

Sugar hit sure to KO best diets

Paddy Hintz

PEOPLE who consistently have trouble losing weight might have too much sugar in their diet, Gold Coast-based nutrition expert Amanda Clark says.

After portion control, monitoring sugar intake was the next most important step in getting to and maintaining a healthy weight range, Ms Clark said.

"I don't think sugar is so much the problem, on its own, but the increase in the portion size of foods containing sugar and how often we are now eating them is," Ms Clark said.

"If these foods were restricted to parties and special occasions, like they

used to be, there wouldn't be so much of a problem.

"But we are now eating more of these foods every day instead of just at special occasions."

Dietitians from Diabetics Australia - Queensland say people should focus on the total amount of sugar in the foods they ate but it was a myth that sugar alone caused diabetes.

When checking the label, if sugar is one of the first three ingredients, it is best to avoid that food or save it for a special occasion.

Ms Clark said high-sugar foods caused insulin levels to rise in the body

and made it hard for some people to lose weight.

Insulin controlled blood glucose but also determined what fuel was used for energy.

She said no more than 15 per cent of the daily calorie intake should come from sugars such as white sugar, raw sugar, brown sugar, honey and glucose.

The daily recommended intake for women was 12 teaspoons of these types of sugars, 16 teaspoons for men, and seven teaspoons for children.

Brisbane-based dietitian Julie Gilbert said most people did not realise that sugar-like carbohydrates were present in a range of

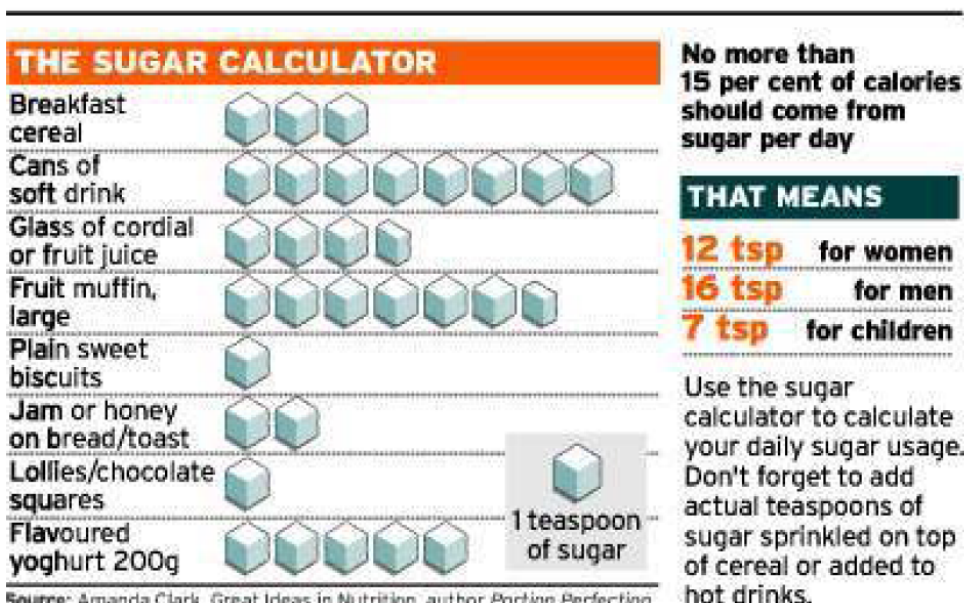
food.

"People don't realise low-fat milk contains kilojoules. But milk has lactose which is a type of sugar."

Those trying to lose weight who thought they were on a healthy diet often did not realise that eating five pieces of fruit a day would increase their sugar content markedly because of its fructose.

The sugar content of an apple was equivalent to a cream biscuit.

"We're not saying don't eat fruit, but just be aware of the sugar content of that fruit," she said.



BEWARE HOW SWEET IT IS

■ Be aware of the types of sugar, including fructose, glucose, lactose, in the foods that you eat.

■ Read the back of food labels. Sugar is a type of carbohydrate and a total daily intake of 60-90g of carbohydrate is recommended. A teaspoon of sugar measures 5g.

■ Be wary of products such as yoghurt which claim they are 99 per cent fat free. Often these have a high sugar content which can be read on the back of the label.

■ Be aware that nutritional content of food products listed on packaging are listed per serving size and often these products will be more than one serving size.

■ Ski D'Lite and Nestle Low Fat yoghurts are products which are high in sugar.

■ Breakfast cereals can be hidden culprits containing sugar. Highly coloured children's cereals are the worst offenders. Weetbix and rolled oats do not contain added sugar.

Source: Julie Gilbert, Solutions Food Management

