

Many Americans are dying from a lack of knowledge, and you need not be one of them. What knowledge do we need to be sharing with our friends and love ones that could help them walk through this life with radiant health and free of the American killer disease?

Picture this, you are at your Wednesday prayer meeting. A member, lets call her Jill, ask for prayer. She is a plump woman in her mid-thirties and her three children are sitting with her in the front row seat. As a mom she is very concerned because she has chronic fatigue, is often irritable and depressed. Then Elizabeth asks for prayer, she is a high-strung secretary with a serious weight problem. She is overwhelmed with food cravings and feels her life is out of control. Jim also has a pray request, his two young boys go from excessive nervous activity to a state of lethargy. Their lack of attention span has become a problem in school and the principle wants them on medicine. Nick has a prayer request for himself as well as a friend. He suffers with rheumatoid arthritis and his friend is an alcoholic. Then there is Mary; she has just been diagnosis with cancer.

Does this sound familiar to you? We as a church body can and do offer prayer but are we missing out. Is there more that we should be doing? Do we have the knowledge to help them in any other way?

The names and faces change but these requests can be heard over and over everywhere we go. The United States has fallen on the international wellness list. The World Health organization has us as fortieth where as years ago we were on top. Statistics may not mean much until you see the faces of these very sick people asking for help. We are all victims of our food industry.

When refined sugar became available in the late 1800 our radiate health began to take a fast trip downhill. Sugar has been directly and indirectly implicated in a host of acute ailments and chronic diseases. If you are honest with yourself you CANNOT deny this. A great research physician Dr. Edgar Howell says in his book "Enzyme Nutrition", sugar is the greatest scourge that has ever been visited on man in the name of food. I believe it should be outlawed as a poison."

There is plenty of evidence of the damaging effect of sugar yet our lives just seems to be getting sweeter every day and we can't give it up! In 1822, the average American ate 2 teaspoons of sugar a day but by 1870 it had increased to 11 teaspoons a day. Then in the early 1900 people began to ingest 22 teaspoons a day, then 35 teaspoons in the 80's and now many of us are consuming 50 plus teaspoons a day, that's 150 pounds a year. We could easily be eating more then our weight in sugar every year.

Sugar has no nutrients, no fiber, absolutely no true food value. Sugar takes nutrients from our cells to be processed. It destroys cells and tissue, yet we still consume plenty of this sweet stuff. Why are we addicted to it? Sugar, like cocaine, is a plant extract reduced to a chemical state of purity. In the bloodstream sugar produces a brief high followed by a bottomed out low. Sugar and cocaine's main purpose is to produce a pleasant sensation. And yes, sugar is addictive.

Dr. Agatha Trash writes in *Nutrition for Vegetarians*, p. 39, “The list of physical and mental disorders related to sugar is formidable. Refined sugar has been shown to reduce the ability of white blood cells to function properly, to aggravate heart disease, to reduce life-span, and to contribute to alcoholism, mental illness, high blood pressure, skin diseases, and enlarged liver and kidneys.”

Dr. Donald Davis, a chemist at the University of California, fed rats a diet of sugar and processed foods and they developed a 50% greater craving for sugar and an 18% greater craving for alcohol than a controlled group.

Refined carbohydrates and sugars have been robbed of chromium, which is very important for pancreatic function. You also lose manganese, iron, cobalt, copper, zinc and many other trace elements, which are required for proper cell metabolism and growth.

Could our love for sugar be adding to our obesity problem? What do you think? Sugar can cause food cravings, but did you know that sugar could make the appetite control center go haywire. Studies show that addictive substances such as sugar, caffeine, and alcohol produce a chemical rush or reaction in the body that brings momentary pleasure. But the sad story goes on; there is a corresponding low, which often results in irritability, depression, fatigue and a strong sensory desire for that former high. So once again you reach for the sugary food to just repeat the damaging effects on all the cells, especially your brain. Do you see why we still eat plenty of sweets even though we may know how bad it is for us? Again, to remind you of the sad fact, sugar, like cocaine, is a plant extract reduced to a chemical state of purity. In the bloodstream, sugar produces a brief high followed by a bottomed out low. Both sugar and cocaine’s main purpose is to produce a pleasant sensation and yes, sugar can be addictive.

In their book, *The Hidden Addiction*, Jancie Keller Phelps, M.D. and Alan E. Nourse, M.D., discuss the addictive characteristic of sugar. Dr. Phelps bases her conclusions on clinical work with more than 10,000 drug addicts treated at her detoxification center in Seattle, Washington.

Dr. Phelps says: “All of the patients have two things in common: an addiction to sugar and an underlying depression. They begin as ‘sugarholics’ and graduated to the drug of their choice – more sugar, tobacco, caffeine, alcohol, prescribed drugs, street drugs, or a combination of these.

Dr. Calvin Thrash, preventive medicine specialist and cardiologist, explains the process in terms of brain chemistry. He says that when stimulants such as sugar and caffeine are taken into the body, the brain is stimulated to produce a hormone known as ACTH. This hormone stimulates the adrenals, which in turn caused hyper secretions of hormones and visceral stimulation. What this means is the body is charged artificially and then drained of energy, drained of B vitamins, calcium, and trace elements. If that were not bad enough it even gets worse. The entire immune system is knocked out for a period of time!

So, is that sweet break really worth it? You may think you are doing well when eating a salad for lunch but then you saturate it with a sugary dressing, you strike out again.

Simple sugars and refined carbohydrates like white flour, noodles, processed foods require little metabolism and enter the blood stream rapidly. This is the lift phase but then the crash comes. The pancreas, which regulates how much insulin is released, is caught off guard with this sudden surge of sugar. Thinking it has more work to do than it really does, the pancreas releases too much insulin. Insulin is important in processing starches and sugar, keeping the blood sugar at an even level. Because of the pancreas quick and aggressive response, there is a dramatic drop in blood sugar. Now one feels very lethargic, weak, mental fogginess and a false feeling of hunger. So you wonder why you cannot lose weight. Sugar causes weight gain, not merely because of its caloric content, but because it actually alters the metabolism, as well. A study published by the U.S. Department of Health shows when two groups were fed the exact same number of calories, but one group took its calories in sugar and refined products, while the other group consumes the calories in the form of whole grains, fruits, nuts, and vegetables, the sugar group gained weight, while the other group stayed the same and some even lost weight. Even sugary calories in a little snacks such as lifesavers eaten every day, can put 10 pounds on you in one year. So watch those sugary, carbohydrate, processed grains, they will cause you to gain weight but worse you will lose your health as well and your brain suffers too.

It is sad to realize that 50 plus % of the calories consumed by Americans today are empty, non-nutritional calories. We are overfed but undernourished American and only you can stop it.

Look around you, sugar is found nearly everywhere, in canned soups, potpies, TV dinners, bouillon, ketchup, salt, and canned vegetables. Consumer Union found Hot Cocoa Mix to be 82% sugar, coffee mate 65%, shake N bake 51%, Heinz Ketchup, 30%, Hamburger Helper, 23%, Cool Whip 21% and it goes on and on. We see it at all parties on everyone's dinner table, at all church functions. Also if you noticed on labels they are now calling sugar by different names, sucrose, dextrose, glucose, lactose, maltose, fructose, corn syrup, molasses – it is still sugar, calorie rich, void of nutrients, causes weight gain. Fifty percent of the American diet is made up of processed, concentrated calories, devoid of vital nutrients and valuable fiber, which get you nowhere, but overweight. Sugar and other refined sweeteners account for 21 percent of our daily calories.

Well what about the liquid sugar we are drinking? Soft drinks contain an average of 16 teaspoons of sugar per can and the average American consumes an unbelievable 547 sodas every year, according to the Beverage Marketing Corporation. Are you one of these average Americans? Only YOU can make a change.

We all like chocolate cake – one slice has fifteen teaspoons of sugar. One cup of frozen yogurt, twelve teaspoons, Jello is 83% sugar. You can buy the unflavored Jello and add

this to fruit juice, add fresh fruit and you have a great cool dessert for this hot summer afternoon.

Most kids today start their day with a bowl of cereal, and hidden inside the average box of pre-sweetened cereal is up to ½ pound of sugar. Your child is getting a bowl full of processed carbohydrates full of sugar to start his day. Teachers end up with a classroom of these kids and very little learning is accomplished.

Our love of chocolate is everywhere – chocolate milk shakes has 10-12 teaspoons of sugar, a hot fudge sundae has 16-17 teaspoons of sugar. What is really surprising is that a sweet pickle could have soaked up as much as 7 teaspoons of sugar from the sweetened juice it is preserved in.

Our healthy white blood cells are hurting from all these assaults of sugar and processed grains. Sugar affects the ability of the white blood cells to destroy bacteria. How does this happen? Well, one healthy white blood cell is designed to kill 14 invading bugs, or pathogens, in its life cycle. Six teaspoons of sugar reduce the white blood cell's ability to fight these pathogens by 25%. That means it can now kill only ten bugs in its lifetime.

Twelve teaspoons of sugar, which is less than one can of soda, reduces the killing capacity by 60%, now it can destroy only five pathogens. Eighteen teaspoons, which is the content of one hot fudge Sunday, weaken the white blood cell by a dramatic 85%. Now it can surround and destroy only two invading bacteria.

Twenty-four teaspoons of your sweet indulgent robs the white blood cell of 92% of its strength leaving it virtually power less and able to destroy just one invader. In other words, just two 12 ounce cans of soda, or a few bowls of box sugary cereal, will effectively destroy 92% of your ability to fight off disease for quite some time.

If you are average and consuming 42 teaspoons of sugar a day, your immune system is seriously compromised and it will remain this way for a period of about 12 hours after each sugary food.

Our defenses do not have a chance. Just about the time they are recouping, we send another sugaring snack to wipe them out again. Many Americans are eating something sweet every two or three hours all throughout the day. It is just amazing to me how well God designed the body to make adjustments for these assaults. Yet, eventually it will catch up with us and then you will be one of those asking for prayer.

When you compromise your immune system by 92% in the case of a person consuming 24 teaspoons of sugar a day, your immune system is operating on the same level of disease-fighting efficiency of an uncontrolled diabetic.

Not only that, when a simple sugar is broken down by the body, the results are far different from what takes place with a complex carbohydrate. A by-product sugar ingestion is a fatty acid or tri-glyceride. That's right, elevated tri-glyceride levels can be

reduced simply by reducing your refined food intake. That is some good news. How simple would that be, eat right, get rid of the responses your body is making from your poor decisions. You have only one body, take care of it, for God has work for you.

Are there any artificial sweeteners that are safe? No, no, and no! Even splenda is not good to consume. Stevia can be used to sweeten your teas but when you really desire a sweet treat, reach for a delicious fruit.