



## Weekly Tip:

Did you know that you can never EVER 'Catch up' on your sleep? What's it is gone, it is gone!

Getting enough sleep is essential to maintain proper health and as we all know affects mood, diet, energy level and yes, even our weight both positively and negatively depending on how much or how little we get!

While the amount of sleep that each person need varies on the individual, in general it is recommended that adults get about 7 hours a night while children and adolescents get at least 10.

Lack of sleep increases hunger causing over-eating and weight gain, it causes irritability, depressed immune systems, increase allergic sensitivities, higher susceptibility to diabetes, heart disease and hypertension...

How much sleep do you get a day?

How much sugar should the average person consume in a day? Do you know? Well according to a new report from the American Heart Association states that we should limit our added sugar consumption to 12g (3 tsp) for children, 20g (5tsp) for women and 36g (9tsp) for men. These are daily limits for added sugar and do not include naturally occurring sugars found in fruits and vegetables.

So what does that mean for you and your family? Does it mean that you can never have another cookie again? Not at all—but it should make you very aware of what you are putting in your body and packing your children for lunch. On average, we as a nation are consuming over 60g of added sugar a day— 2 to 5 times what we should be! If you don't believe that, consider this...

A single can of pop (coke or Pepsi) contains 39g or about 10 teaspoons of sugar. Still think it is a good choice for the lunch box?

On average a single timbit contains 4g or one teaspoon of sugar per bit. How many can you scar down at a single seating?

Is chocolate your thing? A single Mars Bar contains an entire day's sugar for a grown man - 9 teaspoons or 36g.

Now before you start crying in your black coffee, I am not saying that you have to get rid of all the treats, but that we have to make informed choices when enjoying them.

## Sickly Sweet

Why? You may think that as long as you brush regularly, excess added sugar in your diet shouldn't matter but it does and let me explain why...

- Each teaspoon of sugar contains 4grams which in turn contains 16 calories— doesn't sound like much but considering that they are empty calories (void of any useful nutrients) they add up quickly!
- Added sugar depresses your immune system making those who indulge their sweet teeth more susceptible to illness and infection increasing recovery time as well!
- Added sugars decrease your good cholesterol and increase your bad... never a good thing!
- Interferes with your production of insulin putting you at an increased risk of diabetes.

Of course these are just a few examples of what excess sugar in your diet can do to you - now what do you do about it? Yes, cutting out sweets like pop, candy and donuts may be a great start but how do you know what foods have surprisingly large amounts of hidden sugar?

Producers add sugar to some of the strangest products—things you wouldn't think of as 'sweets'. They do this to improve taste but also to hide the taste of excess salt, used as a preservative.

The best way to avoid excess added sugar is to make it a new habit to read labels whenever purchasing something new, regardless of whether you think of it as a 'sweet' thing or not.

How many grams of sugar does it have per serving?

One serving of 'light yogurt' has 14g or 3.5 teaspoons of added sugars. Why? Sugar was added to improve taste and texture when the fat was reduced to make it 'light'.

To make life even simpler and avoid calculating grams and serving etc—just read the ingredient list. If sugar is listed as one of the first 5 ingredients in the product— then it is not the right choice for you and your family.

Don't forget however that sugar can be hidden under many different names; corn syrup, fructose, high-fructose corn syrup, maltose, brown sugar, dextrose, glucose, honey, lactose, sorbitol, and sucrose. These words are all saying the same thing.. SUGAR. Sugar by any other name is just as sweet!

Those are all words to avoid, but words you should be looking for include: unsweetened and 'no added sugars' - manufacturers cannot advertise these things by law unless they are true!

Cutting out the hidden sugars in our regular diet will allow us to enjoy guilt-free the occasional sugary treat while making the health of our heart and our families still a priority!

# Recipe Corner

Delicious and nutritious snack and meal ideas that are perfect for the whole family!  
Straight from Michelle's kitchen!



## Chick Pea Snacks

These delicious and nutritious legumes are not just for chilli anymore! Here are a couple of different ways to enjoy garbanzos that the whole family will enjoy!

**Roasted Chick Peas** - Rinse and drain a large can of chick peas and place in a mixing bowl with 1/8 cup of olive oil—stir until coated. Season to taste—some suggestions are: garlic, salt & pepper, cayenne & chilli, dill—the ideas are limitless! Stir until well mixed and spread peas flat on cookie sheet. Roast for 25 to 35 minutes at 350F—serve warm and eat like popcorn!

**Hummus** - Rinse and Drain a large can of chick peas, place in a food processor or blender. Add 3 tablespoons lemon juice, 1 tablespoon olive oil, 2 whole cloves of peeled garlic, 1.5 tablespoons of tahini, 1 teaspoon of salt and blend well. Chill. Serve as a dip with veggies or use as a sandwich spread!

## Sleeping like a baby...

Who wants to sleep like a baby? Not me. My baby wakes up every three hours! I want to sleep like a retired rock star!

On the previous page we discussed why we all need to get enough sleep in a day and how we can never make up for it once it is lost so that begs the question... HOW?? How do we as adults get 7 hours of sleep a night when there are so many things to do and to think about?

Now if you are like me and battling the sleep habits of an infant, most of these will not apply to you because I am sure that you (like me) could nod off for 7 hours at the drop of a hat if you were just given a chance! Hang in there—it will pass! For everyone else, here are some great tips to improving your sleep habits and in turn, improving your over-all health!

#1 The best way to improve your sleep is to keep a regular schedule. Go to bed at and wake up at the same time every day if possible—yes even on weekends!

Sleeping in, only create the risk of staying up later which in turn runs the risk of either sleeping in again or not getting enough sleep when getting up for work on Monday morning!

#2 Maintain a balanced diet and exercise routine try not to work out within a few hours of bedtime as exercise increases your metabolic rate which can make it hard to relax into a sleep-inducing state. Regular exercise will help you sleep better—just not right before bed!

#3 Avoid napping. Just like sleeping in, this will interfere with your body's schedule and change the quality of your nightly sleep. (again—this does not apply to moms with new babies) ;)

#4 Avoid caffeine, nicotine and alcohol as all will interfere with your sleep. If you do choose to indulge in these drugs, try not to do so within a couple of hours of bedtime.

#5 Relax! Develop a bedtime routine similar to what you would for your chil-

dren. Take some downtime before settling down for the night. A warm bath, a good book soft music are all great ways to tell your body it is time to slow down and get some rest.

#6 Look at your surroundings—is your room conducive to sleep? Do you have a firm, comfortable mattress? Is it too bright? Too warm?

#7 Are you hungry? Too many people believe that if they eat before bed, they will gain weight so they go to bed hungry. That will never get you a good night's sleep. It isn't when you eat that causes weight gain but what you eat. Bedtime is not the time for a turkey dinner as being too full won't help either, but a snack of veggies and dip or even a bowl of high-fiber cereal could be your solution!

#8 If you are thinking too much—write down your thoughts or get out of bed and leave the room until you are relaxed. Laying in bed worrying about not sleeping will never actually get you to sleep!