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How Fructose Can Clog Your Arteries



When it comes to keeping your heart in great shape, one of the most important factors to consider is your diet. The food you put into your body undoubtedly plays a crucial role in every aspect of your health—and that includes your cardiovascular system. In addition to adding heart-healthy foods to your plate every day, it's also important to limit your intake of harmful ingredients. And while there are some obvious foods to stay away from, such as greasy, fried food, there are some artery-clogging ingredients that could be sneaking their way into your diet and taking a toll on your heart.

To shed some light on one such ingredient, we touched base with nutritionist Mary Sabat. She told us that added sugars like fructose—the kind found in things like high-fructose corn syrup—is among the worst offenders. Read on for all of her expert insight regarding this sneaky, detrimental ingredient.

How fructose can clog your arteries

You likely already know about many of the health effects of sugar. It's well-known that consuming too much of this sweet ingredient can take a serious toll on your health. But did you know that fructose, in particular, which is found in many processed foods and beverages, could clog your arteries and raise your risk of heart disease? "When you consume too much fructose, it can lead to several adverse effects," Sabat warns.

For starters, she says that this type of added sugar could lead

to elevated levels of one type of fat, called triglycerides, in your blood. "High triglyceride levels are associated with a greater risk of atherosclerosis (the buildup of plaque in arteries)," she explains.

In addition to raising triglyceride levels and clogging your arteries, excessive fructose intake could also lead to insulin resistance. "This can result in higher blood sugar levels and an increased risk of type 2 diabetes, which is a risk factor for heart disease," Sabat says.

Finally, she points out, high fructose intake has been linked to an increased risk of hypertension (a.k.a. high blood pressure), which is another major issue that could contribute to heart problems.

To avoid running into these issues, Sabat recommends cutting back on sugary beverages (that includes fruit juice) and processed foods, and choosing whole fruits instead of sweetened snacks. It's also important to remember that moderation is key, which is to say that if you do indulge in a sweet treat every now and then, you shouldn't make a habit out of overindulging.

Ultimately, limiting your intake of added sugars like fructose is a great step towards a healthier heart and body overall. "It's essential to be mindful of sugar intake, choose healthier alternatives, and prioritize whole, unprocessed foods in your diet," Sabat concludes. Got it! *Story by Faith Geiger*

