

HEALTHY EATING GUIDES

# HOW & WHY TO GO ON A DETOX

By The American Institute of Health Care Professionals, Inc.

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## How and Why to Go On an Alcohol and Soda Detox

Two of the most popular drinks out there include soda and alcoholic beverages. Go to any party and you will find people drinking one or the other. People who are unable to drink alcohol, either because they do not like it or because they have to drive, immediately gravitate towards soda.

Nearly half of all Americans drink soda on a daily basis. Meanwhile, over half of all Americans regularly drink alcohol. But, both soda and alcohol are not good for us at all. Both have numerous negative effects on a person's health and both can be responsible for taking years off someone's life. So, there is a good reason to go on both a soda and an alcohol detox. We are going to explain the various negative health effects associated with each and explain how you should go about avoiding partaking in each.

### Negative Health Effects of Soda

Soda has a huge variety of negative health effects. Here are just a few of the main ones.

#### Obesity

By far the biggest health issue associated with soda is the fact that it is just so fattening. Now, will soda alone make you obese? Probably not, if you eat well and exercise, then a single soda a day will not make you obese. But, soda is so pervasive in our culture that many people do not just limit themselves to one soda a day. Some people will have a soda with lunch (this is especially true if they go out to eat for lunch), then they will proceed to have one when they eat dinner.

Likewise, soda is sold in so many places, it is at every super market checkout, every movie theatre, etc. This would not be so damaging if soda had some nutritional value, but it does not, it is just empty calories. A can of soda only has around 150 calories in it, which may not seem like much, but remember that it adds up over time, and it comes with no fiber or other nutritional goodness. Some nutritionists estimate that drinking one can of soda a day adds up to a whopping 15 extra pounds over the course of a year.

The addition of soda to a meal can make a meal that is already unhealthy and fattening even more so. So, while soda alone may not make you obese, it certainly does not help and cutting out soda can potentially help a person lose upwards of 15 extra pounds a year.

## Diabetes

One of the biggest issues with soda is that it can lead to an increased risk of developing type-2 diabetes. Those with type-2 diabetes suffer from high blood sugar levels and low insulin levels (insulin helps regulate your body's absorption of protein, fats, and carbs, which makes it extremely important). Unlike type-1 diabetes, which is caused almost entirely by genetics, type-2 diabetes can be caused by a variety of factors, including poor diet.

Now, is soda alone enough to increase your chances of developing type-2 diabetes? Shockingly, researchers seem to think so. For example, one study found that those who drank soda regularly were almost 20% more likely to develop type-2 diabetes when compared with those who did not drink any soda. The study also controlled for the various other factors that can increase the risk of developing type-2 diabetes, such as obesity, age, gender, etc.

## Tooth Decay

If you value oral hygiene and the health of your teeth, then drinking soda is one of the worst things that you can do. Soda is full of chemicals and sugar that wear down your enamel (the protective surface of your teeth). After your enamel becomes sufficiently worn down, your teeth become more vulnerable to things erosion and cavities.

**This study** looked at a man who drank soda for a period of 7 years, and it looked at just how much damage large amounts of soda consumption did to his teeth. The study found that consumption of soda over a 7-year period did serious damage to his enamel and resulted in increased amounts of tooth decay. Of course, practicing proper oral hygiene can help reduce the amount of damage done to the teeth, but the soda will still do some serious damage, no matter how often you brush and floss.

## Negative Health Effects of Alcohol

Much like soda, alcoholic drinks also have a variety of negative health effects.

### Liver Health Issues

As we all know, alcohol does serious damage to people's livers. People who drink alcohol regularly are more at risk of developing liver cancer, as well as other issues like cirrhosis, which interferes with the ability of the liver to do its various jobs. Now, normally we associate liver issues with people who are heavy drinkers or full-blown alcoholics, but even casual drinkers are still doing damage to their livers.

### Obesity

Beer is not often cited as a cause of obesity, but it can actually be extremely fattening. Beer is full of very fattening ingredients like barley, hops, etc. While it is nowhere near as fattening as soda or other very sugary drinks, it can still be very bad for your waistline.

It isn't just about the ingredients, though, it's about the way your body metabolizes alcohol. We have all heard of the infamous "beer bellies" that some people develop. Well, there is actually scientific backing for the idea that beer makes you fatter. [This article](#) explains how beer causes your waistline to expand because the liver is busy burning alcohol instead of fat.

### Alcohol Induced Accidents

Alcohol, even small amounts, can have negative impacts on things like your decision making and your motor skills. Although you can have a few beers and still legally drive, your reaction times and decision-making skills will be seriously reduced; which of course, makes driving much more difficult. Now, we all know that drunk driving is an issue, but even doing mundane things like chopping food is dangerous while intoxicated.

## How to Give Them Up

While it may sound easy to give up soda and alcohol, it is much harder to do it in reality. As we have already mentioned, soda and alcohol are everywhere and it can be hard to avoid them – not to mention the fact that they are both addictive. But, there are some things you can do.

### Be Careful When You Eat Out

Restaurants go all-out in order to sell you drinks like soda and alcohol. They do not make money off giving people water to drink, so they try to sell you on beer, wine, and soda. You can avoid eating out altogether, but that isn't really practical for most people. Instead, make a plan before you go. Tell companions in advance that you are cutting out alcohol so they don't try to pressure you. Then look for healthy alternatives on the menu, like herbal tea or mineral water.

### Try Some Alternatives

A big reason why people turn to soda or alcohol is that they want something to sip on that is not water. This is understandable as water can be a bit boring. The good news is that the more you get used to drinking water, the more you can feel the benefits and actually grow to like it. If not, there are still other things you can try.

One simple switch could be sparkling water, which has all the benefits of water, but with added carbonation. You could even mix this with a bit of juice to trick yourself that it's soda (although it'll be a lot less sweet!) Fruit juice itself may seem like a good substitute, but it is high in sugar and has many of the same negative effects that soda does. Another idea is to try infusing your water with a variety of ingredients – berries, lemon, cucumber etc. You'd be surprised at how flavorsome they can be!

### Go on a Fixed-Term Detox

Sometimes the only way to break a habit is to go cold turkey! Many people do this after the holiday period by giving up alcohol for the entire month of January. You can pick some dates and do the same sort of thing. You'll usually find it hard at first, but then it becomes your new normal. It's a great way to break bad habits.

## How and Why to Go On an Fried Food Detox

Fried foods are a staple of American cuisine and are a prominent feature in a lot of fast food restaurants. Fried chicken, French fries, onion rings, potato chips, even desserts are now often fried, things like fried cheesecake and fried chocolate bars are becoming popular. So, needless to say, we love our fried foods. But, are the fried foods good for us? Well, we all know the answer to that!

Fried foods, while delicious, are rarely, if ever good for you. Sure, depending on what is being fried they are not terrible for your health, but generally fried foods that are popular, like fries, chicken, etc., are absolutely awful for your health. In this article, we are going to explain why you should get fast food out of your diet and how you should go about doing that.

### Negative Health Effects of Fried Foods

#### Increased Risk of Type-2 Diabetes

We have long known that poor diet contributes to type-2 diabetes. Although fried foods are usually a big part of a poor diet, they are not usually singled out as the cause of type-2 diabetes. However, research shows that the oils used in fried foods can increase a person's risk of developing type-2 diabetes.

**The study** from Harvard shows that the increase is extremely significant. People who ate fried food at least 4 times a week had a nearly 40% higher chance of developing type-2 diabetes. Those who ate fried food at least 7 times a week experienced a whopping 55% higher chance of developing type-2 diabetes.

#### Increased Risk of Heart Disease

Heart disease is one of the biggest killers out there, especially in countries with obesity issues, and fried foods contribute to this. The actual food itself that is being fried is not the issue. For example, chicken, on its own, is actually very good for you. Heart healthy diets that are aimed at lowering cholesterol often include chicken breast as one of their main meals.

However, the reason fried foods contribute to heart disease is because of the oils that they are fried in. The oils get absorbed into the food, which adds extra calories and extra fat. The oil that a lot of restaurants use to fry their food is full of saturated fats, which can lead to a massive increase in a person's LDL cholesterol level (that's the bad cholesterol that you want to avoid). Some restaurants will attempt to get around this by using healthier oils, like vegetable oil, but there really is no way to make fried foods healthy. Eating fried foods consistently will result in your cholesterol levels rising, which can then result in strokes and heart attacks.

## Increased Risk of Obesity

When food is fried in oil, it absorbs excess calories from the oil (as mentioned above). This means that fried foods are a lot more fattening than regular, non-fried foods. Consistently eating fatty foods is an easy way to quickly become overweight.

Being overweight or, even worse, obese is terrible for your health. You will have higher blood pressure and higher cholesterol, both of which can lead to heart attacks and strokes. Being obese can also put tremendous strain on your joints. Being overweight also increases your risk of developing various kinds of cancer, including stomach cancer, liver cancer, and many other cancers that can infect the digestive system.

## Lack of Nutrients

One of the primary reasons why we eat food is to get the nutrients and vitamins that we need to live. Well, frying food basically removes all the nutrients that you would normally find in food. You can often justify eating food that is high in calories if it also happens to be high in nutrients as well. But, frying food basically turns it into empty calories. You will not be getting all the various nutrients that you normally would from vegetables and meat. For those who eat a lot of fried foods, they will not be getting the amount of nutrients that their body's need.

## How to Avoid Fried Foods

Alright, so now that we have covered just some of the many reasons why fried food is bad for you, how do we cut down on how much we eat when it's so delicious?

Avoiding eating fried foods may sound very easy, but in reality, it is quite difficult depending on your lifestyle. As we said earlier, fried foods are everywhere. They are in lots of restaurants, they are in all fast food joints, and they are in lots of grocery stores. Nonetheless, here are some good strategies you can use to help cut fried food out of your life.

## Understand That Fried Foods Are Addictive

The first thing you need to know is that fried foods really can be addictive. They are salty and high in fat, and over time our body will crave that food because it has become used to it. Knowing this can help you break the cycle.

Try to notice why and when you are eating fried foods. Is it a response to an emotion, or maybe even boredom? Knowing this can help you be more mindful of what you're eating, and gradually cut it down.

## Learn More Exciting Ways of Cooking Food

One big reason why so many people gravitate towards fried food is that they do not know better ways of cooking food. Fried food is so delicious that it can be difficult for an inexperienced cook to find more delicious ways of preparing things like potatoes and chicken. But, there are plenty of great ways of preparing food items like this without resorting to frying them.

For example, chicken breast that has been grilled to perfection tastes just as great as fried chicken. Likewise, you can steam or bake potatoes to go on the side instead of cutting them up and frying them. With the internet, there are literally millions of healthy recipes out there that are completely free. So, you never have an excuse to fry food, when you can find plenty of better ways of cooking online for free.

## Avoid Certain Restaurants

One of the primary reasons why we eat food is to get the nutrients and vitamins that we need to live. Well, frying food basically removes all the nutrients that you would normally find in food. You can often justify eating food that is high in calories if it also happens to be high in nutrients as well. But, frying food basically turns it into empty calories. You will not be getting all the various nutrients that you normally would from vegetables and meat. For those who eat a lot of fried foods, they will not be getting the amount of nutrients that their body's need.

## Picture Rewards and Consequences

A very effective strategy for those attempting to stop indulging in harmful things is to visualize the potential rewards that you will reap when you finally succeed in cutting something out of your diet. But, you also need to visualize the potential consequences as well, to remind yourself about what happens if you fail.

In the case of fried foods, think about how much better you will feel, think about how much thinner you will be, and think about how many years will be added onto your lifespan. Likewise, also try to visualize what will happen if you do not succeed in cutting out fried foods. Visualize yourself getting bigger, visualize yourself suffering from high cholesterol or high blood pressure, etc. It may sound a bit grim, but it is important that you are able to know both the potential rewards and the potential downfalls.

And, once you actually start cutting back on fried food, really think about how it makes you feel. Chances are fried food wasn't making you feel at your best. You may have more energy, more focus and simply just feel better now that you're eating less of it.

## How and Why to Go On an Processed Foods Detox

Processed foods are extremely common in grocery stores all throughout the world. Lots of people these days lack the time to cook meals from scratch from fresh ingredients, so they instead decide to buy processed foods.

Processed foods are a wide category that encompasses a variety of foods. When people hear the phrase “processed foods” they instantly think of processed meals that you microwave and eat. However, those are not the only processed foods that people consume regularly. For example, high fructose corn syrup is a processed replacement for sugar and it is regularly used in a variety of products as a replacement for natural sugar.

In this article, we are going to explain why you should go on a processed foods detox and how you should go about cutting processed foods out of your diet.

### Negative Health Effects of Processed Foods

#### Lack of Nutrients

Eating processed foods every once in a while is not going to cause any nutritional deficiencies in a person. But, not everyone eats them once in a while, many people regularly eat processed foods, it forms a major part of their diet.

This is problematic because processed foods are lacking in nutrients and vitamins. We need nutrients and vitamins like fiber, vitamins A-D, calcium, protein, etc., to live. However, the cooking process prepackaged meals go through tends to result in them losing many of the nutrients and vitamins that are in the food. Processed vegetables, for example, will lose a huge amount of the nutrients that you would normally expect to find in those vegetables. Certain foods have to be cooked in specific ways to avoid losing their nutritional value; unfortunately, most processed meals are cooked in such a way that the food loses its nutritional value.

#### More Trans Fats

Processed foods often use oils, specifically cheap oils that are full of trans fats. Most everyone out there should by now know about the dangers of trans fats. They cause increases in cholesterol levels and they drastically increase your risk of coronary artery disease. Eating trans fats regularly is a surefire way to increase your risk of stroke and heart attack. Plenty of companies are trying to market their products as trans fat-free, but plenty of processed foods still contain them.

## More Weight Gain

Eating processed food regularly will result in you gaining more weight than someone who sticks with fresh food. This is not because processed food somehow magically has more calories. Instead, it is because processed foods often taste worse than their fresh equivalents, processed food manufacturers often load their food up with salt and other additives to give it more taste. The problem is that these additives can be very addictive and make you crave more. Which then leads to you over eating.

Another reason why processed foods lead to you gaining more weight is because they leave you feeling less full. They tend to be full of carbs which are very easily broken down, which means that you feel full for a few hours after eating, but then you quickly become hungry again.

## Increased Risk of Cancer

Certain processed foods increase your risks of developing cancer, specifically stomach, intestinal, and colon cancer. [This study](#), which compiles various scientific studies on the matter, shows that eating processed meats (think about those packaged sandwich meats that you can buy at the store) drastically increases your risk of developing the certain kinds of cancers. Many processed foods also use a number of different additives, which they don't necessarily need to disclose on the ingredients, that have not yet had long term safety studies.

## How to Avoid Eating Processed Foods

We should all know by now that processed foods are bad for us. But cutting them out can be very hard. Processed foods are convenient and cheap, which is why so many people gravitate towards them, despite fresh ingredients being available to most people at their local supermarket. A lot of people struggle to cut processed foods out of their diet, and those who do succeed often struggle to avoid them in certain situations.

## Learn to Cook Easy Meals

People are always strapped for time: they have to work all day and then make meals when they get home. They may have other commitments that need to be dealt with. All of this leaves very little time for cooking. So, naturally, people gravitate towards processed meals because they are quick and easy to prepare.

The solution here is to learn how to cook fresh, simple, and easy meals. There are thousands of recipes online that can be accessed for free that will let you cook delicious meals using fresh ingredients in minutes. Plus, most of these recipes are easy to tweak, so you can tweak the recipes to cater to any fussy eaters in your family. It really is a lot easier than it may first sound! And home cooking is the best way to know exactly which ingredients are going into your meals.

## Plan & Cook in Batches

A lot of people who do weightlifting or serious exercise regimens will cook all their meals on one day, so that they do not have to do any cooking throughout the week. Now, they do it to control calories and portion size, but there is no reason why you cannot do the same thing, but instead of doing it to watch your calorie intake, you will be doing it to avoid processed foods.

Pick a day that you have off, then proceed to cook the meals you plan on eating for the rest of the week. Freeze the meals after they are done and that is it. When you want to eat your meal just pop it in the microwave or oven and you do not have to worry about cooking for the rest of the week. This will really help you save time, and means it takes a lot less willpower to stick to your healthy diet.

## Buy All-Natural Food

Do you ever wonder what the real difference between all-natural food and regular food is? Well, one of the major differences is that all-natural food does not use processed ingredients. A good example of this is maple syrup. Most regular syrup you see in stores is made with high fructose corn syrup and other additives. All-natural maple syrup, on the other hand, is free of processed ingredients like that.

So, if you want to completely eliminate processed foods from your diet, then you need to make a conscious effort to start buying all-natural foods and avoid junk foods and other foods that make use of processed ingredients. This can be a bit difficult as not everyone has access to organic and all-natural foods in their grocery stores. Plus, these foods tend to be a bit more expensive. But, if you want to get rid of processed foods from your diet, then it is something that you need to do.

## How and Why to Go On an Sugar Detox

Pretty much all of us consume sugar on a regular basis. After all, it is near impossible to actually escape sugar, it is everywhere. You put sugar in your coffee and tea, you get it from fruit, you get it when you drink soft drinks, you get it when you eat dessert. Sugar is literally everywhere and it is in almost everything. While sugar is alright for us in small amounts, consuming excessive amounts of sugar is awful for us. So, to counteract this, some people try to go on sugar detoxes, so as to avoid the negative health effects of sugar. However, this can be quite difficult, as so many different foods and drinks contain sugar, that it can be hard to truly avoid sugar. In this article, we are going to cover why you should try going on a sugar detox and how you should go about doing so.

### Why Go on a Sugar Detox?

There are quite a few reasons why sugar is bad for you. In this section of the article, we are going to go over a few of these reasons.

#### Sugar is Incredibly Addictive

Now, normally when you think of addictive substances, you think of drugs, nicotine, and alcohol - very few people would include sugar in that list, despite being incredibly addictive. Plenty of people hear this and scoff, but believe us when we say that sugar addiction is real and that plenty of people suffer from it, even if they do not know that they do.

Science backs up the idea that sugar is an addictive substance. As [this study](#) shows, consuming large amounts of sugar gives your brain a feeling of "reward," that is comparable to what drug addicts feel when they consume whatever particular drug they are addicted to. The study goes so far as to compare sugar to other addictive substances like cocaine.

Now, you may be wondering "why is a sugar addiction bad, after all, it won't kill you?" It is true that sugar is healthier for you than other addictive substances like alcohol and drugs, but you also need to consider how you go about getting sugar. Gravitating towards sugar-rich foods like candy and chocolate, or sugary drinks like soda means you are consuming unhealthy foods that are bad for your health.

## Sugar Increases Your Risk of Heart Disease

Heart disease is a major killer in the western world. Poor diet, lack of exercise, and smoking all contribute to the relatively high amount of people who die each year from heart disease. As it turns out, sugar also massively contributes a person's chances of developing heart disease.

**This article**, published by Harvard medical school, shows just how dangerous sugar can be. A 15-year study showed that people who ate large amounts of sugar were over 50% more likely to develop heart disease than those who ate relatively little sugar. Now, the article notes that the main danger came from what is called "added sugars."

Sugar can be found naturally in a lot of things, such as fruit. You obviously need the vitamins and minerals found in fruits to survive, so you have to eat a little bit of sugar, no matter what. Added sugars refer to sugars that you do not need to eat. For example, you do not need to have sugar in cakes or coffee, so the sugar you get when you drink coffee would be considered "added sugars." These added sugars are what increase your risk of heart disease.

## Sugar Increases Your Risk of Diabetes

Type-2 diabetes is becoming an increasingly bigger problem in the west. A big reason for this is the poor diets that a lot of people follow. Sugar and fatty foods both increase your risk of developing type-2 diabetes. In the case of sugar, the reason for this is that sugar helps make your cells resistant to insulin. As **this study** from BioMed Central shows, regular consumption of sugar can lead to insulin resistance in the body, increasing your risk of diabetes over time.

## Sugar is Plain Bad for Your Health!

Most people, when they were kids, were probably told that sweets were bad for their teeth. A lot of kids probably had this proven to them when they were taken to the dentist because they developed cavities. But, despite most people knowing that sugar gives them cavities, they do not know why.

The the reason is that sugar gets feasted on by bacteria, who eat away at your enamel. Your enamel is responsible for protecting your teeth. So, as the bacteria eats away at your enamel, your teeth become more vulnerable.

Of course, cavities are not the only thing that you need to worry about when it comes to sugar and oral hygiene. Excessive sugar consumption can also lead to other issues, like tooth decay. While brushing your teeth can help protect you from the negative effects of sugar, it is not a guarantee that you will not get cavities or experience tooth decay.

## How to Go on a Sugar Detox

Okay, so now that we have covered why sugar is bad for you, let's cover how to avoid unnecessary amounts of sugar. As we already said, avoiding sugar entirely is pretty much impossible, but you can avoid consuming unnecessary added sugars with these helpful strategies.

### Get Used to Your Coffee Tasting Different

Most of us probably start our day with coffee and most of us probably put sugar in it, but we shouldn't. If you can stomach black coffee, then you should start taking it black right away. If it tastes weird, cut down on the amount of sugar gradually until you get used to it.

If you are one of those people who cannot stomach black coffee, then don't worry, because there are other ways to get the caffeine that you need to start the day. You could try green tea, or breakfast tea. And remember, too much caffeine is bad for you, too!

### Watch What You Drink

Some people can be quite good at avoiding sugar in their meals, but totally overcompensate with what they drink. Do you often drink soda? If so, did you know that they are FULL of sugar, and are basically just empty calories? This means that you get nothing from them apart from sugar and calories. You need to cut these out too if you want to cut down on sugar. The same goes for alcohol, as many alcoholic drinks are overloaded with sugar, and it can be hard to control how much you drink once you start feeling a little intoxicated!

### Prepare Everything Yourself

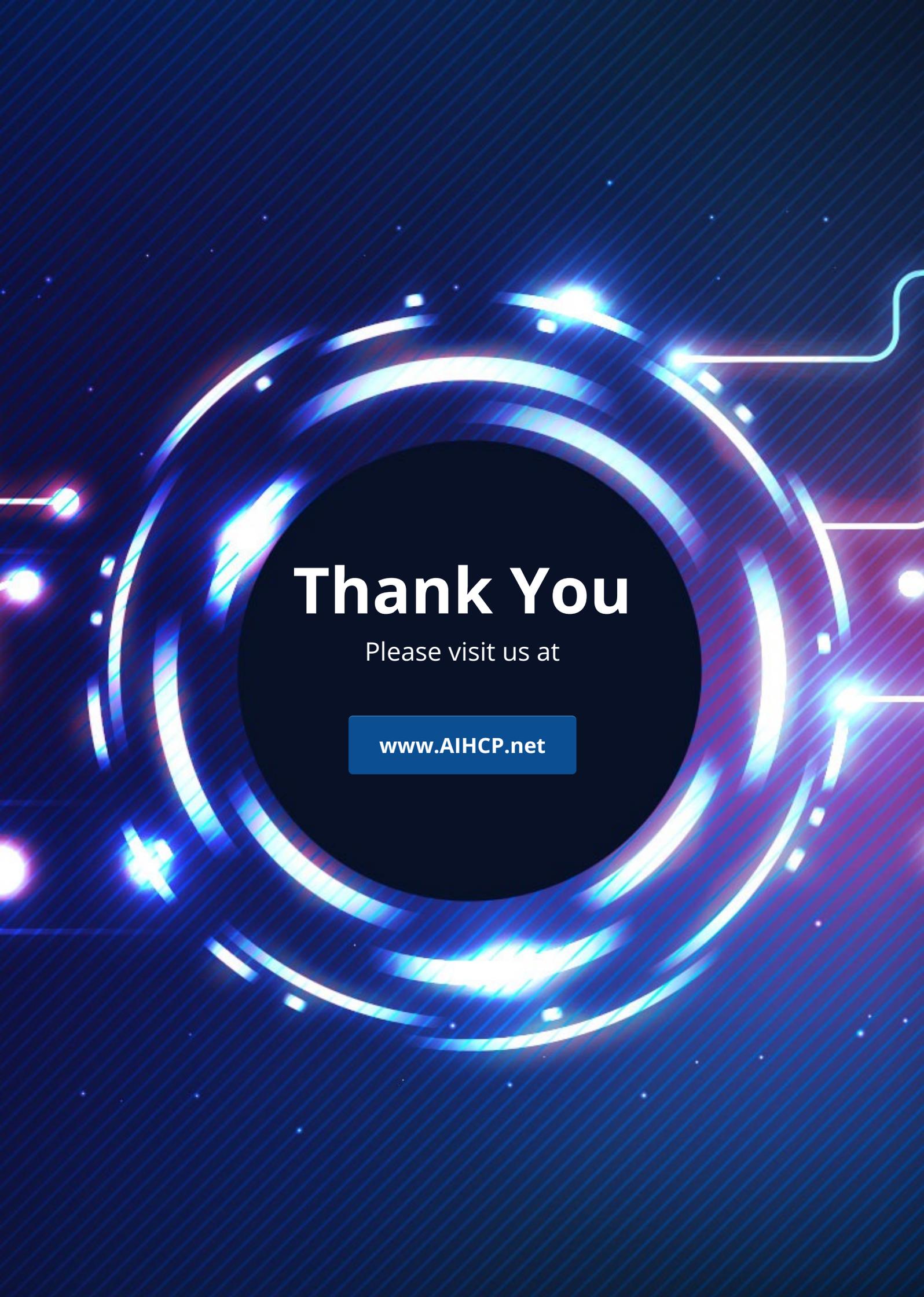
If you are trying to cut out something as common as sugar from your diet, then you should really be preparing (almost) every meal yourself. This way you can make sure that there is absolutely no added sugar in whatever it is you happen to be eating.

A good example of this would be salad dressing. You can make perfectly good salad dressing without sugar and yet a lot of store bought dressings add sugar unnecessarily. Another example is pasta sauce. Store bought sauces often have a lot of sugar in them, yet you tend to think of them as being completely healthy and vegetable-based.

## Do Something Productive Whenever You Crave Sugary Food

Most people can probably skip out on eating sugar during the day when they are occupied with other things like work. When people really start craving sugary foods is late at night when they are relaxing and watching television. So, if you are trying to cut out sugary foods (or really any addictive substance) then you should be doing your best to keep yourself occupied at all times.

It's also worth keeping a journal of when you crave sugar the most. You may find that it's related to boredom, or you may even notice that it happens when you're stressed or upset. Once you learn the pattern, you can start addressing the root causes.



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