

For People
TOO TIRED
to Diet or
Exercise

JORGE CRUISE

#1 *New York Times* best-selling author

FOREWORD BY DAVID L. KATZ, M.D.,

Nutrition Columnist, *O, The Oprah Magazine*

The

BELLY FAT CURE™



Discover the new
CARB SWAP SYSTEM™
and lose 4 to 9 lbs.
every week

**"Jorge's recipes make eating smart easy. I recommend them highly."
— Andrew Weil, M.D.**

Director of the Arizona Center for Integrative Medicine, University of Arizona, and author of *Why Our Health Matters*

BELLY BAD



Little Debbie Fudge Brownies
Sugar = 21g / Carb servings = 2

CARB SWAP SYSTEM™



BELLY GOOD



Outrageous Chocolate Brownie
Sugar = 0g / Carb servings = 1
(page 213; with no artificial sweeteners)

For years, experts have told you that you're tired and overweight because you eat too much and don't exercise enough. **They were WRONG.** The truth is that you are eating foods packed with hidden sweeteners that deliver a belly-fattening Sugar/Carb Value. This simple guide makes smart eating effortless and affordable. It includes **more than 1,500 options** customized for: carboholics, meat lovers, chicken and seafood fans, chocoholics, fast-food junkies, and even vegans! What are you waiting for? **Dig in.**



Dawn (page 7)



Michelle (page 15)



Ken (page 37)

Watch and join the **Belly Fat Cure Challenge** exclusively at **YouTube™**

Be coached by Jorge. Visit **YouTube.com/JorgeCruise**,
upload your video, and you could be selected!

Jorge Cruise is the author of 3 consecutive *New York Times* best-selling series, with more than 5 million books in print in over 15 languages. He has appeared on *Oprah*, *Regis and Kelly*, *The View*, *Good Morning America*, the *Today* show, *Dateline NBC*, and *CNN*.
Go to **TheBellyFatCure.com** to join Jorge's **FREE e-mail club**.



Praise for **Jorge Cruise** and *The Belly Fat Cure*

“Jorge Cruise gets it right by eliminating excessive sugar and processed carbohydrates. His recipes make eating smart easy. I recommend them highly.”

— **Andrew Weil, M.D.,**

Director of the Arizona Center for Integrative Medicine,
University of Arizona, and author of *Why Our Health Matters*

“The Belly Fat Cure makes a solid case for healthful eating based on sound science. This way of eating will increase your energy, help you slow the aging process, and reduce your risk for major killers like heart disease and cancer. I strongly advise you to listen to Jorge’s recommendations.”

— **Terry Grossman, M.D.,**

co-author of *Transcend: Nine Steps to Living Well Forever*

“When it comes to your health, forward thinking will allow you to avoid obesity and disease and achieve longevity. Jorge’s program springs from progressive science that can truly change your body—and it all starts with controlling your consumption of sugar and processed carbs.”

— **Ray Kurzweil,**

world-renowned scientist and author of *The Singularity Is Near*,
When Humans Transcend Biology, and *Fantastic Voyage: Live Long Enough to Live Forever*

“Jorge, again, is on to something; belly fat is surely an indicator of poor health. This book will turn your life around.”

— **Suzanne Somers,**

actress and best-selling author of *Breakthrough: Eight Steps to Wellness*

“I put the Belly Fat Cure into practice and took 15 pounds off around my middle. I obviously endorse this book!”

— **Dr. Wayne W. Dyer,**

the #1 *New York Times* best-selling author of *Excuses Begone!*

“Like me, Jorge Cruise practices what he preaches.”

— **Jack LaLanne,**

godfather of fitness and co-author of *Fiscal Fitness*

“In this revelatory yet practical book, Jorge raises our awareness of innocent-seeming foods that trigger insulin responses which keep us unwell and thick around the middle. He then guides us to choose readily available and easily prepared substitutions, ensuring that the solution to our hidden dependence on sweets will be as easy and delicious as it is healthy.”

— **Carol Brooks,**

Editor-in-Chief, *First for Women*

The
BELLY FAT
CURE™



Other Books by
JORGE CRUISE

The Body at Home™

The 12-Second Sequence™

The 3-Hour Diet™

The 3-Hour Diet™ Cookbook

The 3-Hour Diet™ for Teens

The 3-Hour Diet™ On-the-Go

8 Minutes in the Morning®

8 Minutes in the Morning®: Extra Easy Weight Loss

8 Minutes in the Morning®: Flat Belly

8 Minutes in the Morning®: Thinner Thighs and Hips

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Hay House South Africa: www.hayhouse.co.za

Hay House India: www.hayhouse.co.in

The
BELLY FAT
CURETM



Discover the new **CARB SWAP SYSTEM**TM
and lose 4 to 9 lbs. every week

JORGE CRUISE



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Nutrition information for all brand-name products mentioned in this book was provided by company Websites or official nutrition labels. IHOP does not offer complete nutrition information to the public; therefore, the estimates for their meals were created from The Daily Plate (thedailyplate.com), owned by Demand Media, Inc., and CalorieKing.com, a service owned by Family Health Publications.

TRADEMARKS

The Belly Fat Cure
TheBellyFatCure.com
Carb Swap System
S/C Value
Body at Home

12-Second Sequence
12Second.com
3-Hour Diet
3HourDiet.com
8 Minutes in the Morning
Be in Control

Controlled Tension
Jorge Cruise
JorgeCruise.com
Time-Based Nutrition
Jorge's Packs

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*To Heather,
the woman who makes me
feel lucky every day.*

*Love,
Jorge*



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Dear Reader,

The ultimate solution to the threat of obesity is to “re-engineer” the modern environment so that eating well and being active each day are the societal norm, and the path of least resistance for us all. While many of us are working on that goal, I wouldn’t recommend holding your breath!

What I *would* recommend instead is just what you are doing: reading this book. Because rather than waiting on the world to change, you can take matters into your own hands and change your lifestyle to control your weight and protect your health. And in that effort, you would be hard-pressed to find a more passionate, and compassionate guide, than my friend Jorge Cruise.

Jorge knows, as I do, that excess sugar in our diets is among the most important factors conspiring against our waistlines and our health. Too much sugar means increased risk of weight gain, obesity, hormonal imbalance, diabetes, heart disease, and even cancer. In *The Belly Fat Cure*, Jorge puts this threat in his crosshairs to help defend you from it.

Jorge knows about the challenge of weight loss and control, because he has confronted and overcome that challenge himself. And he knows that for guidance to be of any real use to you, you have to be able to follow it. In *The Belly Fat Cure*, Jorge offers his trademark variety of clear, kind, simple, supportive, real-world coaching. You can do this!

I commend you for being proactive in the defense of your health; it won’t just take care of itself. For you to take care of it, a wise, kind, savvy, dedicated health coach would sure be helpful! That’s just what you’ve found in Jorge Cruise.

With all best wishes,

David Katz, M.D., MPH, FACPM, FACP

Director and Co-Founder, Yale University Prevention Research Center;
Associate Professor, adjunct, of Public Health, Yale University School of Medicine;
Director & Founder, Integrative Medicine Center at Griffin Hospital;
Nutrition Columnist, *O, The Oprah Magazine*



Dear Friend,

What if everything we've been told by conventional medical experts for more than 60 years was wrong? What if the truth on how to lose weight—especially from the waistline—has nothing to do with eating less or exercising more? This book is the culmination of a decade I spent answering these questions.

Not only is obesity taking over our world, in which 68 percent of us are overweight and sick, but this epidemic is bankrupting our economy with insane health-care costs numbering in the billions. Perhaps what's even more important is that being overweight also robs us of something even more essential if we want to live a truly extraordinary life: *confidence*. I know this because for most of my life I had belly fat, and every day I felt disempowered. The good news is that the science is clear—the smaller our waistlines, the more attractive we look and feel . . . and this directly enhances our confidence.

Imagine this: no dieting or exercising to lose weight. (Don't get me wrong—I love exercise, but I do it now only to build strength and endurance, not to lose weight.) With the Carb Swap System™, you'll discover the one simple key that never overstimulates production of insulin, the hormone that science proves pushes fat into fat cells. *Bottom line: you can't get fat if you keep your insulin under control.* This guidebook will actually steer you away from foods full of hidden sweeteners that deliver a belly-fattening sugar/carb value. So get ready to dig in and lose four to nine pounds a week.

Be well,

JORGE CRUISE



2

The One Critical Key

“The best part of the Belly Fat Cure lifestyle

for me is something much greater than just weight loss: the discovery that excess sugar is dangerous to the immune system. I thought I was eating healthfully and had no idea how much sugar was hidden in my low-fat foods—I was eating upwards of 200 grams per day!”

— Michelle McGowen, lost 20 pounds

Now that you know what belly fat does to your body, you’re probably ready to discover how to get rid of it. What I’m about to share with you took me more than ten years to uncover. There is only one critical key to getting rid of belly fat forever, and that is to lower insulin, the scientifically proven hormone that pushes fat into fat cells. You see, you can’t get fat or stay overweight without insulin. This is a biological fact that was proven in multiple research studies over the last 60 years that have appeared in such respected publications as *The British Journal of Nutrition* and *The Journal of the American Medical Association*. Unfortunately, this critical idea that insulin is essential for storing fat—and lowering your insulin is essential for releasing that fat—has been buried under the conventional medical community’s message that it’s all about calories in, calories out; that all you have to do is exercise more and eat less to lose weight. It’s a broken theory; it’s time for you to get ready for a new, intelligent, and effortless way of eating.

The Carb Swap System™

The Carb Swap System is my trademarked eating method that guarantees that you will automatically steer clear of foods full of the sweeteners and processed carbohydrates that chronically keep insulin levels high and belly fat present. The secret



to the Carb Swap System is that it will ensure that you always hit what I have determined to be the magical sugar and carb values, or S/C Value™, each day. Write these two numbers down, since they're what all my work has revealed, and they will transform your body forever: 15/6. **This means that each day your total eating goal needs to be 15 grams of sugar and 6 servings of carbohydrates.** This combination is called your daily S/C Value.

How did I come up with 15 and 6? Well, the 15 grams of sugar a day was based on two things: First, in my research on the evolution of nutrition, it was evident that early humans didn't consume any sugar because it didn't exist (with the exception of honey and fruit), and it certainly didn't exist in the refined form it does today. Men and women dating back 40,000 years ago—we'll call them Stone Agers—ate only the foods that allowed their bodies to function at their best. During this time, almost everyone had an ideal body mass and didn't have diabetes, high blood pressure, or heart disease (of course, these Stone Agers had other scary things to worry about, like saber-toothed tigers). Researchers at Colorado State University confirmed that these early humans were "largely free" of diseases associated with modern societies.

Regardless of how drastic the changes have been to our diet since that time, our bodies aren't different . . . except for the fact that we cover them in clothes. According to research published in *The Journal of Nutrition*, genetically we haven't had time to adapt to a diet of highly processed, sugar-filled foods, which is why obesity and disease levels have reached an all-time high. This means that the absolute ideal would be to get back to a diet similar to the Stone Agers, but based on the reality of the foods available today, eating a no-sugar or no-processed-carb diet is virtually impossible. Instead, we should return to what researchers from the University of Toronto say was consumed for "thousands of years"—about 15 grams of sugar per day. Not only is 15 grams a day possible, it's enjoyable. How do I know this? Because my second reason for coming up with this amount is based on real tests with everyday people just like you. Fifteen grams has been client-tested and enthusiastically approved. My clients have found that this amount allows them to enjoy eating while eliminating belly fat fast. Remember, this is a lifestyle that will work for your busy, modern life. That's why I recommend about 5 grams of sugar per meal, for a total of 15 grams per day.

Why did I select six servings of carbs (about 120 grams) for you each day? Because it allows you to eat the carbs you love, but still keeps insulin levels low enough to lose your belly fat. A research study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* revealed that participants who ate between four and seven servings a day of whole-grain, complex carbs lost significantly more weight from their abdominal region than those who got their carbs from refined sources. Aim for six servings and you will quickly start to shed your false belly fat.

With more than 100 easy, at-home Carb Swap meals in Chapter 4, there's no thinking involved—you just enjoy these meals for breakfast, lunch, and dinner and you'll never go over 15/6. Plus, you'll find more than 600 Carb Swap grocery products in Chapter 5 and more than 800 everyday food items

in Chapter 6. Many of the items have pictures to make it even easier for you to know what to eat to lose belly fat.

I suggest that you learn how to apply the S/C Value to all of the foods you want to eat. This will allow you to calculate the S/C Value for any food you love and know if it's what I call a "Belly Good" or a "Belly Bad" item. You can skip this part if you want, but I strongly believe that having this understanding will help you make this plan a lifestyle. Here's how the S/C Value works; it's as simple as A, B, C:

A. Know your sugar. The first number (the "S") is the amount of sugar in any food represented in grams. Anything under .5 grams is not counted.

B. Know your carbs. The second number (the "C") is the amount of carbohydrates in any food represented in servings: 5 to 20 grams is 1 serving; 21 to 40 grams is 2 servings; 41 to 60 grams is 3 servings. Anything under 5 grams is not counted. **It's very important to be exact. For example, if you eat something that has 21 carbohydrate grams, you can't count it as "1" carb serving—it's "2" carb servings.**

C. Track it. Using the planner (see page 36), cross off one sugar box per gram consumed and one carbohydrate box per serving consumed. Once you've checked off all of your boxes, you've reached your daily limit.

On page 12 is an example using chips. The "S" arrow points to the sugar content, which is a 0. The "C" arrow points to the carbohydrate content, which at 17, is a 1 using the S/C Value. This means that a serving of Mission Tortilla Triangles has an S/C Value of 0/1.



Kimberly lost 15 pounds

Age: 52

Height: 5'7"

Pounds Lost: 15

Belly Inches Lost: 6

"I was sick of having a fat belly, not looking nice in clothes, and constantly feeling tired. I always said that I'd never be overweight because of my mother, who spent the last five years of her life in bed with pain in her knees—they were unable to hold her weight. I have four kids, and I want to be around for a long time for them and my grandkids! I love this plan because it's easy to do, and I have more energy and am able to exercise with no problems. This program is so easy; it's the way I will eat for the rest of my life."

BEST TIP FOR SUCCESS:

"I take stevia or xylitol with me in my purse wherever I go."

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1oz (28g/about 10 chips)	
Servings Per Package 14	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 160	Calories from Fat 80
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 9g	14%
Saturated Fat 4g	20%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 150mg	6%
Total Carbohydrate 17g	6%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Sugars 0g	
Protein 2g	
Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 2%	Iron 2%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less Than 65g 80g
Saturated Fat	Less Than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less Than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less Than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g
Calories per gram:	
Fat 9	Carbohydrate 4 Protein 4

Mission Tortilla Triangles
(10 chips)
S/C value 0/1

The rest of this chapter will focus on the science behind the Belly Fat Cure. You don't need a complete understanding of the facts to be successful, but any time I've shared the following information with my clients, they've experienced a profound "Aha!" moment. I want you to have this opportunity, too. What follows in two parts is the science of the Belly Fat Cure. Part I is about how too much sugar leads to belly fat. Part II is about how too few carbs leads to *false* belly fat.

PART I: How Too Much Sugar Leads to Belly Fat

Here's a fact: the average American consumes more than 47 teaspoons of sugar each day (this shocking number was revealed by researchers at Colorado State University); that's about 189 grams a day. About 200 years ago, daily consumption of sugar was under 15 grams—research has shown that before the Industrial Revolution, that's about how much the average person ate. Guess what you didn't see much of then? Belly fat. You also didn't see a population severely overwhelmed by obesity; compare that to now, where two-thirds of our population is overweight and sick and facing crippling medical bills due to the consequences of poor health habits. Don't get me wrong, I love sweets; but when you eat too much sugar, or what are technically called "caloric sweeteners" (sugar from cane or beet, corn syrup, fruit juice, or even milk), you develop belly fat in one primary way. Here's more on how it happens.

Increased Insulin

As I mentioned before, consuming sugar and refined carbs affects one of the most critical hormones in your body: insulin. Insulin is produced by your pancreas to manage your blood sugar and control the accumulation of fat—especially around your waistline. According to Nobel prize-winning physicist Rosalyn Yalow, co-inventor of the first accurate test used to measure insulin in the bloodstream, insulin is the "the primary regulator of fat tissue." Increased levels of insulin will make you fat and make sure you *stay* fat.



47 tsp.—avg sugar
consumption

Research published in *The European Molecular Biology Organization Journal* determined that insulin is probably the most important hormonal factor influencing the creation of fat, or what is scientifically called *lipogenesis*. In the book *Transcend*, my friends Ray Kurzweil and Dr. Terry Grossman used a scary visual to describe what happens to your blood when you consume too much sugar and it gets converted into fat—they suggested that your blood actually turns into a “pink cream.” Imagine the most vital fluid in your body turning to a gooey glob that can barely get through your veins (yes, this can lead to problems other than belly fat—namely, high blood pressure and increased risk for heart disease and type 2 diabetes). If you’re a healthy person, this fat in your blood may filter out in a few hours, but if you have diabetes or are prediabetic, it could linger in your blood even longer—or never go away. Even in healthy individuals, this fat still has to go somewhere, and it’s most likely going to get deposited in abdominal fat cells. High levels of triglycerides have been connected to dangerous belly fat by researchers affiliated with the American Heart Association and the Mayo Clinic.

Once the fat in your blood (otherwise known as triglycerides) gets locked into your fat cells, they actually have to be broken down before they can move out and become usable energy. Insulin plays an important role here as well by preventing the triglycerides from breaking down—it wants to make sure that the fat stays put. And it does. Only when



Alexandra lost 16 pounds

Age: 32

Height: 5'1"

Pounds Lost: 16

Belly Inches Lost: 6.5

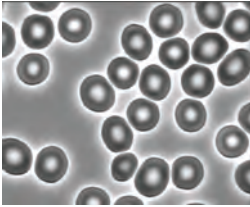
“Before this plan, I had completely given up on myself. No amount of exercise or dieting gave me results. I was depressed; as well as suffering from acne, fatigue, and painful headaches. I was so ashamed of myself—I used to be an athlete, and I thought I knew a lot about nutrition. When I stumbled upon Jorge’s program, I felt a little spark of hope—I’m amazed every day by how easy it is. I feel great, and I’m starting to look like my old self. I’m now motivated, I’m going out with friends again, and I have my smile back.”

BEST TIP FOR SUCCESS:

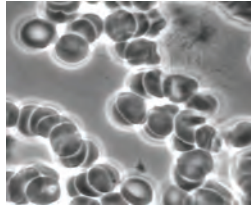
“Plan ahead.

I make five sandwiches on Sunday to get me through the week.

Sunday is also when I wash and chop vegetables and defrost chicken and fish for the week.”



BEFORE SUGAR



AFTER SUGAR

insulin disappears for a while can this fat escape from the cell to be used. **That's the primary way stored fat is released—your insulin levels absolutely have to be low.**

What's vitally important to understand is that not all foods trigger the same type of insulin response. Fats and proteins, for example, don't ever significantly drive up your insulin level (which, like I mentioned, is why we don't

track them on this plan). Sugar and processed carbs, on the other hand, cause a rapid and dramatic increase in insulin levels, which directly causes your body to store fat. Sugar consumption can also lead to a condition known as “insulin resistance,” which by itself drives up insulin levels and keeps them up. Various breakthrough studies done at Harvard University over the past decade have clearly shown that the main reason you have “belly fat” is that you've been eating too much sugar and processed carbohydrates, which keep your insulin levels chronically high—not because you've been eating too much fat or protein. It's that simple. To paraphrase George Cahill, a former professor of medicine at Harvard and an expert on insulin, “Carbohydrates [sugars] is driving insulin is driving fat.” Does this mean you can eat a whole cow or ten sticks of butter because it won't trigger insulin production? No. You need to use common sense—but the good news is that proteins and fats satiate your hunger fast, so it's almost impossible to overeat them. As you'll see with all of my Carb Swap meals, my top pick for proteins are almost always lean meats. My top picks for fats are those that come from egg yolks, raw butter, extra-virgin olive oil, flax oil, or fish oil—and never dangerous hydrogenated oils.

I hope that by now you can see how important the hormone insulin is to regulating fat accumulation and to the Belly Fat Cure. When you eat using the Carb Swap System, you'll ensure that you keep your insulin response low. Plus, the great news is that once you begin to lose belly fat, you will actually improve your body's response to insulin and will have perfectly controlled fat regulation. Bottom line: to lose belly fat, you must keep your insulin levels low. Since sugar and carbs have the biggest impact on insulin, we only track sugar and carbs on the Belly Fat Cure—it's that simple, and it's the only way you'll lose weight. Like my mentor and good friend Gary Taubes, author of the groundbreaking *Good Calories, Bad Calories*, put it: “The only non-pharmaceutical remedy [to obesity] is to restrict or remove the cause—sugar and refined carbohydrates.”

One Other Problem: Less Leptin

Another side effect of eating too much sugar is that you're programmed to overeat and gain belly fat. Why? While sugar drives up insulin production, it fails to trigger another hormone in your body that helps control appetite: leptin. Without enough leptin, your “signaling center” breaks down, and you quickly end up with a traffic jam of food in your body ready to get stored as fat. Where this fat gets

deposited depends on your genetics, but most of us start storing it in our midsection. Research published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* confirmed that foods sweetened with fructose, sucrose, glucose, and high-fructose corn syrup all have the same effect on leptin—they fail to produce it. Another study done at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), discovered the same about lactose (milk sugar).

What happens when you don't have leptin? Research at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York showed that when leptin was produced, it directly contributed to a decrease in abdominal fat. Without the right amounts of leptin, your body is programmed to store fat in your abdominal region. The most revealing studies were published in *The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism* and the *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, which showed that the proper levels of leptin decreased abdominal fat by 32 percent and an extraordinary 62 percent, respectively. Making sure your diet contains foods that will regularly stimulate leptin production is essential to belly fat loss. These include proteins, fats, and complex carbs, which trigger leptin and make sure you're not set up to overeat.

Too Much Sugar Can Kill You, Too

Belly fat is what I would call the “physical marker” of eating too much sugar—it's the exterior consequence of a highly refined, processed diet filled with sweets, sodas, and nutrient-lacking foods. But sugar's damage goes beyond this and has been linked to three of the most deadly health conditions that may not have any exterior signs . . . until it's too late:



Michelle lost 20 pounds

Age: 46

Height: 5'7"

Pounds Lost: 20

Belly Inches Lost: 7

“On this plan, I didn't think I'd lose much since I was able to still eat chocolate and ice cream, but after just *one* week, I was astounded by a seven-pound loss! Now I feel trim and have tons of energy. The best part for me, though, is something much greater: the discovery that excess sugar is dangerous to the immune system. After beating stage IIIB breast cancer, I thought I was eating healthfully. I had no idea how much sugar was hidden in my low-fat foods—I was eating upwards of 200 grams per day!”

BEST TIP FOR SUCCESS:

“Bake several chicken breasts at a time and keep them in the refrigerator. They can be sliced up and used in Caesar salads, nachos, or quesadillas.”

1. Cardiovascular Disease: More Than 600,000 Annual Deaths

Sugar consumption has been linked to something called metabolic syndrome. This syndrome is a combination of a number of health conditions, including abdominal obesity, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, insulin resistance, and inflammation. Researchers at the University of Florida considered sugar to have a “major role” in igniting the health problems listed under the metabolic syndrome. One of the most dangerous aspects of the metabolic syndrome is inflammation, because this internal “swelling” is associated with arterial stiffness and heart disease. Inflammation causes your arteries to “swell in” and cause problems in circulation. To make matters worse, if you’ve been feeding your body a diet of sugar and refined carbs, those same arteries will begin to fill up with LDL, or “bad” cholesterol. To help attack the inflammation, your body responds by sending in white blood cells—but this attack actually releases toxic infection fighters that eventually land on your arteries, creating holes. These holes fill up with platelets and essentially scab over, adding even more and more buildup. The combination of these events leads to heart disease, which can result in a fatal heart attack.

One study, published in *Circulation*, the journal of the American Heart Association, confirmed that sugar intake is connected to increased triglyceride levels, a “known risk factor for coronary heart disease.” Another research study conducted at the Harvard School of Public Health found that drinking two sodas a day (78 grams of sugar) increases your risk of heart disease by 35 percent. But there is a simple way to lower your risk (find out what soda I recommend on page 291—it has zero sugar).

2. Cancer: More Than 550,000 Annual Deaths

You probably know that when you have a weakened immune system, you’re more susceptible to getting sick. But what you may not know is that this sort of shutting down of your defenses can lead to something much more serious than just a cold: cancer. Research done in Sweden linked excess sugar consumption to one of the most dangerous types of the disease, pancreatic cancer. They found that those individuals who consumed more sodas and foods with added sugars were more likely to get this tough-to-beat form of cancer. Another study published in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute revealed a link between colon cancer and sugar consumption. Research in Italy “found a direct association between breast cancer risk and consumption of sweet foods.” Pretty scary. You see, sugar feeds cancer cells, helping them reproduce faster. Cancer cells love glucose, which is what your body breaks food down into so that it can be used as fuel. Even though all carbs convert to glucose, sugars and refined carbs provide the biggest rush of glucose into the blood, which cancer cells eagerly devour. When it comes to breast cancer, the increased risk is thought to also be related to the overproduction of insulin caused by sugar because insulin can stimulate the growth of cancerous cells in the breast.

3. Type 2 Diabetes: More Than 70,000 Annual Deaths

Speaking of the overproduction of insulin . . . you should know that this is one of the main factors that can lead to type 2 diabetes. When you eat foods loaded with sugar, your body produces extra insulin so that it can unlock cells and your body can use it for fuel. This is usually followed by a drop in blood sugar, which reignites the craving for more sugary foods. What’s created is a vicious cycle that wears out

your cells—so much so that they can eventually forget how to respond to insulin. This is what is known as insulin resistance, and once you have this, you're well on your way to type 2 diabetes. A Harvard study confirmed the link between consumption of sugars and increased risk of diabetes. Did I mention that excess sugar also leads to belly fat, which essentially ensures you're on the fast track to type 2 diabetes?

Research published in the journals of the American Heart Association and the American Diabetes Association described how visceral fat can begin to dump fatty acids and hormones directly into the liver, which causes it to produce too much glucose. Again, your body starts producing more insulin to try to manage the glucose. This cycle causes your body to become insulin resistant, which leads to type 2 diabetes. You see, even when your body's response to insulin is broken, your pancreas will continue to produce it to make sure that your body is getting fuel, and this simply wears your pancreas out. When your pancreas no longer produces enough insulin, or your cells fail to respond to insulin, you've reached the diabetic state. When you have diabetes, you're at risk for a long list of complications. According to the American Diabetes Association, you're susceptible to vision loss, kidney disease, circulation problems, skin problems, depression, nerve damage, gum disease, heart disease, and stroke. This means that although fewer people die from diabetes than the other two big killers, life expectancy *is* cut short in those with type 2 diabetes—by almost 15 years.

In addition, too much sugar can be responsible for premature aging and compromised immune health:

Aging. In Chapter 1, I briefly mentioned another nasty side effect of sugar (as if all of these terrible health risks and diseases aren't bad enough):



Marian lost 42 pounds

Age: 43

Height: 5'5"

Pounds Lost: 42

Belly Inches Lost: 6

“Doing the Belly Fat Cure was a life-changing experience and the best thing I’ve ever done regarding my health. I feel like Jorge gave me myself back. Today, I am 42 pounds lighter and have more energy. On top of that, my thyroid medicine has been decreased. Year after year, I’ve always been told that I have to take more medicine for my thyroid problem—now I’m taking less! I firmly believe that this is something my family and I could do for the rest of our lives. It’s easy, and best of all, it works! Thanks, Jorge!”

BEST TIP FOR SUCCESS:

**“Be creative with your meals
so you don’t get bored.**

**Plus, enjoy treats—I ate blackberries
with whipped cream every day
on this plan.”**

wrinkles. I know that I said belly fat was really the main physical marker—and it’s certainly the most dangerous one—but sugar won’t stop there. Sugar in your bloodstream can also attach to the proteins there and create modified proteins called *advanced glycosylation end products*, or *AGEs* for short. Research published in *The Journal of Nutrition* recently confirmed the link between excess consumption of sugars and higher amounts of AGEs. The more AGEs you have, the faster actual aging processes occur in your body. These modified proteins can damage other proteins that perform important functions. Two of the most susceptible are collagen and elastin, which also happen to be essential to keeping your skin smooth and tight. Bottom line: your sugar consumption will begin to show itself in the very lines on your face. This is yet another reason to stick to no more than 15 grams of sugar a day.

Immune health. When you fill your body with sugar, you put your immune system in a weakened state. It actually impairs your immune system by not allowing your white blood cells to work properly. A study done by researchers at Loma Linda University in Southern California determined that “sugars impaired the neutrophils to engulf bacteria.” Neutrophils are the main type of white blood cell you have in your body, and one of their main jobs is to gobble up bacteria and viruses that enter your body; sugar essentially wears them out so that they can’t get that critical job done. If you ever feel like you’re coming down with something, cut out sugar to help keep your defenses strong, get extra sleep, and take olive leaf complex. Olive leaf extract has one of the highest antioxidant values and helps support a healthy immune system.

Alternative Sweeteners: Not So Sweet

Now you may be thinking that the solution is to use alternative sweeteners, right? Nope. There are five sweeteners that I suggest you watch out for: **saccharin (pink packets)**, **aspartame (blue packets)**, **sucralose (yellow packets)**, **high fructose corn syrup**, and **agave nectar**. The first three are known as excitotoxins, which contain neurotransmitters that “overexcite” neurons in the brain, causing degeneration and even death in these critically important nerve cells. I avoid these as much as possible and suggest you do the same. Here’s more on these alternative sweeteners, along with two others I recommend you avoid:

Saccharin is the oldest sugar substitute around; you probably know it as Sweet’N Low. It was discovered by a chemist in 1879 and became a popular additive in the 20th century. As early as 1911, though, there was already an effort being made to ban it due to its potentially unhealthy effects. Controversy continued to follow saccharin, especially in the 1970s when research published in *Science* linked it to bladder cancer in animals. Again, there was an attempt to have it banned, but instead, products were required by law to post a label stating that saccharin caused cancer in laboratory animals (you probably remember seeing it on the side of popular sodas like Tab). Even though the ban has since been removed, scientists from institutions such as the University of Illinois and Boston University have requested that saccharin be

labeled a carcinogen once again, stating that there is “ample evidence” to suggest it’s cancer causing. I don’t know about you, but if something has been proven to cause cancer in any living being, I don’t want it in my body! It’s not a risk I’m willing to take, which is why I avoid saccharin.

Aspartame was also discovered by a chemist; you probably know it as Equal and NutraSweet. It’s found in thousands of food and drink products—namely, diet sodas. Studies have shown that it can cause imbalances in your brain; aggravate migraines; and affect your nervous system, your moods, and even your quality of sleep. A study published in *Environmental Health Perspectives* found a connection between aspartame consumption and seizures. Additionally, researchers from Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis questioned the rise in malignant brain tumors during the years after aspartame was introduced.

Sucralose is found in more than 4,500 products on supermarket shelves, including Splenda. Also discovered by chemists, this sugar alternative is 600 times sweeter than sugar. Scientists at Duke University recently revealed that commonly consumed amounts of sucralose reduce the amount of “good” gut bacteria by 50 percent. Gut bacteria are essential for promoting a healthy digestive system and regular bowel movements, which help you get rid of false belly fat. Sucralose also produced significant weight gain in the study. Beyond this research, sucralose contains chlorine, which, as you know, is used to sanitize pools and is certainly not something you want to ingest. Manufactured chlorine compounds, like the ones used in Splenda, can cause damage to your organs and reproduction functions.



Ronald lost 20 pounds

Age: 40

Height: 5'11"

Pounds Lost: 20

Belly Inches Lost: 3

“I have a family history of high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and diabetes. In my late 30s, I went to a doctor’s appointment and was told that I too had high blood pressure and high cholesterol and was on my way to getting diabetes. I was put on two medications and started working out, and slowly I did lose some weight. I could never get below 205 pounds, though, until I tried the Belly Fat Cure. The biggest change for me is learning about my sugar intake. Now I feel as healthy as ever, and my blood pressure and cholesterol are back to normal!”

BEST TIP FOR SUCCESS:

“Enjoy a hearty breakfast that gives you energy straight through the morning. Realize that every day is a chance to improve.”

High-fructose corn syrup (HFCS) is something you've probably heard is bad for you, but you might be confused about *why* it's so bad. All simple sugars that enter the bloodstream can cause a rapid increase in blood sugar, but fructose has a specific effect on your body—and it's not a good one. Fructose has also been linked to leptin resistance, kidney stones, nonalcoholic fatty liver disease, diabetes, metabolic syndrome, and heart disease. When you consume fructose, it goes directly to your liver and gets processed into fatty deposits, which can lead to fatty liver disease—which is typically seen only in alcoholics. This fat also filters into your blood and fills your veins with fatty blood, otherwise known as high cholesterol. Since the introduction of HFCS into mainstream foods in the '70s, the American obesity epidemic has skyrocketed. If you track the rise in obesity and the rise in consumption of HFCS, you'll almost see a direct parallel. To make matters worse, high-fructose corn syrup has invaded nearly all types of food—you can find it in breads, sodas, juices, pastas, baking ingredients, cookies, ice cream, sauces, salad dressings, jellies . . . just about everything. According to the USDA, the availability of HFCS has increased 10,673 percent since 1970 (yes, you read that number right).

Agave nectar is a sweetener made from the agave plant, a common succulent found in Mexico. It's a bit like honey, but thinner. It's been labeled a healthy sweetener and said to be good for diabetics and "100 percent natural." But here's why it's landed on my list of wrong sugars: it is actually highly processed and has even more fructose in it than high-fructose corn syrup—agave nectar can be up to 90 percent fructose. According to Dr. Ingrid Kohlstadt, a fellow of the American College of Nutrition, "It's almost all fructose, highly processed sugar with great marketing." And Dr. Joseph Mercola, author of *Sweet Deception: Why Splenda®, NutraSweet®, and the FDA May Be Hazardous to Your Health*, says that "agave nectar is neither a natural food nor organic." Don't believe the hype and the labels that claim this to be a "healthy" alternative to sugar. It will actually trigger the same responses as white sugar and high-fructose corn syrup. I recommend avoiding it entirely—my personal doctor believes that it's worse than any other sweetener available!

Smart Sugar

So what can you eat that's sweet? The most critical thing you can do is to make sure you stick to 15 grams of sugar or less per day. If you make smarter choices about sweetness, you can still indulge your sweet tooth if you have one. (See page 267 for smart options.) My top recommendations for a healthy "real sweet" taste are stevia and xylitol. These are categorized as "nutritional supplements," and you can find them at all health-food stores or even online at TheBellyFatCure.com.

Stevia is an herb that originated in South America; it contains no calories, does not cause blood-sugar spikes, and can be used in baking. It's much sweeter than sugar, which means that you need only a little bit to get the right amount of sweetness. Recently, stevia was approved by the FDA for use in food and

drink products, and it's the first herb-based sweetener to get that approval. Research published in the journal *Life Sciences* and in the *Journal of Human Ecology* revealed that stevia is effective in reducing blood pressure and hypertension. Turn to page 308 for more info on the types of stevia I recommend. My favorite soda, Zevia, uses Stevia (see page 291 for more information).

Sugar alcohols are considered nonnutritive sweeteners—this means that they add sweetness to foods and drinks without any nutrients and virtually no calories. Registered dietitians with the Yale-New Haven Hospital confirmed that sugar alcohols have fewer calories than sugar. They also revealed another benefit: these sweeteners don't cause cavities. Contrary to their name, sugar alcohols are neither a sugar nor an alcohol, but rather, a type of carbohydrate. The reason they have fewer calories is that they aren't completely absorbed by the body (most of consumed sugar alcohols will be excreted in urine). They also don't cause blood-sugar spikes like regular sugar does, which means they cause less disturbance to the endocrine system.

There are several types of sugar alcohols, but some of the most popular are xylitol, erythritol, and maltitol. On the Belly Fat Cure, we don't count any grams listed as "sugar alcohols" in the sugar category. However, they may be counted on a label under "total carbohydrates," which means that they'll be counted as carbs in the S/C Value (but you won't have to track these separately). Because sugar alcohols are incompletely absorbed, some can cause gas and bloating when eaten in excess; for this reason, you should avoid eating more than 100 grams in one day. Here's a little more about the sugar alcohols you're most likely to encounter:



Duke lost 18 pounds

Age: 48

Height: 5'10"

Pounds Lost: 18

Belly Inches Lost: 10

"With the signs of aging and low self-esteem, I knew that it was time to get back into the gym. I started walking, yet I yo-yoed for several months. Then I tried my doctor's recommendation to reduce fats and calories; that didn't work either. Now everything is simple. This program has helped me shave almost \$225 off of my monthly food bill as well. With the Belly Fat Cure, I haven't felt bloated, I feel lighter, my posture is better, and I sleep better, too. I know that my energy is up, along with my sex drive. Yes, that's right, sex drive! Thanks, Jorge."

BEST TIP FOR SUCCESS:

"Get your family and friends on your side. Let them know what you're doing. They will help you."

Xylitol is a sugar alcohol derived from the fiber of various fruits and vegetables. It was originally extracted from birch trees and was found in research done in Finland to help prevent the advancement of osteoporosis.

Maltitol has become very popular for use in baked goods, chocolates, and cookies. Having said that, some of my clients have discovered that too much maltitol can make them feel bloated. Although the reaction is harmless, you may want to adjust your intake of foods that contain maltitol based on your reaction to them.

Erythritol is one of the best sugar alcohols to look for. Research published in the *British Journal of Nutrition* revealed that it causes significantly less intestinal disturbances. In fact, the fermentation that can occur when other sugar alcohols are consumed in excess does not occur with erythritol—this just means it's less likely to cause gas.

PART II: How Too Few Carbs Leads to “False” Belly Fat

The second part of the belly fat problem is not eating enough of the right kind of carbohydrates, which are a key source of *fiber* that moves out hardened waste matter. Many carbohydrates have a more complicated “fibrous” structure, which makes them break down more slowly in your body, and chances are you aren't eating enough of them. Here's the bottom line: carbs are truly the only source of fiber. The right kind of carbs can eliminate any “false belly fat” that may come from built-up waste in your intestines and colon. Ideally, you should be having one to three healthy bowel movements a day. If you're eating enough fiber, you shouldn't have a problem with your body cleansing itself naturally. If you're not going to the bathroom enough, you might have one of those firm, hard bellies that sticks out. That's from built-up waste in your intestines. You've got to get rid of that false belly fat! By eating three Carb Swap meals each day, you'll be getting close to my ideal goal for you, which is 25 to 30 grams of fiber a day. I even have a Belly Fat Cure drink on page 101 that will give you 10 grams of fiber at one time to help you boost the flushing of false belly fat.

When you eat six servings of carbohydrates per day, you will ensure false belly fat loss. As I mentioned in the beginning of the chapter, research published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* revealed that participants who ate between four to seven servings a day of whole-grain complex carbs lost significantly more weight from their abdominal region than those who got their carbs from refined sources. Research giants Harvard University and the Mayo Clinic praise complex carbs for their belly-reducing benefits; they both suggest increasing complex-carbohydrate intake over refined or simple carbs specifically to reduce dangerous visceral fat. At the University of South Carolina, researchers established the same relationship between complex carbs and belly fat—they discovered that consuming foods with fiber was directly linked to losing belly fat. This means that you should aim to get most of your six carb servings a day from complex carbohydrates. This will help you get the

recommended 25 to 30 grams of fiber a day and have the greatest effect on your belly fat.

Time for a Change

I've addressed how sugar consumption has steadily climbed over 200 years. At the same time, consumption of complex carbs and fiber has declined greatly, with people typically eating fewer than 15 grams a day, which is about half the recommended amount. This combination of increased sugar and decreased fiber has had a drastic effect on the health of our country. That is why with the Carb Swap System, I'm suggesting a nationwide shift in common consumption patterns—this dramatic shift will truly transform health.

Start Today

With the Belly Fat Cure, you'll regain control of your confidence, your energy, and the most important part of your life: your health. The brand-new vitality you feel will empower you in every area—you'll reacquaint yourself with a level of confidence and security that will even carry over into your bedroom. Plus, you'll achieve a level of health that will ensure you end fatigue forever. You'll show your kids and loved ones how amazing living a healthy life can look and feel. Additionally, your risk of premature death will be significantly decreased, as will the threat of several diseases, including type 2 diabetes, heart disease, inflammation, and certain cancers. And, of course, you'll lose up to four to nine pounds of belly fat a week. Let's get started right now!



Cathy lost 15 pounds

Age: 54

Height: 5'6"

Pounds Lost: 15

Belly Inches Lost: 4

"I used to gain weight in my butt and thighs, but this time it was going right to my belly—and I knew that being an 'apple' was far more dangerous, health-wise, than being a 'pear.' I'm at the age where if I don't pay attention, I could easily lose control of my health; I intend to be active and on this earth for a long, long time. This plan is easy to follow, extremely effective, and a way of eating that I can truly live with. I don't have to decide to cheat or not—everything I want I can have, including wine!"

BEST TIP FOR SUCCESS:

"Use a food diary—it's a great tool to monitor progress, record history, and show what does and doesn't work."