

*Naturally End Your  
Sugar & Food Cravings*



# **THE SUGAR FREE LIFESTYLE**

End PMS, Hot Flashes, Night Sweats,  
Mood Swings, Irritability, Depression, Restless Sleep,  
Brain Fog, Bloating, Chronic Fatigue and  
Lose those Extra Pounds.

*Nancy Desjardins*

The Sugar Free Lifestyle: How to stop your sugar cravings without feeling deprived or hungry

The Sugar Free Lifestyle

By Nancy Desjardins ROHP  
Registered Orthomolecular Health Practitioner

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*“Within you right now is the power to do things you never dreamed possible. This power becomes available to you just as soon as you can change your belief.”*

Dr. Maxwell Maltz

# Dedication

This book is dedicated to:

My mother-in-law, Juliette Desjardins, for believing in me and treating me with so much love and respect. She taught me SO MUCH about values and the importance of good health. She was a big influence on what I know today. Her wisdom and practical knowledge molded me to who I am.

All of the clients who have trusted me with their health challenges over the years.

My peers, for their wisdom and guidance, for their unwavering encouragement.

And of course, my immense gratitude goes to my husband Yvan and our son Jesse for their continuing assistance and faith in my passion and what I believe in.

# Preface

The Sugar Free Lifestyle is based on sugar-free, gluten-free, alkaline-forming, natural whole foods, which are designed to strengthen your immune system, recharge your digestive system, and boost your mental and emotional outlook so you can be your healthiest and most energized self.

## **WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THE SUGAR FREE LIFESTYLE?**

**Your body will release the accumulated effects of white sugar, white flour, processed foods, caffeine, heavy dairy products, and food additives.**

## **WHAT ELSE WILL HAPPEN?**

**We will be adding the highest quality foods to your diet to help your body heal, stabilize, and balance itself, which, in turn, will allow you to conquer that sugar craving.**

This is a fantastic opportunity for advanced and first-time cleansers or for anyone who wants a quick jump-start. Even my clients who have used this diet before have said that it is so comprehensive that it will give you all the information you'll ever need!

**Here's how it will work.** I'll provide you with an eating plan, which is packed with truly delicious recipes and cleansing foods that you can use to cleanse and easily incorporate into your everyday living.

Breaking life-long cravings for food and sugar can seem like an impossible task for most people. That's because you're facing two challenges from the start:

- You're dealing with actual food cravings that you've had most of your life.
- You don't have information on how to break these habits!

This revolutionary diet has been proven to break the chains of food and sugar cravings within a week. That's because the diet relies on fresh, whole foods.

And the best part of this diet is that you get to make choices while you go through it.

Each of the two plans I offer is meticulously designed to kill your cravings for sugar and processed carbohydrates within a week. Also, the plans are specifically designed to fuel long-term weight loss.

Here's just a sample of what you'll learn through this diet:

- The simplest, quickest, and most direct ways to improve your health and energy
- How to stabilize your weight and feel fresh and powerful
- The principles of healthy eating on a cleansing diet
- How digestion and elimination work

- The importance of enzymes and how vitamins, minerals, and proteins work
- Ways to hydrate the cells of the body, flush out toxins, and bring in nutrients
- How to use superfoods and herbs for added nutrition both during and after the cleanse

When you've completed the diet, you're going to feel great and you'll be in a good place to reassess your normal eating habits and to institute healthier ones.

Here's a brief description of the two effective 7-day plans you'll have to choose from (refer to Chapter 11 for the detailed plans):

**Plan A: Beginner's Cleanse** – This plan includes smoothies, some steamed/cooked veggies, animal protein, and healthy carbohydrates. It's an effective cleanse that's great for beginners.

**Plan B: Power Cleanse** – This plan includes fresh vegetable juices, blended soups, and lots of salad. It's a more aggressive cleansing process.

**Important note:** I really encourage people to eat closer to a vegetarian/live food diet. I didn't always eat this way, and this is one of the reasons I can walk you through the diet—I know how you're probably feeling at this time. So if you choose to keep animal protein in your diet, it's okay! Just be aware that growth hormones are put into meat and poultry. So, to keep your diet healthy, eat only organic, grass-fed, ideally kosher, meat and poultry, which, most importantly, have not been given growth hormones. Also, the fish you eat should not be farm raised.

I've added cold water fish for protein as an option in the meal plan, but 3 ounces is the maximum allowed in one day; and remember that the fish you eat should not be farm raised. Try to keep your protein intake to lunchtime; this gives more time for it to process in your stomach.

If you're not a fish lover, organic chicken will do! I suggest you limit that to 3 servings per week. The same goes for red meat, and please go with organic only!

If you find ingredients in the menu plan that you're not familiar with, go to the health food section at your grocery store and let them help you.

If you're still hungry after eating what's on your plan, add something from the list of Top 12 Alkalizing Snacks.

Finally, I want to share a few choice words about **supplements and superfoods**.

Choosing and consuming superfoods and herbs will make it easier for you to achieve your ideal weight. They help you change your eating habits. Plus, they help to ease detoxification and make the transition to consuming more living, raw plant foods easier, with very little effort on your part!

Remember that taking supplements during the process is optional. You will still get fantastic results if you choose not to take them; supplements will simply help you to speed up the cleansing process.

## **WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO APPROACH THIS DIET AND BE SUCCESSFUL?**

I know it's tempting to skip ahead to the grocery list and head off to the store, but PLEASE read all of this information before you jump into the plan. If I could lock up that section until it's time, I would, but I trust you to follow my guidance on how to successfully complete this diet.

Please remember to read through the entire book before you start the plan. It's crucial that you understand the underlying principles that make up this diet.

Not fast enough? Let me assure you that if you're looking for a magic bullet, this diet is going to disappoint you. I'm not delivering a quick fix here; I'm teaching you how to make fundamental changes that offer truly incredible results.

And you're going to have fun while you're doing it! Yes, you can experiment with this diet, have fun with it, and make it your own. And, while I can't make the changes for you, I will be here with you every step of the way as someone who was once in your shoes. That's how I know you can do this.

To your health,

*Nancy Desjardins*

Nancy Desjardins

# Introduction

**FACT: The average person consumes about 200 pounds of white flour per year**

**FACT: The average person consumes about 160 pounds of refined sugar per year**

Those facts add up to 360 pounds; that is like adding one pound of toxic substances to your body every single day. Would you drink one pound of poison? Or eat chemical residue with a spoon?

I know you want to stop willingly poisoning yourself with these foods. And that's why you're here.

## **KICK THE SUGAR HABIT**

Like many people, I was sugar-addicted for years. I ate sugar all the time and found that once I began, it was quite difficult to stop. If I had anything sweet in the morning, then I'd yearn for more sweets in the afternoon and then, again, after dinner. It was ridiculous, really, but I couldn't help myself!

I noticed that I was moody and anxious without really knowing why. I became irritable and found myself snapping at my friends and family. I lost my temper easily and I realized that I was feeling worn out and falling ill frequently.

As I observed these symptoms in myself, I also was observing similar symptoms in my clients. They also suffered with chronic fatigue, bloating, constipation, and skin problems. I searched for a common thread that might explain all those shared symptoms.

The common thread turned out to be sugar. They all described their unquenchable craving for sugary foods and how difficult they found it to overcome those cravings. As a nutritionist, I knew that the next steps I had to take must be toward a deeper understanding of how sugar behaves in our bodies.

The more I studied, the more frightened I became. I discovered research showing that sugar dulls the brain, impairs organ function, strips the body of calcium, taps mineral reserves, causes depression and obesity, and leads to cellular death. I was horrified! My steps had led me to one conclusion: Sugar acts like a poison!

Further research I found compared sugar to heroin in the way it is processed and used. Raymond Francis, MIT graduate and expert in vitamin science explains sugar's addictive qualities: "Animal studies show that regular consumption of sugar causes long-lasting changes in brain chemistry, similar to those caused by street drugs such as cocaine or heroin. These changes mean that even a single exposure to sweet, salty or fatty foods will change gene expression, stimulating opioids in the brain. These pleasure chemicals are addictive."

Fifty percent of the ingredients in breakfast cereal is made up of sugar and 2/3 cup of fruit flavored yogurt is loaded with 7 teaspoons of sugar. An innocent bowl of tomato soup can contain 8 teaspoons and a small bottle of orange juice can contain 10.5! It's no wonder many of us suffer from this sneaky addiction!

The good news is that there are many alternatives to refined sugars and, with some know-how, you can kick the sugar habit for good.

But that doesn't mean we have to deprive ourselves. The key is knowing that some of the foods we eat make us sick. They can even, eventually, kill us. Experts have known and understood the necessity of a healthy diet for centuries.

Of course, no one said such changes in lifestyle and eating habits are easy. No doubt about it: It's a challenging endeavor for most of us. It involves not only physical activity, but also mental determination and old-fashioned stick-to-itiveness. Every component of healthy living—eating right, exercising, avoiding smoking and alcohol (and the list goes on)—has a huge impact on our health and wellness.

Instead of reaching for pills that mask the cause of our distress, we must learn to pay attention to what our bodies are telling us. The best way to take care of ourselves is to engage in healthy approaches to how we deal with our problems. These approaches need to be natural and efficient with effective prevention becoming a way of life. Those who practice preventative approaches to health enjoy happier and cleaner lives with more productive and positive attitudes.

A healthy lifestyle like this causes you to view food in a way you have never viewed it before. I am 44 years old and feel more vibrant and look better than when I was in my twenties. Now I would like to share my success with you.

I welcome you to the Sugar Free Lifestyle and I hope it can bring you the same vibrant health, peace of mind and freedom from food addiction that it has brought to my clients and me.

## CHAPTER 1

# Emotional Eating

While there is no shortage of diet books and new fitness equipment on the market, the problems of being overweight and obese continue to grow with the number of people being affected by these serious but preventable conditions. There must be something else going on here.

All of us have our own special relationship to food. We don't just use food to satisfy our physical hunger; we sometimes use it to quell our emotional hunger as well.

### WHAT IS EMOTIONAL EATING?

As we learn more and more about why we eat and why we choose the foods we eat, we begin to understand how our emotions play such an instrumental role in our health. Roger Gould, MD, Associate Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at UCLA and author of *Shrink Yourself: Break Free from Emotional Eating Forever* defines emotional eating as eating to satisfy emotional hunger. In this fashion, you use food for comfort or as a way to cope with life. That means you eat for reasons other than what your body needs.

We all indulge in emotional eating at one point or another. Reaching for chocolate after a disagreement with your spouse or comforting yourself after a grueling meeting at work with an entire pizza are prime examples of emotional eating. But when this condition goes too far, it crosses the line into food addiction, where you actually lose control over what and how you eat.

### WHY DO WE DO IT?

Dr. Gould points out that all of us have emotional hunger. The difference between an emotional eater and a non-emotional eater is how they respond to this hunger.

When presented with a challenge, an emotional eater has a knee-jerk reaction to reach for whatever food will offer him or her a moment of comfort. Our comfort foods are usually not the healthiest choices, including ice cream, refined carbohydrates, heavy pastas and fast food.

Emotional eating happens without much regard to health, nutrition, or even real hunger. In fact, eating is usually hurried, with very little awareness of what is being consumed, and therefore emotional eaters are more prone to overeating.

Food offers relief from stress or emotional discomfort and provides a refuge and safety net that we can quickly turn to for solace and security. Food becomes the drug that distracts us from whatever discomfort we are feeling. The more we emotionally eat, the less likely we are to focus on the real cause of our unrest.

But food is just a temporary bandage. The feeling that drove you to emotionally eat in the first place is still there, and will quickly return. And worst of all, now there are usually new feelings of guilt, remorse, anger, and isolation once you have given in to the emotional eating.

## **HOW DO I HEAL FROM IT?**

Wanting to change something and actually changing it are two different things. For someone who is prone to emotional eating, the lines between feeling physical hunger and emotional hunger can begin to blur. This is why it is so important to examine how your relationship to food triggers your behavior.

Understanding food addiction's powerful grasp and the underlying issues that lead us to emotional eating are paramount in helping us to recover and heal.

Because your habits, even your way of thinking of things, took years to develop, you must allow yourself the same patience that you would extend to someone else tackling a new skill. Dr. Elson Haas, founder of the Preventive Medical Center of Marin, in California, mentions that you will need "greater attentiveness and a willingness to deal openly with emotions and other adversities that may block your way to healing."

Look for a trained health professional, support group, or program with a specialty in food addiction. They can help you develop coping skills that are not food-focused—effective interventions that will help you break the cycle of emotional eating and live an emotionally and physically healthy life.

It's also helpful to look at what the food is giving you, that you might be able to get somewhere else. Have you heard that craving sugar is a sign that you lack sweetness in your life? Cravings can often be distractions from what we really want in our lives.

Think about what happens when you eat the food you are craving. For example, when you eat sugar, do you feel warmth, peace or euphoria? Where are you missing those emotions in your life? What could you be doing that would allow you to experience them without food?

## **YOU ARE NEVER TOO OLD OR TOO YOUNG TO CHANGE UNHEALTHY HABITS**

Whether you are an emotional eater or a nail-biter, you're not alone. Unhealthy habits run the range of extremes from the benign to those that threaten our health and livelihoods. The truth is that anytime that you are a slave to a habit, it is holding you back from your true potential and interfering with your success.

But here's the thing: You can choose to change them! You don't have to be handicapped by these habits because you can make new decisions starting today—like kicking your sugar habit—that will change your entire future.

You can develop life-enhancing habits that revolve around your desire for health, happiness, financial independence and success.

The reason so many people struggle with unhealthy habits is that they haven't made the connection between mental skills and habits. Just like learning a new physical skill requires repetition and practice, battling old habits and replacing them with new ones requires mental practice.

Every action starts with a thought—though so many of our habits and actions are so ingrained that we do them subconsciously. And that's where the mental practice begins. When we can stop in the moment and become aware of what we are about to do, we can think about whether or not we want to do it. We can make a healthier choice.

Once you make the conscious decision that your old habits aren't helping you achieve your goals and that they are, in fact, holding you back, you can begin choosing new habits that you would like to adopt. And it doesn't matter where you are in your life. You might be fresh out of college or a retired adult seeking a new career. You are never too old or too young to make changes that will improve the quality of your life.

## CHAPTER 2

# The Dangers of Sugar

Before you start the Sugar Free Lifestyle, it's important to understand what we're up against and just how dangerous sugar can be.

Thousands of years ago, the only sugar available was from fruits or honey, but as human technology has progressed, so has humankind's ability to refine sugar from sugar cane or beets into a tasty sweetener. Unfortunately, our bodies were not built to process refined sugar—it is alien to our systems. Raymond Francis, DSc, MSc, RNC, author of *Never Be Fat Again*, says that “feeding refined sugar to a human body is similar to burning high-octane aircraft fuel in an automobile engine. Impressive amounts of energy, but after a while, you damage the engine.”

And that is exactly what has happened to us. We have “damaged our engines.” As we have increased our consumption of sugar over the years, diseases have also increased.

While our bodies are trying desperately to somehow process these useless refined sugars, they are forced to deplete important vitamins and minerals that would otherwise be keeping us balanced, healthy and functioning properly.

This disruption of the body's balanced state (called homeostasis) causes all sorts of serious, life-threatening, preventable conditions such as cancer, heart disease, stroke and diabetes.

For example, some of those minerals that the body redirects in order to deal with sugar are actually designed to help us digest our food. Without those minerals, we don't digest our food properly, which means we don't get the nutrients from any healthy food we ARE eating.

Improper digestion also promotes food allergies. Food allergies cause serious physical, emotional and cognitive problems, as well as decreased immunity.

Digestion is only one of many bodily functions that are severely impaired when we consume sugar. And just look at all of the problems that causes!

Sugar also causes reactive hypoglycemia, a dramatic rise and fall of blood sugar which creates a strong craving for more sweets (which starts the cycle all over again). Sugar intake can bring on trembling, amnesia, and even hallucinations and violent behavior, similar to what you might see with the use of addictive drugs. These reactions can mimic mental illnesses.

## EMPTY CALORIES

The calories in sugar are considered empty calories because they contain no vitamins and minerals. It is no wonder that people who eat mainly sugary foods feel so sluggish and heavy all the time.

We know that consuming too much sugar leads to fat build-up in the belly, hips, buttocks and breasts. What you might not know is that once those areas are filled up, the liver starts depositing fat around vital organs like the heart and kidneys. Not only can this lead to high blood pressure, it can also result in damage to your brain function.

Even in the short term, your brain is affected by sugar. In fact, you'll likely feel the effects right away. As soon as the "low" sets in, sugar dulls your brain, so you'll feel sleepy. You'll probably also find yourself forgetting things or having trouble making simple calculations.

The next time you have a craving for cookies or ice cream or doughnuts, imagine the chaos you are about to set in motion inside your body. You may be getting ready to swallow the recipe for diabetes, heart disease, stroke, cancer, kidney stones, yeast infections, headaches, arthritis or allergies. How about it? Do you still want that slice of chocolate cream pie?

## SUGAR IS A ROADBLOCK

According to William Dufty, author of *Sugar Blues*, "Sugar of all kinds—natural sugars, such as those in unpasteurized honey and fruit (fructose), as well as the refined white stuff (sucrose)—tends to arrest the secretion of gastric juices and have an inhibiting effect on the stomach's natural ability to move. Sugars are not digested in the mouth, like cereals, or in the stomach, like animal flesh. When taken alone, they pass quickly through the stomach into the small intestine. When sugars are eaten with other foods - perhaps meat and bread in a sandwich, they are held up in the stomach for awhile. "The sugar in the bread and the Coke sit there with the hamburger and the bun waiting for them to be digested. While the stomach is working on the animal protein and the refined starch in the bread, the addition of the sugar practically guarantees rapid acid fermentation under the conditions of warmth and moisture existing in the stomach."

One lump of sugar in your coffee after a sandwich is enough to turn your stomach into a fermenter! One soft drink with a hamburger is enough to turn your stomach into a still!

## BE A SUGAR DETECTIVE

Food manufacturers know that people are getting wiser about the effects of sugar. The message IS getting across, slowly but surely. So what do they do? They try to disguise the sugar by giving it different names.

Some of sugar's favorite aliases are: high fructose corn syrup, brown sugar, turbinado sugar, pasteurized honey, molasses, rice syrup, barley malt, sugarcane crystals, raw sugar, pure sugar, cane sugar, cane juice, evaporated cane juice, dry cane juice, maltodextrin, and all products ending in "ose," such as sucrose, dextrose, fructose, glucose and levulose.

Don't be fooled! Inside your body, these products all behave exactly like sugar and cause all of the same harmful effects.

## **SUGAR'S EFFECT ON THE IMMUNE SYSTEM**

Let's face it. We have become a society addicted to sugar. It's standard fare in our modern diet because it's so prevalent in the various foods we purchase at the grocery store. And, just because we can't taste sugar in our food doesn't mean that there isn't an abundance of sugar in it. That's why it's important to monitor our sugar intake by learning to read food labels and by eating more organic, raw foods rather than processed foods.

Various studies have shown that the consumption of large amounts of sugar can significantly affect the body's immune system. In fact, sugar, even in small quantities can suppress the immune system's functioning. And, when our immune system, as well as the body's other organs, glands, and systems are compromised by sugar, it can leave us vulnerable to a host of different conditions, illnesses, and diseases including the following:

- Diabetes
- Bacterial and yeast infections
- Hypoglycemia
- Premature aging
- Cancer
- Chronic fatigue
- Mineral deficiencies or imbalances in the body
- Obesity
- High cholesterol
- Arthritis
- Migraines
- Constipation

How does sugar break down the immune system? Simple sugars suppress the vitality of white blood cells and impede their ability to engulf harmful bacteria in the body. In fact, studies have shown that as sugar intake increases, the ability of white blood cells to destroy pathogens in the body decreases. In addition, sugar makes the blood more acidic, which, in turn, makes the body more vulnerable to viruses and bacteria. These are some of the reasons why people who consume large quantities of sugar are often plagued more frequently with colds, flu, and other infections. Just think about the amount of sugar that families consume around the fall holidays and you begin to understand why colds are so prevalent during that time of year.

Consider this fact: **a regular 12-ounce can of soda contains about 40 grams (over 7 teaspoons) of sugar.** When you add a normal meal, which contains other fats and carbohydrates to that soda, you can see why the statistics are showing that the average American consumes roughly three pounds of sugar a week.

Now consider that every time you consume sugar, you're impeding the functioning of your immune system. Even eating or drinking a small amount of sugar can cause the immune system to decline for several hours immediately after ingestion. For example, if you drink a couple of cans of soda, the amount of sugar from the soda can start to suppress your immune system as quickly as 30 minutes after consumption and can last up to five hours. When you think about the amount of sugar you ingest throughout the day, you begin to see the stress you're putting on your immune system, as well as your organs and other systems.

If you want to strengthen your immune system, start by minimizing your intake of processed sugars. Read food labels for words like dextrose, glucose, sucrose, maltodextrin, sorbitol, and high fructose corn syrup; all are indicators of a higher sugar content in the product. Also, detoxify your body regularly and eat more organic, live food—food that is provided by Mother Nature.

## HOW BIG OF A PROBLEM IS THIS?

Mike Adams, author, educator and self-proclaimed Health Ranger writes that “human researchers are fascinated by the behavior of lab rats in response to food rewards, but few humans are willing to closely examine their own behavior in relationship to sugar.”

Author Raymond Francis shares these startling facts and figures: “Since 1909, sugar consumption has increased by 70%. Americans now eat an average of about 150 pounds of sugar per year, up 25 pounds (20%) since 1970!” And that, “sugar makes up more than 25% of the average American's diet and up to 50% of some children's diets!”

It's no wonder that our health is degenerating. According to James Howenstine, MD, author of *A Physician's Guide to Natural Health Products that Work*, since 1980 the rate of diabetes has risen from just 2.8 people in every 100,000 to a whopping 10% of the total population!

If the thought of diabetes isn't enough, how about the fact that consuming sugar can actually have a negative effect on your love life? In her book *Food and Healing*, author Annemarie Colbin identified a link between sugary foods and sexual problems like impotence and premature ejaculation as well as unusual sexual behaviors and attitudes.

If reading all of this has finally turned you off sugar—great! But our job is not over. In order to give up sugar, you will need to deal with cravings, change your eating habits, and enrich your diet with vitamins, minerals, and other healthy practices.

Before we jump into the physical solutions, however, it's time to look at precisely HOW to make such life-altering changes—and how to make them stick.