

SUGAR

It's the holiday season and that means that we all have had the opportunity to consume too much sugar. Think of it, Halloween candy, Thanksgiving with way too much food, and then Christmas with all the special treats and parties. It is no wonder that we will have gone overboard with sugar consumption. What is sugar? Why do we eat too much of it? What's the big deal with too much sugar?

Sugar is the word we use for sucrose, a carbohydrate made up of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen atoms. Sucrose is really two simple sugars (fructose and glucose) stuck together. Sucrose is made by, and found in, all green plants. Glucose and fructose are products of photosynthesis. The 'sugar' (sucrose) that you reach for and add to your tea or coffee has been harvested from sugar beets or sugar cane. Maltose (two molecules of glucose) is found in grains. Lactose (glucose & galactose) is found only in milk. Starch is a polymeric carbohydrate made up of many glucose units that plants use for energy storage. When eaten, starch is broken down by digestion into glucose, which is then transported throughout our body as a source of energy.

We need glucose to survive. Our brain depends on glucose for energy. The human brain accounts for 2% of the body weight but consumes 20% of glucose-derived energy. It is the main consumer of glucose at 5.6mg glucose per 100 grams of brain tissue per minute. (1)

Glucose is stored in our bodies (in liver and muscle) as glycogen, which can be converted back to glucose when needed. Every cell in our body uses glucose for energy. Glucose is broken down in a process called glycolysis (Greek: glukus "sweet", and lysis "rupture") that involves about 10 separate reactions leading to the production of adenosine triphosphate (ATP) that supplies energy for all our cellular functions, including such activity as muscle contraction, nerve conduction, and DNA & RNA synthesis. To keep our bodies running smoothly there needs to be a continuous concentration in our blood of 60 to 100 mg/dL of glucose. Hypoglycemia is too little glucose and hyperglycemia is too much glucose.

Our problems come when we consume too much added sugar, which we get from soft drinks, fruit drinks, flavored yogurts, cereals, cookies, cake, candy, and many processed foods. According to the National Cancer Institute adult men take in an average of 24 teaspoons of added sugar per day. That's equal to 384 calories. The American Heart Association suggests that women consume no more than 100 calories (about 6 teaspoons) and men no more than 150 calories (about 9 teaspoons) of added sugar per day. That is roughly the amount in a 12-ounce can of soda.

An 'artificial sweetener' is a man made chemical (Equal, Sweet'N Low, Splenda). They have no calories and are much sweeter than sucrose. They're soda and low calorie deserts. They give you a more intense 'sugar high' (releasing of dopamine) than sucrose because they are so sweet. Although approved for human use by the FDA, there is still a link to medical problems like obesity, hypertension, heart disease, and possibly malignancy.

A 'natural sweetener' is honey, agave nectar, and maple syrup. In our bodies, during digestion, they are broken down into glucose and fructose. Your body does not process natural sugars as quickly as added sugars or artificial sweeteners, so you don't get the rollercoaster effect of dopamine.

High-fructose corn syrup (introduced in the 1970's) is cheaper than sugar and has a longer shelf life. It has similar fructose/glucose ratios as sucrose. It gives you a higher increase in CRP (C-reactive protein) levels when compared to sucrose. CRP increases when there is inflammation in your body. In other respects it is similar to sucrose.

The consequences of added sugar (of any kind) include addiction, high blood pressure, weight gain, inflammation, diabetes and the increased risk of heart attack and stroke. Enjoy the sugar treats with moderation!

1. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3900881/>



BOW CHARTER INFORMATION COMMITTEE

In the fall of 2022, the Bow Select Board appointed 9 local citizens to serve on a Charter Information Committee. The Select Board's charge to the Committee was, among other things, to educate the voters in Bow about the different forms of government that are available to the Town, and to explain what a Charter Commission is and how it works.

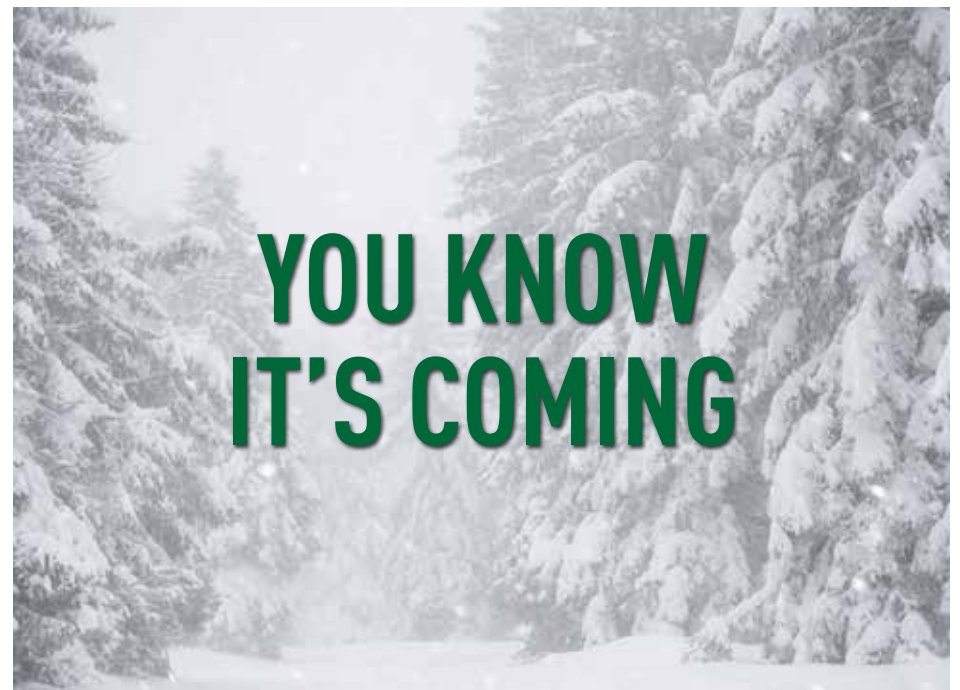
The Committee has assembled numerous resources about forms of town government and Charter commissions, all of which are all available on the Town's website at:

<http://bownh.gov/822/Charter-Information-Committee>

The Committee has created an educational slideshow presentation summarizing its work. This presentation is available on the Town website and and at the Baker Free Library on January 8, 2024 at 7:00 pm. All are welcome to attend.

In addition, members of the Committee will be happy to present the slideshow to any group or organization in Town interested learning more about the Charter Commission process and options for Town government.

Interested groups should contact Town Administrative Assistant, Tonia Lindquist, at 603-223-3911 to schedule a presentation.



Some things in life are inevitable, like New England snowstorms, economic ups and downs, and retirement. Just as you prepare for winter by tuning up the snow blower, stacking wood and getting out your snow tires, preparation for both retirement and life's unexpected situations is crucial to your financial well-being. Let our experience help you craft a comprehensive financial plan that gets you ready both for the retirement you deserve and those unexpected events along the way.

This Is What We Plan For.



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