

Minimizing Refined Sugars

In an Anticancer diet, foods and beverages high in simple sugars should be limited or even eliminated. When you want something sweet, try to reach for items with naturally occurring sugars, like fruit. Also, many vegetables, such as cut carrots, can satisfy a sweet tooth as well. Have them handy in the fridge, or bring them to work, for when your energy dips and you would otherwise be tempted to reach for something high in sugar.

Here are some helpful tips for reducing your sugar intake:

- Limit added sugar. Fuel your body with natural sugars from fruit, plain yogurt (plant-based or dairy), and whole grains. These foods will provide your body with the energy it needs without unnecessary added sugars.
- If you eat products with added sugar, try to combine them with protein, fat, or fiber. When sugar is consumed with other foods such as vegetables, fruits, fish, or healthy fats, the glucose is slowly released into the bloodstream, which minimizes spikes in insulin and IGF-1.
- Exercise. Exercise sensitizes cells to insulin, making them less resistant. Exercise also lowers IGF-1 by increasing a binding protein that acts like a magnet to IGF-1 and makes it less available to cancer cells for growth.
- Aim for a healthy weight. Those who are overweight and sedentary often become “insulin resistant,” meaning that insulin is no longer effective in circulating blood sugar into your cells. This results in higher levels of insulin and glucose in the blood, which can cause chronic inflammation.