption of sugar can impair the delicate balance of body’s internal microbiota.

2. Sugar causes tooth decay
   The bacteria in the mouth utilize excessively consumed sugar for production of acids and chemicals that cause damage to enamel and can, which can damage and dissolve teeth as well as affect gums.

3. Sugar can lead to gum disease that can cause heart disease.
   Chronic infections arising from periodontal problems can be instrumental in leading to the development of coronary artery diseases.

4. Sugar can impair cognition and memory
   Limiting sugar has an effect of withdrawal symptoms like excessive craving and emotional mood swings. Sugar has also been shown to interfere with memory and cognition in the long run.

5. Sugar can damage the heart
   Foods with high glycemic index can lead to rapid spikes in blood pressure, which can lead to hypertension if the diet is not modulated.

6. Sugar can lead to fatty liver disease
   Fructose, a high glycemic component of refined table sugar can trigger the liver to store more amounts of fat.

7. Sugar interferes with satiety and appetite control
   Sugar can interfere with the hormone leptin, which signals the brain to stop eating when full. This can lead to mindless uncontrolled eating which can further worsen the risk of obesity and weight gain.

Sources:


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About IMA: Indian Medical Association is the only representative, national voluntary organization of Doctors of Modern Scientific System of Medicine, which looks after the interest of doctors as well as the well being of the community at large. It has its Headquarter in Delhi and State / Terr. Branches in 30 States and Union Territories. It has over 2, 60,000 doctors as its members through more than 1765 active local branches spread across the country.

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