

# Nutrition E-Bites

## Summer 2023

### July & August Edition

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As we embrace the summer months and battle with the (occasional) heat and humidity, taking the time to rest, relax and recharge is crucial! If you already had the opportunity to escape to a European getaway, visit a cottage, or enjoy an all inclusive trip, we hope that the **June newsletter** helped you in keeping healthy eating a priority.

With the summer heat, comes summer drinks! The phrase "rethink your drink" has come up before in our newsletters, with a focus on keeping hydrated with water, first and foremost. Iced coffees, beers, smoothies, slushies, cocktails and mocktails are hard to resist in this heat, especially when you are sitting by the water or on a patio with your family and friends. As always, moderation is key, and making small substitutions can go a long way, without compromising on the taste and the fun.

If you have been enjoying the summer time so far, you may have missed the press releases and media talking about emerging evidence and information on sweeteners (sugar alternatives).

This newsletter will focus on keeping you up to date on the new information about sweeteners, and what exactly it all means for you!

We hope you enjoy our Summer Newsletter edition and we wish you a safe and healthy rest of summer.

*Cheers,*  
Filomena & Gabriella, Registered Dietitians

P.S. – Don't forget to join our **Sept 9th Full-Day Wellness Retreat** at Kingbridge Centre in King City Ontario. From nutrition wellness seminars to fitness & movement activities (yoga, full body) to meditation and nature walks, we will help you **FIND YOUR BALANCE** towards health and wellness and hope you will disconnect with us on Sept 9th.

Follow the **EVENTBRITE LINK** [CLICK HERE](#) to register or find out more info! Hope you can join us!

## Aspartame: a Possible Carcinogen?

Aspartame, an artificial sweetener, that is known to be 200 times sweeter than sugar, is found in many products on the shelves in our grocery stores, including, but not limited to, diet sodas.

Recently, the World Health Organization released information about aspartame as a possible carcinogen (cancer causing), specifically liver cancer.

Given the wide spread use of aspartame and the popularity of diet sodas, this recent headline and research has caused a great amount of confusion and frustration among the general population.

*What's worse for you—aspartame or sugar?  
Do I need to cut out diet soda all together?  
What is too much aspartame? And how do I know?*

Check out the video below to learn more about the information released and some of the answers to your top burning questions...



**The National** 

[Click here to read more about this study](#)



**After the World Health Organization released the new information about aspartame, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics made a follow-up statement <sup>(1)</sup>:**

"The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics believes scientific research and evidence-based practice form the basis for healthful-eating recommendations and supports an

individualized approach to helping people reach their nutrition and physical fitness goals.

The newly released assessments of the health impacts of the non-nutritive sweetener aspartame cite "limited evidence" that the sugar substitute is a cancer-causing agent in humans and the Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives reaffirmed the acceptable daily intake of 40 mg/kg body weight. Nevertheless, the International Agency for Research on Cancer has now classified aspartame as "possibly carcinogenic to humans.

The Academy will continue to support the recommendations of registered dietitian nutritionists, the food and nutrition experts, who accept the use of non-nutritive sweeteners, including aspartame, by their patients and clients within accepted daily limits until further evidence can be generated.

*No one ingredient or food increases cancer risk. It's the amounts and patterns of food consumed over time, along with other genetic and lifestyle factors, that influences health risk."*

## What does this mean to you?

While we recommend you keep to non-caloric beverages such as water, naturally flavoured water/carbonated water beverages most of the time, consuming beverages that are artificially sweetened such as those with aspartame is generally recognized as "safe" up to 40 mg per kg of body weight per day — the amount found in 9 to 14 diet soft drinks according to the FDA. The disagreement between the WHO/IARC and the FDA is causing confusion among the general public which is unfortunate. Until there is more conclusive evidence, the decision remains with you! If you enjoy small quantities of these other beverages that is your choice. Our recommendation remains to make water your drink of choice most of the time!

## Sucralose: Gut Health Problems?

The Journal of Toxicology and Environmental Health released an article in May 2023, looking at the impact on sucralose (most commonly known as the artificial sweetener, Splenda).



*In part, researchers found that:*

"Sucralose causes DNA to break apart, putting people at risk for disease. They also linked sucralose to leaky gut syndrome, which means the lining of the intestines are worn down and become permeable. Symptoms are a burning sensation, painful digestion, diarrhea, gas, and bloating."<sup>(2)</sup>

[Click here to read more about this study](#)

## Non-Sugar Sweeteners & Weight Control

"The World Health Organization (WHO) has released a new guideline on non-sugar sweeteners (NSS), which recommends **against the use of NSS to control body weight or reduce the risk of noncommunicable diseases**"<sup>(3)</sup>



"Replacing free sugars with NSS does not help with weight control in the long term. **People need to consider other ways to reduce free sugars intake, such as consuming food with naturally occurring sugars, like fruit, or unsweetened food and beverages**, says Francesco Branca, WHO Director for Nutrition and Food Safety." <sup>(3)</sup>

[Click here to read more about this guideline](#)

## So, what does this all mean for me?

While new research and studies is important for science and the growing field of nutrition, there is no doubt that this can add another layer of confusion. *Here are two take away points that hopefully keep you at ease and put things into perspective:*



- More research that incorporates higher quality research standards is needed to gain a better understanding of harm and risk. When you read or hear about new evidence, it always best to be a critical thinker! Reach out to your Registered Dietitian for clarity on new research and information shared in the media, to discuss its validity and how it relates to you and your dietary plan.
- As mentioned many times before, **moderation and balance is key**. One or two diet soda's a day is likely not problematic. However, if you find yourself consuming a number of foods and beverages that are filled with sweeteners (and/or sugar for that matter) on a daily basis, think about long lasting dietary changes that can be made to benefit your overall health. Sweeteners provide no nutritional value, so if there is a more healthful way to naturally sweeten or flavour an item that you enjoy, it's a great idea to try it out. Below are some great recipe ideas for you!

## Recipes to Help You Beat the Heat

By Cookspiration

[Click on the image for the recipe](#)



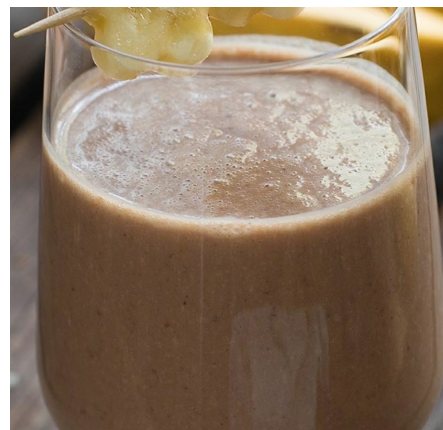
**Tropical Cooler**



**Grape Juice Sangria**



**Citrus Berry Shake with  
Lentils**



**Banana Split Smoothie**



**Green Lentil Power Smoothie**



**Frozen Tropical Vacation  
Pops**



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2. Medscape. Sucralose damages DNA, Linked to Leaky Gut: Study. Retrieved from: [https://www.medscape.com/s/viewarticle/992667?ecd=mkm\\_ret\\_230707\\_mscpmrk-OUS\\_Monthly\\_CA\\_etid5607526&uac=241866DK&impID=5607526](https://www.medscape.com/s/viewarticle/992667?ecd=mkm_ret_230707_mscpmrk-OUS_Monthly_CA_etid5607526&uac=241866DK&impID=5607526)
3. World Health Organization. HO advises not to use non-sugar sweeteners for weight control in newly released guideline. Retrieved from: <https://www.who.int/news/item/15-05-2023-who-advises-not-to-use-non-sugar-sweeteners-for-weight-control-in-newly-released-guideline>
4. Image of coffee cup. Retrieved from: <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/who-advises-not-to-use-non-sugar-sweeteners-for-weight-control-in-newly-released-guideline>

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