

**FOOD FOR
THOUGHT**
FEBRUARY
2024

NEWSTART is an acronym for eight lifestyle principles. This month we will focus on Trust in God.

The LORD is my strength and my shield; My heart trusted in Him, and I am helped; Therefore my heart greatly rejoices, And with my song I will praise Him. Psalm 28:7.

The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the Lord shall be safe. Many seek the ruler's favor, But justice for man comes from the Lord. Proverbs 29:25, 26

You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. Isaiah 26:3

Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, and whose hope is the Lord. Jeremiah 17:7, 8

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Hebrews 11:6

N = NUTRITION

E = EXERCISE

W = WATER

S = SUNLIGHT

T = TEMPERANCE

A = AIR

R = REST

T = TRUST IN GOD

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If we will but listen, God's created works will teach us precious lessons of obedience and trust. From the stars that in their trackless course through space follow from age to age their appointed path, down to the minutest atom, the things of nature obey the Creator's will. And God cares for everything and sustains everything that He has created. He who upholds the unnumbered worlds throughout immensity, at the same time cares for the wants of the little brown sparrow that sings its humble song without fear; when men go forth to their daily toil, as when they engage in prayer; when they lie down at night and when they rise in the morning...each is tenderly watched by the heavenly Father. No tears are shed that God does not notice. There is no smile that He does not mark.

If we would but fully believe this, all undue anxieties would be dismissed. Our lives would not be so filled with disappointment as now; for everything, whether great or small, would be left in the hands of God, who is not perplexed by the multiplicity of cares, or overwhelmed by their weight. We should then enjoy a rest of soul to which many have long been strangers. Steps to Christ, Page 86

Our heavenly Father in love answers our prayers by giving us that which will be for our highest good—that which we ourselves would desire if with vision divinely enlightened, we could see all things as they really are. When our prayers seem not to be answered, we are to cling to the promise; for the time of answering will surely come, and we shall receive the blessing we need most. God is too wise to err, and too good to withhold any good thing from them that walk uprightly. Then do not fear to trust Him, even though you do not see the immediate answer to your prayers. Rely on His sure promise, "Ask, and it shall be given you." Steps to Christ, Page 96



Sugar and Other Sweeteners

What is Sugar?

Sugar is an umbrella term for many types of simple carbohydrates, including white table sugar. Also called sucrose; this is the most common sweetener used in sweet desserts, baked goods, and prepared/processed foods is refined sugar. While carbohydrates are essential macronutrients (nutrients the body uses in large amounts), sugar is not. Conventional sugar is made from sugar cane or sugar beet plant, which have a high concentration of sucrose, which is extracted and refined into table sugar:

- **White Refined (table sugar):** Sugar that has undergone a rigorous refinement process. It is available in different grains, such as coarse grain, granulated, and powdered/icing.
- **Brown Sugar:** White refined sugar that has had molasses added to it. Nothing more, nothing less.

Sources of Sugar

There's a big difference between added sugar and naturally occurring sugar. Much sugar is added to processed foods such as donuts, bread, candy, soda, fruit punch, sweet tea, and even condiments like ketchup and barbeque sauce. The result is that many people consume a large amount of added sugar that has no nutritional benefits. Too much added sugar can lead to health problems including high blood sugar, insulin resistance, metabolic syndrome, dental issues such as cavities, increased triglycerides, obesity and type 2 diabetes.

Sweeteners like fruit juice, honey, molasses, and maple syrup contain natural sugar and have nutritional benefits. Fruit has fiber, vitamins, and antioxidants. Even raw honey and maple syrup can contain antioxidants and minerals like iron, zinc, calcium, and potassium.

Sugar Substitutes

Sugar substitutes taste sweet but don't contain sugar. They have fewer calories than sugar, and some have no calories at all. Foods labeled "sugar-free," "keto," "low carb" or "diet" often contain sugar substitutes, which fall into three categories: artificial sweeteners, sugar alcohols and novel sweeteners.

Artificial Sweeteners

Most artificial sweeteners are created from chemicals in a lab. A few are made from natural substances like herbs. These sweeteners don't contain calories or sugar, but they also don't have beneficial nutrients like vitamins, fiber, minerals, or antioxidants. They are regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as food additives. Some experts believe that artificial sweeteners pose health hazards, from weight gain to cancer.

Sugar Alcohols

Like artificial sweeteners, sugar alcohols are created synthetically (typically from sugars themselves). Sugar alcohols are used in many processed foods. They're not as sweet as artificial sweeteners, and they add texture and taste to foods. Unlike other sugar substitutes, sugar alcohols must be listed on nutrition facts labels. Examples include: Erythritol, Isomalt, Lactitol, Maltitol, Sorbitol, and Xylitol.

Plant-Derived Noncaloric Sweeteners

Derived from natural sources, this relatively new group provides many of the benefits of both artificial and natural sweeteners like fruit or honey. They are not a significant source of calories or sugar, so they don't lead to weight gain or blood sugar spikes. They are also typically less processed and are more like their natural sources compared to artificial sweeteners. Examples include: Allulose, Monk fruit, Stevia, and Tagatose. Stevia and monk fruit are both naturally derived from plants and have a flavor very similar to regular sugar.

Should I eliminate sugar from my diet?

While eliminating all refined sugar and other refined foods (particularly foods made with refined white flour) from your diet is recommended, it is not necessary to remove fruits and whole grains that contain natural sugars. To reduce the refined sugars and make healthy choices about where sweetness in your foods is coming from:

- Consider a sugar substitute like Stevia.
- Increase whole foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, and seeds.
- Use whole fruit as a sweetener. Add a mashed banana to oatmeal, or blend dates into a smoothie.
- Read the nutrition facts label on food packages and avoid "healthy" foods that have added sugar, like granola or energy bars.

He would have fed them also with the finest of wheat; And with honey from the rock I would have satisfied you. Psalm 81:16