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Added sugar intake, Glycemic Index and insulin response

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Abstract

Most fruits and dairy products are high in sugars, and thus naturally occurring sugars are consumed as part of a healthy diet. Sugars are also added to foods during processing or preparation, primarily to enhance taste. Monosaccharides and disaccharides added to foods are chemically indistinguishable from naturally occurring forms. However, concern has been expressed about the apparent increasing consumption of added sugars and its possible role in displacing or diluting nutrients in the diet and contributing to the epidemic of obesity in developed countries. One of the 2000 Dietary Guidelines for Americans states, "Choose beverages and foods to moderate your intake of sugars." The 2000 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee (DGAC) discussed whether to specify added sugars rather than the broader term sugars but decided that it was not possible to conclude that added sugars per se play a negative role in the public's health. The DGAC issued a call for more definitive studies on the role of sugars in current diets and the potential effect of a reduction in added sugars on both dietary quality and energy intake. In 2000 the American Heart Association released a statement advising consumers to limit sugars consumption. The macronutrient report for the Dietary Reference Intakes (DRIs), released in 2002, addresses many of these same issues; the expert panel concluded that it was not appropriate to set a Tolerable Upper Intake Level (UL) for added sugars but suggested a maximal intake level of 25% of energy from added sugars because of concerns about reduced intakes of essential micronutrients.