

[IMAGE]

Zero Tolerance for Zero-Calorie?

By Editorial Staff

It sounds enticing enough, particularly for anyone trying to lose weight: *zero calorie*. Over the years, artificial sweeteners have emerged as the popular choice for people who want to prevent weight gain and diabetes without sacrificing the sweet taste of their favorite desserts and beverages. In fact, these days you'll find artificial sweeteners in a wide range of food and drink products including soft drinks, gum, candy, jelly, yogurt, breakfast cereals, baked goods and many other processed foods.

But is "zero calorie" all it's cracked up to be? According to new research, consuming zero-calorie artificial sweeteners may have the same impact as consuming good-old fashioned sugar. For the study, presented this month at the American Physiological Society's 2018 Experimental Biology meeting, researchers gave one group of mice sugar (glucose or fructose) and a second group zero-calorie artificial sweeteners: aspartame (sold under the brand names Equal and NutraSweet) or acesulfame potassium (sold as Sunett and Sweet One).

diet soda - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark In less than a month, the group given artificial sweeteners showed significant changes in their metabolism, particularly related to the processing of fat and energy. The researchers suggest these changes could increase the risk of obesity and diabetes in a similar fashion as that produced when consuming excess amounts of sugar.

This isn't the first study to suggest artificial sweeteners may negatively impact metabolism and how the body processes fat and energy. The moral to the story: Avoid consuming too much sugar, whether it's natural *or* artificial! Talk to your doctor about a low-sugar, balanced, nutritious diet that helps you maintain a healthy weight and avoid the health consequences associated with obesity.

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