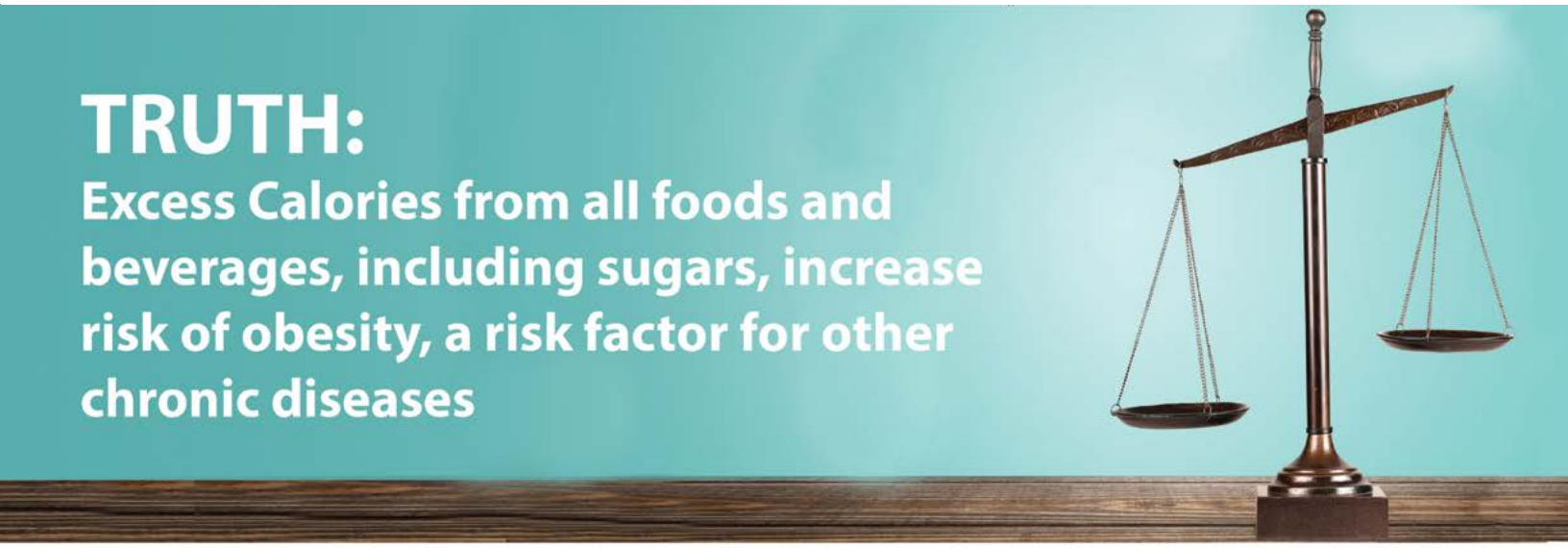
UNCOVER THE TRUTH ABOUT SUGAR: **CHRONIC DISEASE**

Myth: Sugar causes chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease



Reducing Your Risk for Chronic Diseases:

- Consuming excess Calories from all sources, including sugars, fats, other carbohydrates, protein, and alcohol, can increase your risk of obesity, a risk factor for chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes and several types of cancer [5]. Your level of daily physical activity along with a number of other lifestyle and genetic factors also influence your risk for obesity.
- Foods and beverages higher in sugars and fats can be key sources of excess calories. Individuals who want to reduce total calories would benefit from reducing the frequency of intake or portions of these foods, and increasing consumption of nutrient-dense whole foods like fruits and vegetables.
- Eating a healthy diet, maintaining a healthy weight, and managing blood pressure can help reduce the risk of developing cardiovascular disease and diabetes [6].
- More high-quality research is needed to determine whether sugar contributes to chronic disease beyond its contribution to Calories.

How the Body Uses Sugars for Energy:

- All carbohydrates (sugars and starches) are eventually converted by the body to glucose, the body's main energy source.
- Organs like the brain and red blood cells rely primarily on glucose to function.
- Glucose is also the preferred energy supply to support intensive physical activity.
- If you eat excess Calories from sugars and starches, your body stores the extra energy as glycogen or fat for use at a later time. Excess Calories from fat and protein can also be stored as fat in the body.

The body has several mechanisms to ensure an adequate and constant glucose supply to the brain to support mental work

References:
5. Institute of Medicine. Dietary Reference Intake for energy, carbohydrates, fiber, fat, protein and amino acids. National Academic Press. Washington. 2005.
6. Public Health Agency of Canada. Healthy living can prevent disease. http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/cd-mc/healthy_living-vie_saine-eng.php

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Nutrition Information Service

The Canadian Sugar Institute Nutrition Information Service provides health professionals, educators, and the media with current scientific information on sugars and health. Learn more at sugar.ca and join the conversation about sugars on Twitter @CdnSugarNutr.