

Sugar and the Immune System

Avoid white, refined sugar.

It has been documented that refined white sugar can suppress the immune system. In a study reported in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, as far back as 1977, reported the adverse effect that sugar has on the immune system. Blood was drawn from subjects and the activity of the white blood cells that neutralize viruses and bacteria was observed and calculated. The white blood cell activity was calculated before and after subjects were given various doses of sugar: 6, 12, 18 and 24 teaspoons, respectively. Each subsequently higher dose of sugar created a corresponding decrease in the activities of the subject's white blood cells. The group that had consumed the largest amount of sugar had essentially *no* functioning white blood cells within an hour after consuming the sugar. The immunosuppression occurred for up to two hours after consuming that sugar, but the adverse effects of no blood cell activity persisted in some for up to five hours.

REF: AM J Clin Nut 1977;30:613 "Depression of lymphocyte transformation following oral glucose ingestion."

Why is this important? White blood cells eliminate viruses and bacteria that invade our defenses. Without the efforts of those cells, susceptibility to infection is increased and recovering from infection can be stalled. Therefore, do not offer children with fevers Coca-Cola, 7-Up, or Ginger Ale for an upset tummy and ice cream to soothe a sore throat. Unaware, these hefty doses of sugar can further drag down the immune system at a time when it needs to be at its strongest.