

Higher amounts of added sugars increase heart disease risk factors

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Added sugars in processed foods and beverages may increase cardiovascular disease risk factors, according to a study by Emory University researchers.

The study, published in the April 20, 2010, issue of the [Journal of the American Medical Association \(JAMA\)](#), analyzed U.S. government nutritional data and blood lipid levels in more than 6,000 adult men and women between 1999 and 2006. The study subjects were divided into five groups according to the amount of added [sugar](#) and caloric sweeteners they consumed daily.

Researchers found that people who consumed more added sugar were more likely to have higher [cardiovascular disease](#) risk factors, including higher triglyceride levels and higher ratios of triglycerides to HDL-C, or good [cholesterol](#).

"Just like eating a high-fat diet can increase your levels of triglycerides and high cholesterol, eating sugar can also affect those same lipids," says study co-author Miriam Vos, MD, MSPH, assistant professor of pediatrics, Emory School of Medicine.

In the United States, total consumption of sugar has increased substantially in recent decades, largely due to an increased intake of 'added sugars,' defined as caloric sweeteners used by the food industry and consumers as ingredients in processed or prepared foods to increase the desirability of these foods," Vos and colleagues note.

In the *JAMA* study, the highest-consuming group consumed an average of 46 teaspoons of added sugars per day. The lowest-consuming group consumed an average of only about 3 teaspoons daily.

"It would be important for long-term health for people to start looking at how much added sugar they're getting and finding ways to reduce that," says Vos.

The study, "Caloric Sweetener Consumption and Dyslipidemia Among U.S. Adults," was published in the April 20, 2010, issue of *JAMA*. It is the first study of its kind to examine the association between the consumption of added sugars and lipid measures, such as HDL-C, triglycerides and low-density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL-C). The study did not look at natural sugars found in fruit and fruit juices, only added sugars and caloric sweeteners.

More information: The study is available online at jama.ama-assn.org/

Provided by Emory University

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