

# 30-Day Sugar Free Challenge!

## Q&A



### What is a 30-Day Sugar Free Challenge?

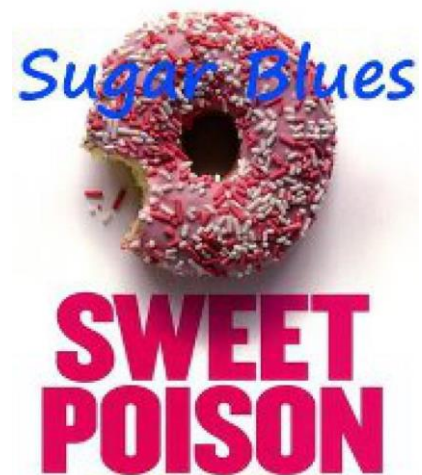
This challenge is to remove all processed and added sugars out of your diet for 30 days. Natural whole fruits are okay – they contain natural sugars, which are allowed. Added sugar is any sweetener that is added to the original food. For instance, plain yogurt can have 5 grams of natural sugar, but vanilla yogurts can have an extra 10 grams of sugar added for flavor. So, the vanilla yogurt would be on the not-to-eat list. Choose the plain yogurt, add in fresh or frozen berries, and you've got yourself a snack on the challenge.

I know it sounds like a tall order, but the challenge can be flexible, here is a modification example:

Recommended Daily Amount of Sugar Challenge: A less strict modification would be to consume only the recommended daily amount of sugar (for men, 36 grams or 150 calories per day, for women 25 grams or 100 calories per day). In this challenge you are still greatly limiting your sugar intake by looking at nutrition labels and counting grams of sugar. However, the type of sugar you consume is your choice.

### Why would I want to do this challenge?

As presented in the 2nd Tuesday event from October 2020 Sugar, the Good, the Bad and the Ugly (you can find this presentation on the MorrisHealth YouTube channel), most of us eat way too much sugar. Many times, we don't even know we're eating it. Easy convenience or ready-made food are usually loaded with hidden sugar along with an abundance of chemicals and additives that we are vaguely aware of.



There are extreme health costs that come with consuming excess sugar on a continual basis. These include . . .

Fatigue

Weight gain

Insulin resistance

Diabetes Type 2

Brain fog

Poor self-esteem

This challenge will help you not only become more aware of what you're eating but will also help you make lasting healthy changes. This is your chance to take a stand for your health and take a stand for your family's health, whether in the same household or far away.

You have the knowledge, but knowledge is only powerful when action is taken. This is your chance to upgrade your eating standards, provide greater awareness about making good choices and have the satisfaction of following through.

### **Colleen's 30-Day Sugar Free Challenge Experience**

*Since my earliest recollection, I've always had a sweet tooth. I was the proverbial child with her hand in the family cookie jar – usually eating more than my share. As a teenager I would eat the profit margins on the eclairs in my father's bakery, until for some unknown reason my father shifted my job responsibilities to the produce department. . . Hmmm . . . Suffice it to say, sugar and I go way back.*

*But two years ago, I decided that my so called "love" affair with sugar was no longer working for me. I was done with that out of control, insatiable desire for sweets that seemed to overtake me every day after 2 p.m.*

*In my search for help I found a 30-day sugar free challenge that piqued my interest. The title alone got my attention, I Love Me More Than Sugar. "Well, yes I do," I thought. My goal for starting the challenge was to reset my palate and recalibrate my preferences from sweet foods towards things that are more wholesome and naturally sweet.*

*I threw away my ice-cream and cleaned out my cupboards and stocked my refrigerator with healthier options. I was raring to go. When I made it to day thirty, I so inspired myself I decided to go for another 30 days. My second round of thirty turned into a third round, and then a fourth until I found myself completing an entire year of living sugar free! I did it! An entire year without processed sugar! (Except for on my birthday, I did have an ice-cream.)*

*So, if you ask me was it worth it? YES! A hundred times over. The sugar-free challenge dramatically reset my taste buds. In fact, anything too sweet doesn't taste good to me anymore. And if I can do it, truly anyone can. I invite YOU to jump on board and join our MorrisHealth Sugar-Free Challenge and reset YOUR taste buds!*

## **What can I expect during this challenge?**

Expect support from Heather and Colleen every step of the way. This is done mainly through informative and encouraging weekly emails, 30 minutes Zoom meetings every Wednesday at 1 p.m. and personal phone calls if you need additional help.

## **Understanding the challenge**

Challenges are well...challenging. The body is adapting to new ways of eating and you are becoming more aware of your daily habits. In the first few days beginning the challenge you might become tired or moody. After all, many of us have relied on sugar for a "pick me up". These side effects will soon fade by resting, drinking plenty of water and consuming a balanced diet. We will talk about a balanced diet on Day 1 of the challenge.

## **Can I eat Carbohydrates?**

The challenge rules are simple - no processed or added sugars, so even though starches such as potatoes turn into sugar, there is no added or processed sugar. Potato is a whole food and if you leave the skin on you also get a healthy amount of fiber. Plain whole grain bread like Ezekiel bread is fine, but not cinnamon raisin bread which has plenty of added sugar.

## **Where can I sign up?**

Click the RSVP link in the body of this email.

## **What happens when the challenge is over?**

As a congratulations for finishing the 30-day sugar free challenge you will receive a MorrisHealth Certificate of Completion. Upon taking a short survey you will be entered into a drawing to win one of three \$25 gift certificate to Sprouts.

But the best gift is the one you give to yourself . . . becoming a healthier version of you, including:

- Weight loss
- Better mood
- Clear thinking
- Healthier looking skin
- Better sleep
- Increased energy

Sounds great, right? Let's do it!



## Preparing for the Sugar Free Challenge

Being prepared for this challenge means greater chance of success. A little planning and meal-prepping can go a long way.

Here are some helpful tips to implement before we begin.

- **Rid the fridge and pantry of all sugar-filled foods:** This will help you not to be tempted during the 30 days.
- **Have handy foods that you can eat:** Plenty of fruits, vegetables, and healthy lean meats.



- **Dust off the spice rack:** Sugar is not the only thing that can make our food taste good. Spices and extracts can add more complex, satisfying flavors to a dish or treat.
- **Replace Sweetened Beverages:** Steer clear of soda and sports drinks. If you are a coffee or tea drinker, try enjoying it plain or with a splash of milk, hold the sugar.
- **Be Smart with Condiments:** Certain condiments are sneaky sources of added sugar. For example, ketchup has 3 grams of added sugar per tablespoon, and barbecue sauce has 6 grams per tablespoon. Switching to a condiment like mustard or hot sauce will help you cut out the extra sugar and calories.

- **Have your journal ready:** Documenting your experiences, as well as any feelings that may arise, will help you curb your cravings by becoming more aware and present to your needs.
- **Buddy Up:** Find a sugar free buddy to team up with for extra support. Come to the weekly support meetings every Wednesday on Zoom.
- **Snack Attack:** Have a sugar free treat already made. When you find yourself in a position where your willpower is fading, knowing that you have a healthy snack without effort will help you say no to any sugar presented to you.

## Helpful tips during the challenge

- **Drink Plenty of Water:** In many cases, we are not hungry or craving sugar (although it may seem like it). We are just thirsty. Always keep a water bottle handy and sip throughout the day. You can also add some lemon juice for extra flavor. If you experience an intense sugar craving, first take a few more gulps of water. Then wait a few minutes for the craving to subside.
- **Try a Savory Breakfast:** Breakfast is the most common meal to have something sweet. Instead try a savory breakfast like avocado toast, a hard-boiled egg and fruit, or a veggie omelet to keep you full and satisfied all morning.
- **Snack Smarter:** Choose whole-food snacks—like fruit, nuts or plain yogurt instead of packaged snacks and bars. Whole-food snacks have no added sugar and will keep you fuller for longer if they contain protein, fat and fiber. Prepping snacks in advance can also save you money on last-minute, less-healthy purchases.
- **Eat Before You Feel Starving:** We are most susceptible to cravings when we are really hungry. Eating a snack or meal with complex carbs, fats and



proteins, such as apple slices with almond butter or salmon with a salad, before you feel famished can help you get ahead of a craving before it starts.

- **Take a Walk:** When cravings strike, one of the best ways to overcome it is through distraction. Next time you are dreaming of something sweet, get some fresh air and take a walk. This will help take your mind off food so you can come back and make a snack or meal with a clearer head.
- **Have Some Fruit:** Indulge in nature's candy. Fruit is known for its naturally sweet and sometimes sour qualities, but some additional water, fiber and antioxidants are what make fruits truly special. Enjoy fruit and dishes sweetened with fruit as a treat. Please keep in mind that people with Type 2 Diabetes need to be mindful of portion sizes.
- **Check Your Bread Labels:** One surprising source of added sugar is store-bought bread. The average loaf contains 2 to 3 grams per slice. Reading the label for added sugars is a great way to cut down on sugar that you won't miss. Also, check to see that your bread contains 3 grams of fiber per serving, which can help promote gut health and weight loss.



- **Make Your Own Salad Dressings:** Salads are a great way to boost your vegetable intake and reap all the nutritional benefits. However, salad dressings are not all created equal. Some store-bought brands can add sugar. Making your own salad dressing\*\* can be as simple as whisking olive oil with balsamic vinegar and some herbs. Homemade dressings are usually more delicious and contain no added sugar.

*\*\*If you missed the “Nutritious and Delicious Salad Dressings” check it out on our MorrisHealth YouTube channel. There’s also a great set of handouts, email us for a link or pick one up at the office.\*\**

The challenge will begin **October 1<sup>st</sup>**.

And as always, I’m here to help you sort it out, provide further support, or to put that commitment in writing.

Join us!

*Yours in Health,*

*Heather*

**“You have the knowledge,  
but knowledge is only  
powerful when  
**ACTION**  
is taken.”**

**~Health Coach Heather**