



*"Your genetics load the gun—your lifestyle pulls the trigger."*

- Mehmet Oz



# WINTER 2017 *fit* FOR *thought*

## Sugar—The Toxic Truth\*



The bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives should consider adding sugars to its list of controlled substances given the damage high sugar intake has on the brain and the body.

The American Heart Association recommends no more than 6 tsp of added sugar per day for women and 9 tsp for men. Yet, the average American consumes 19.5 tsp/day.

Growing scientific evidence shows that eating too much added sugar is linked to serious diseases, such as obesity, diabetes and heart disease. Poor memory and cognitive function is also affected.

In particular, fructose can be toxic to the liver, just like alcohol.

Fructose is the sugar that makes fruit taste sweet. For most people, there's nothing wrong with eating fructose in its natural state, in fruit.

But today, manufacturers extract and concentrate the fructose from corn, beets and sugarcane, removing the fiber and nutrients in the process. Getting frequent, high doses of fructose throughout the day, without fiber to slow it down, is more than our bodies were designed to handle.

Nearly all added sugars contain significant amounts of fructose.<sup>3</sup> Typical formulations of high-fructose corn syrup contain upwards of 50% fructose, depending on processing methods. Table sugar and even sweeteners that sound healthy, like organic cane sugar, are 50% fructose.

What's unique about fructose is that, unlike any other sugar, it's processed in the liver. Small amounts of fructose, meted out slowly, are not a problem for your liver. Think of eating an apple - its sweetness comes with a lot of chewing that takes time. The apple's fiber slows down its processing in the gut.

But when we consume large amounts of fructose in added sugar, particularly in liquid form on an empty stomach, it slams the liver with more than it can handle.

As with alcohol, a little added fructose, consumed with fiber-rich foods, is OK. It's only when we frequently consume large quantities, in concentrated form, that fructose becomes a health hazard.





Julio Cantero, MD  
Medical Director

## Lifestyle Interventions & the Brain

Many of us are worried about memory loss and for good reason. 98% of those diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease are over the age of 65. Scientists and researchers, while working tirelessly to find a cure for Alzheimer's, have also determined that lifestyle interventions applied therapeutically, are in fact improving memory and slowing down decline.

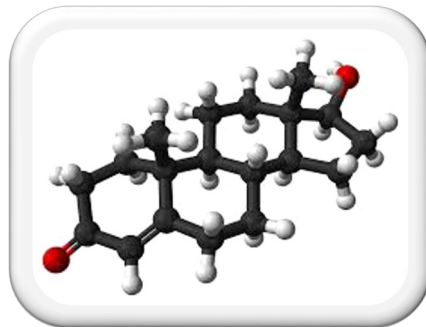
Exercise, Mediterranean Diet, stress management, good sleep habits and social engagement are known to reduce risk associated with Alzheimer's and dementia while increasing protective factors.

So how are lifestyle interventions used therapeutically? For this article I'm focusing on diabetes type 2. Diabetes is the second most important risk factor for Alzheimer's disease. High insulin and high glucose is toxic to the brain.

When you eat foods with a high glycemic index such as sugars, starchy food and baked goods, your body pours out large amounts of insulin to keep glucose levels in check.

1. Cells become insensitive to the constant flood of insulin leading to insulin resistance and contributes to diabetes type 2.

2. Insulin also supports the survival of neurons. Chronically high insulin levels compromise survival.
3. Insulin degrading enzyme IDE then degrades excess insulin so you don't become hypoglycemic. IDE also contributes to degrading beta amyloid, one of the hallmarks of Alzheimer's disease. However, when tied up degrading insulin, it isn't degrading beta amyloid.



1. Exercise: keeps glucose, blood pressure and cholesterol in check

2. Mediterranean Diet: rich in vegetables, whole grains and olive oil, enable you to better manage diabetes without medications

3. Stress: Managing stress supports normal blood sugar levels.

4. Sleep: Getting 7-8 hours of sleep at night help keep glucose levels in check.

It is important to keep your hemoglobin A1-C below 5.6.

As of 2012, about one-half of all adults had one or more chronic health conditions. Physical activity and diet have been identified as two modifiable risk factors that may impact onset or progression of disease.



Nicci Kobritz, President

## Supporting Brain Health in the Home



It's estimated that 5.4 million people in the U.S. have Alzheimer's disease or another form of dementia, and about 70% live at home. Given the number of individuals who choose to live at home, and the pervasive underlying symptoms of dementia, it becomes important to adapt our care planning in support of brain health.

Research studies have clearly demonstrated the positive impact of lifestyle interventions in support of improving cognitive function, regardless of age.

### Exercise

Exercise increases vascular density in parts of the brain, particularly the hippocampus. The hippocampus plays an important role in the consolidation of information from short term memory to long term memory and spatial navigation. Exercise also plays an important role in increasing blood supply to the brain. When blood supply is cut off, a TIA (mini stroke) may become the first symptom that blood supply to neurons is lost. When the vascular supply is lost, neurons become damaged in the same way that Alzheimer's pathology can attack neurons

The links between exercise and healthy brain growth, and exercise and healthy vascular growth in the brain are well established. A routine exercise program can go a long way to support brain health.

### Mediterranean Diet

Is a blueprint to control levels of silent inflammation in your body. Silent inflammation is a precursor to the development of beta amyloid, one of the hallmarks of AD. New advances in molecular biology and genetics now allow us to understand how certain nutrients can take inflammation control to higher levels. A large class of chemical compounds synthesized from fruits and vegetables provide a unique group of antioxidants called polyphenols and flavonoids. Both are prevalent in the Mediterranean diet. Additional benefits include:

1. Lowers blood pressure
2. Reduces the combined risk of acute heart attack, stroke or cardiovascular death by 30%
3. Reduces the level of LDL, the bad cholesterol

### Mental Stimulation

Mental stimulation includes learning new and challenging information from the simple to the complex. Socialization encourages connections with others and reduces the tendency to become isolated.

### Youthful Aging: At the Forefront

Youthful Aging Home Health continues to practice their proactive model of in-home care: slowing down physical and cognitive decline through lifestyle interventions and attentive caregiving.....enabling our clients to be the best they can be for as long as possible!



**Q** I'm intrigued by your focus on integrating healthy lifestyles into the care of your clients. How would you get my 87 year old mother interested when she has never liked being health conscious?

*Excellent question — Our success and her benefits have to do with the caregiver. For example: Exercise; “let’s take a walk outside, it’s such a beautiful day.” The caregiver identifies places of interest. Nutrition: “let’s try some fresh vegetables today, which one’s would you like?”*

*Our integration become part of the “normal conversation and routine.”*

## Tips to Lower Your Glycemic Index

1. **Swap those spuds:** If you're a big potato eater and can't bear the thought of giving them up, you don't have to – just switch to a lower GI potato such as Carisma™.
2. **Go grainy:** Instead of buying bakery foods made primarily with white flour (e.g. white bread, crumpets, pikelets), choose grainy breads (where you can actually see the grains), authentic sourdoughs or stoneground wholemeal options.
3. **Get a good start:** Replace highly processed breakfast cereals with natural muesli, traditional porridge oats or cereals that carry the GI Symbol.
4. **Love legumes!** Dried and canned beans, lentils & chickpeas are all low GI and nutrient rich along with providing good levels of protein and fiber.
5. **It's all about combinations:** You don't need to completely cut out high GI options – the trick is to combine them with low GI options to achieve a moderate GI and GL.
6. **Smart Snacking:** When it comes to snacking, go for fresh fruit, dried fruit, nuts and yoghurt. Avoid refined flour products like cookies, crackers and biscuits.
7. **Quantity control:** Watch the amount and type of rice you eat at home and when you are eating out. Jasmine and Calrose varieties are high in GI. Better choices are Doongara, Moolgiri and Basmati; they have a lower GI and higher portion of the starch amylose that takes longer to break down helping to manage your blood glucose levels.
8. **Dairy good:** Most dairy products including milk and yoghurt are low GI and an important source of protein and calcium. For alternative dairy products select calcium enriched soy milks rather than higher GI Rice milks.
9. **Wonderful Water:** Make water your first choice. Avoid sugary drinks and drink no more than one to two glasses of alcohol a day.

Glycemic Index Foundation

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