
WHAT ABOUT “NEW” SWEETENERS SUCH AS STEVIA, XYLITOL, MONK FRUIT, AND ERYTHRITOL?

Stevia is not a sugar per se, as it does not raise blood sugar levels. The active compound, steviol glycosides, is up to 150 times sweeter than sugar. Historically, women in South America used large amounts of stevia as a natural contraceptive and in some women I've worked with who have eliminated all forms of sugar but used stevia generously had had their periods stop. Like with all things in life, moderation is key (even when it comes to cutting out sugar) and consuming stevia in large amounts is not a path to health. It's fine as a temporary solution for women who are going through the anti-Candida diet, who have fluctuating sugar levels or are working on reversing insulin resistance and PCOS. Other than that, enjoy the sweeteners in the left column of the table, in moderation.

Alcohol sugars such as xylitol, sorbitol, mannitol, and erythritol have become popular as low caloric and low-GI/GL sweeteners. There is little research available today to fully know their safety; some short-term studies state improvement of blood [sugar levels](#) and others report that some people develop digestive problems such as bloating, diarrhea, and gas. They can also contribute to pathogenic bacterial growth in the [gut](#). I do not recommend using them on a daily basis.

Monk fruit (also known as lo han) has favor recently. Studies show that monk fruit can lower blood sugar levels and cholesterol. However, the monk fruit products I have found on the market are either combined with erythritol, a sugar alcohol, or inulin, a type of fiber, which are both not suitable for many people with digestive problems. If you can tolerate it, monk fruit is a good option during the anti-candida diet.

Choose Low-Sugar Foods

I am often asked: "should I stop eating all fruit to avoid fructose?" The answer is no. Cut out all processed forms of fructose (or the likes of high fructose corn syrup and agave syrup) and be mindful of how much fruit you consume and how it impacts you. With the latest "health trend" of commercially made smoothies, juices and energy bars, it is much easier to load up on fructose than you think. To help you navigate the shopping aisles, **the below table should help.**

HORMONES & BALANCE SUGAR GUIDE

PRODUCT	WHAT TO LOOK FOR	HOW TO SUBSTITUTE
Power bars and protein bars	Many contain as much as 20-30 grams or 5 - 7.5 teaspoons of sugar per bar. Check for sugar content and pick the lowest. The amount of protein matters as it helps to even your sugar levels, so the more the better. The first ingredient must be real food. Avoid long lists of additives and preservatives. No gluten, soy and dairy. No "partially" or "isolated" anything. No HFCS, corn syrup, sugar alcohols or artificial sweeteners. No agave. First ingredient must be real food.	Switch to savory snacks like beef, turkey or buffalo jerky, crackers, flax seed crackers with hummus, or real food like a sliced apple with nut butter. If purchasing ready-made, consider these low-sugar, organic and unprocessed brands: Epic (paleo), Tanka (paleo), CORE Bar (raw), Health Warrior, and GoRaw.
Cereals	Stop eating them altogether. Raw grains like oats are hard to digest. Skip pre-cooked grains like quick oats, quinoa puffs, rice puffs or amaranth puffs to avoid sugar spikes.	If you like grains for breakfast, stick to whole grains like steel cut oats (if you pre-soak them overnight, they cook quickly), teff grain (high in protein content and vitamin B1), amaranth (high in protein, iron and magnesium). Whole grains won't create sugar spikes and will sustain you longer.
Juices	Avoid juices made with fruit and sweet root vegetables like carrots and beetroot, which can contain as much as 7 to 8 teaspoons of sugar in an 8 ounce glass.	Look for or make 30% fruit and 70% vegetable juices that use celery, fennel bulb, spinach, kale, cucumber, or zucchini. When at a juice bar, ask for a juice with reduced fruit content.
Smoothies	Most smoothies contain too much sugar from common fruit like banana, mango, pineapple and added sugars.	Opt for smoothies containing low-sugar containing fruit like berries and fatty fruit like avocado. Add plenty on protein to avoid sugar spikes, like nuts and seeds. Add a pinch of salt to bring out the sweetness.
Lattes	Lattes often seem like liquid ice-cream with cookies, topped with a bit of coffee! Lattes at the leading coffee chains contain as much as 20 to 40 teaspoons of sugar.	Make your own lattes. They are simple and delicious. Check out the Drinks, Teas and Tonics chapter on p.XXX for recipes.
Kombucha	Touted as the next health drink, it can contain as much as sugar as some of the unhealthy drinks. Many people with Candida yeast overgrowth have a problem with kombucha due to its high yeast content, which feeds the overgrowth.	Pick brands that have longer fermentation process and hence a reduced sugar content. If kombucha makes you dizzy, bloated, slightly high or you burp it, switch to other fermented drinks or stop drinking it.

These recommendations are based on my current evaluation of common products. Note that companies re-formulate their products (most often making them less healthful), so you need to do your own investigation when stocking up.