

LOW/NO CALORIE SWEETENERS IN DIABETES

LOW/NO CALORIE SWEETENERS (LNCS) ARE...



sweet-tasting ingredients



added to foods, drinks, and table-top sweeteners to replace sugar



with fewer or zero calories (and no sugars)

"CONSUMPTION OF FOODS/DRINKS CONTAINING LOW/NO CALORIE SWEETENERS INSTEAD OF SUGAR INDUCES A LOWER BLOOD GLUCOSE RISE AFTER THEIR CONSUMPTION COMPARED TO SUGAR-CONTAINING FOODS/DRINKS".
(EUROPEAN FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY – EFSA)

LOW/NO CALORIE SWEETENERS ARE VALUED BY PEOPLE WITH DIABETES BECAUSE...



Contrary to sugars and other carbohydrates, low/no calorie sweeteners do not affect blood glucose or insulin levels^{2,3}.

Low/no calorie sweeteners can play a role in supporting weight control and diabetes management strategies when used as part of a healthy, balanced dietary pattern⁴.



The availability of a variety of low/ no calorie sweeteners has made possible a wider range of lower sugar products that can provide a greater choice for people living with diabetes⁵.



DIABETES-RELATED ORGANISATIONS GLOBALLY SUPPORT THAT...

“INTAKES OF FREE OR ADDED SUGARS SHOULD BE BELOW 10% OF TOTAL ENERGY INTAKE. NON-NUTRITIVE SWEETENERS (NNS) CAN BE USED TO REPLACE SUGARS IN FOODS AND BEVERAGES⁶.” (EUROPEAN RECOMMENDATION FOR THE DIETARY MANAGEMENT OF DIABETES – DMSG-EASD, 2023)

“COUNSEL PEOPLE WITH DIABETES AND THOSE AT RISK FOR DIABETES THAT NONNUTRITIVE SWEETENERS CAN BE USED INSTEAD OF SUGAR-SWEETENED PRODUCTS IF CONSUMED IN MODERATION AND FOR THE SHORT TERM TO REDUCE OVERALL CALORIE AND CARBOHYDRATE INTAKE⁷.” (AMERICAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION – ADA, 2025)

“IF CALORIC SWEETENERS ARE SUBSTITUTED BY LOW/NO CALORIE SWEETENERS ON PURPOSE AND WITHIN A HEALTHY DIETARY PLAN, THEY CAN HELP CONSUMERS LIMIT THE CONSUMPTION OF CARBOHYDRATES AND ENERGY AND CONTRIBUTE TO MODEST WEIGHT LOSS AND GLUCOSE CONTROL⁸.” (LATIN-AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF DIABETES – ALAD, 2018)

“LOW- OR NO- CALORIE SWEETENERS (LNCS) CAN PLAY A ROLE IN SUPPORTING WEIGHT MANAGEMENT AND DIABETES MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES BUT THEY ARE NOT A STAND-ALONE SOLUTION. A HEALTHY, BALANCED DIETARY PATTERN THAT IS LOWER IN SUGARS, SATURATED FATS AND SALT, AND HIGH IN FIBRE REMAINS KEY⁴.” (BRITISH DIETETIC ASSOCIATION (BDA) – BRITISH NUTRITION FOUNDATION (BNF) – DIABETES UK JOINT POSITION STATEMENT ON THE USE OF LNCS, 2025)

Kcal



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WHEN LOW/NO CALORIE SWEETENERS ARE CONSUMED INSTEAD OF SUGARS AND AS PART OF AN OVERALL HEALTHY DIET, THEY MAY BE A USEFUL, SIMPLE STRATEGY TO HELP REDUCE CALORIE AND CARBOHYDRATE INTAKE AND, THUS, ASSIST WITH WEIGHT AND DIABETES MANAGEMENT.

References:

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5. Gibson S, Ashwell M, Arthur J, Bagley L, Lennox A, Rogers PJ, Stanner S. What can the food and drink industry do to help achieve the 5% free sugars goal? Perspect Public Health. 2017 Jul;137(4):237-247
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