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Good news for diabetics: Don't give up sugar, use this herbal sweetener

Stevia has zero calories and is 100 per cent natural.

IndiaToday.in | Posted by Tripti Narain
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Giving up sugar can be tough especially for people suffering from diabetes. There are quite a few artificial sweeteners available in the market that are low in calories. However, many people realise later they've been suffering reactions to one artificial sweetener or another. In a bid to provide a healthy life to diabetic patients, a new sweetener made of herbs has been launched in Mumbai.

Zero Sugar -- made out of natural sweetener Stevia -- enables the patient to tackle obesity and satiate the sugar cravings also.

Stevia is extracted from the leaves of the plant species Stevia rebaudiana.

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"There is no nutritive value in sugar and when consumed in excess, one is likely to be prone to life threatening ailments. After a lot of research, Zero Sugar has been formed with herbal base," said Kanchan Patwardhan, Mumbai-based clinical nutritionist and dietician, at the launch.

India is home to nearly 62 million diabetics - second only to China which has over 92 million diabetics. A majority of diabetics are unable to keep their sugar level under control despite adequate medication and follow ups.

Patwardhan said Zero Sugar is a better solution because, being 200 times sweeter than sugar, it is the best sugar replacement.

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"Being free from carbohydrates, it neither affects blood sugar nor insulin levels. It can be a good alternative for our regular sugar as well as for those who love to eat sweets but still want to be in shape. A gram of sugar contains about 4 calories. In contrast to this, Stevia has no calories," said Patwardhan.

"There are a few natural sweeteners which can regain that lost taste to your sweet foods. One of these is Stevia, a sweetener that is 100 percent natural and zero calories with a number of health benefits that have been confirmed by scientific studies," said Dilip Joshi, managing director and chief executive officer of GreenRev, the makers of Zero Sugar.

By 2030, India's diabetes numbers are expected to cross the 100 million mark according to a 2012 report by International Diabetes Federation. The economic burden due to diabetes in India is among the highest in the world.

If you have diabetes, it's especially important to keep an eye on sugar intake. Of course that's not as easy as it sounds because sugar is found in almost every food item available in the market. For people with diabetes, consuming added sugars can increase carbohydrate and calorie intake without providing quality nutrition. To combat this, diabetics can also switch to natural sugar-based substitutes such as honey or maple syrup.

Honey has a lower glycaemic Index (GI) that is it does not raise blood sugar levels as quickly as sugar. Additionally, it also requires lower levels of insulin compared to regular white sugar to metabolise.

Since honey is sweeter than sugar, the only consideration is the quantity -- use less honey. (With IANS inputs)

[Also read: 5 amazing benefits of honey](#)

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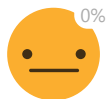
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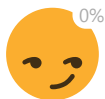
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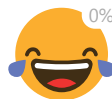
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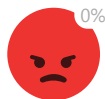
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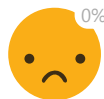
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