

NO SUGAR
FEBRUARY

Let me start by saying a big W E L L D O N E!

This isn't an easy task and chances are, by day 3-7 you will most probably want to create an Alexa shaped voodoo doll BUT stick with me, it gets easier and you will end up feeling SO much better!

I want to tell you all a bit about my journey to living a predominantly 'no sugar' lifestyle. Around three years ago, I suddenly declared on my 30th birthday that I wanted to do a year of no alcohol and no sugar. I had no idea what I was doing, didn't know much about the effects of sugar but I just knew that something needed to change.

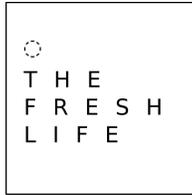
I had three kids, the youngest being 1 at the time and I was exhausted, shouty, snappy and just feeling pretty fed up. I had tried the likes of weight watchers and slimming world but definitely didn't feel any healthier for it (a marshmallow caramel wafer was a staple in my point counting diet!) I was also the girl that would be doing what can only be described as 'shots' of smarties hidden away in the cupboard so that the kids couldn't see me- there was NO way I was sharing those bad boys!

So, at the age of 30 (5 days before my party might I add- cue the 'are you pregnant?', 'are you sure you don't want some cake', 'it's your birthday, go ahead' and 'life is too short not to have fun' comments!) I decided that I needed to take control, that I wanted to be the healthiest version of myself and so I threw myself into it, reading every bit of information I could surrounding myself with courses, books, and lots of new ingredients in the kitchen to start getting creative!

This was simply the best decision I ever made as not only did I see a huge improvement in my health, it also lead me to where I am today with The Fresh Life!

The journey itself has had plenty of ups and downs and I am by no means 100% no sugar all of the time BUT I learnt how to take control of it rather than it taking control of me! I have discovered how to be more mindful about the choices that I make and to focus on if those choices will help me work towards my health goals or not. My body has thanked me, my skin has thanked me and my kids have thanked me as I am no longer riding that sugar rollercoaster!

Now, if I can do it, you can do it and I am committed to help support and coach you along the way. All I ask is that you commit to the process and really focus on WHY you want to do this!



THE WHITE STUFF

Let's talk about sugar, the white processed stuff that we find in cakes, ice-creams, jam (you get the idea!) It is perfectly designed to hook us in, looks pretty and let's be honest, tastes delicious but in reality, there really is nothing to love about refined sugar! It makes us put on weight, increases the size of our liver, ages us inside and out and is as addictive as heroin!

So why do we still eat it? Refined sugar has an almost instant feeling of pleasure and satisfaction and one we often associate it with reward so as a result, we are more addicted and fatter than ever and for the first time in history, the children of this generation are predicted to die before their parents because they're going to end up fatter and sicker due to the big business that sugar is that has a massive marketing campaign behind it.

We also turn to sugar for 'energy' but this is not the type of energy that will last or fuel you in any way. It will simply give you a short burst after eating a chocolate bar but about 10 minutes later you will feel even more tired than you were before.

The RDA of 'added sugars' is 30g which equates to around 7 teaspoons per day yet the average Brit is consuming around 22 teaspoons per day! That's a whole lotta sugar but it's also not too surprising considering 1 can of coke contains 9 of those!

Sugar, not fat is making us fatter and in a healthy slim person, 40% of the sugar they eat is converted straight to fat but in an overweight person, up to 60% is converted straight to fat and tends to linger around the hips, tummy and thighs!

So where are the biggest offenders?

- White refined sugar
- Fruit juices
- Bad Carbs (white pasta, bread, rice, cereal bars etc)
- Alcohol (Sorry!)
- Cakes, sweets, biscuits, ice-cream
- So-called 'low fat foods'
- Any ingredient ending in 'ose' (sucrose, glucose, dextrose etc)
- Cereal!

What about fruit? This is the best form of sugar, especially thin skinned fruits such as berries, pears, apples etc. So eat away but still try to be mindful about how much you have.

How about honey or maple syrup? These are ok and to be honest, we became pretty good friends when I was at the start of my journey to quitting sugar but again, these should very much be used in moderation and not on a daily basis or as a straight replacement.

OK, so now onto the really important part, HOW DO I QUIT???

1. First you must really want to do this but I'm hoping that this is one of the reasons that you are joining THE FRESH LIFE
2. Don't be hard on yourself, it may take time but this is a lifestyle change, not a 9 day juice challenge so it's ok if it takes a while.
3. Start by making some simple swaps, your breakfast for example. If you are used to having a large bowl of cereal first thing in the morning, replace this with some homemade granola or a smoothie bowl.
4. Be prepared! Have your snacks ready for the day and make sure that you fit them in between meals to avoid reaching for a chocolate bar.
5. Have a herbal tea- something like a liquorice and fennel is a great one to beat cravings.
6. Visualise your end goal, whether that's you in your favourite dress or just glowing with radiance, don't lose that image!
7. Reward yourself in other ways. This may be having a relaxing bath, painting your nails, buying a nice body product that makes you feel good!
8. Brush your teeth! This sounds like a strange one but I promise you it works as you then lose the desire to eat.
9. Include protein in all your meals.
10. Drop me a message! This is exactly what I am here for and I bet that by the time you have sent the message, you will have reconsidered.

One final note- There is no pass or fail here! If you do eat something that is perhaps off plan, don't worry- you have not failed but just pick yourself back up and get straight back to where you were. Do not let this be a chance for you to say 'Oh well, I've failed I'll just start again tomorrow or on Monday' This is a 'diet' mentality and not one that we use with THE FRESH LIFE!



WHAT DO I EAT NOW?

Don't panic, there are so many delicious options out there that won't leave you feeling heavy and bloated! As much as it is super tempting to replace sugar with other 'healthier' sweet options, try to not always give in to those sweet cravings as then those cravings will never leave you! They are certainly better for you than a bar of chocolate and are fine in moderation but as always, be mindful about what you are eating and try to focus on eating when you are 'physically hungry' rather than just 'brain hungry'

Here are a few good options to fill in those snack gaps:

Sliced apple with almond butter

Oatcakes with Hummus

Nuts and berries

Toasted seeds in tamari (toast some seeds in a dry pan and add a splash or 2 of tamari)

Popcorn with cinnamon and coconut sugar

Smoothies

Oat cakes with homemade pesto

Dates with either tahini or almond butter in the middle (limit yourself to 2 or 3)

Halloumi and apple (grill some halloumi in a pan and add some chopped apple till the apple softens a bit and then sprinkle some cinnamon on top- it has a wonderful salted caramel flavour!)

Homemade veg crisps (beetroot is great for this as are sweet potatoes)

Power Balls (Recipe in live well recipe book)

Oatcakes with nut butter and grated apple

Egg Muffins

Good quality sliced chicken (or other meat)

Baked Chickpeas