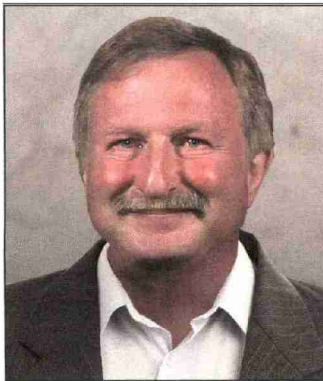


5 minutes with **Jacob Teitelbaum, MD**



Director of the Practitioners Alliance Network, Jacob Teitelbaum, MD, is the author of the several books including *From Fatigued to Fantastic* and *Pain Free 1-2-3*. His most recent book, *The Complete Guide to Beating Sugar Addiction*, was published in May. Teitelbaum is a frequent guest expert on *Good Morning America*, *The Dr. Oz Show*, *Oprah and Friends* radio show, CNN and Fox News Health. He joined us for a few minutes to explore the nation's latest food villain.

Sugar seems like a perennial issue, why write a book now?

Jacob Teitelbaum, MD: Rates of diabetes and many cancers are skyrocketing, as are autoimmune diseases. Many of these have excess sugar as a major predisposing factor.

What's the threat in sugar that people discount or don't want to understand?

JT: Not only does sugar cause anxiety, mood swings and childhood behavioral disorders, but also high blood pressure, heart attack, stroke, diabetes, cancer, autoimmune disease and a host of other health conditions.

You break sugar addicts into four types.

Are sugar obsessions really that different?

JT: Absolutely. As with most addictions, if one fails to treat what is driving the addiction, treatment is doomed to failure. Sugar addictions fall into four main categories: the "Energy Loan Shark"; "Feed Me Now or I'll Kill You"; the "Happy Ho-Ho Hunter"; and "Depressed and Craving Carbs." A simple quiz determines the sugar addiction type, which then is amenable to simple, highly effective treatment. Not only do the sugar cravings resolve, but the person's health and quality of life improve markedly if these underlying problems are addressed.

People giving up sugar often reach for artificial sweeteners but recent research shows the sweeteners alter the gut microbiome in ways that could trigger obesity. What would you tell them?

JT: Just as in business, in life everything—even breathing the air or drinking the water—carries some risks. The key question is what is called the "risk-benefit ratio." Basically, is it worth the risk? The relative risks of sugar substitutes are very low compared with sugar. They are certainly no more likely than sugar sodas to cause weight gain. They change the biome in the mouth the way that prevents tooth decay. And they do not cause the other health problems that sugar causes. Overall, they are dramatically less toxic than the massive amounts of sugar added to sodas—a 48-ounce soda has 36 teaspoons of sugar—and that are present in

juices. We do not tell people to deny their sweet tooth. Pleasure is good. We teach them how to enjoy it and satisfy it safely.

Schools are removing soda and candy vending machines. What else should they be doing?

JT: They need to start having programs teaching parents how to wean their little sugar addicts off sugar in a coordinated way so that the students get the same message at home and at school, in families where the parents choose to participate. In addition, they need to educate students. I found that when I would give a lecture each year to the local third grade on "food is food, and junk is junk," they got it. Students would come up to me even 10 to 15 years later and say how that simple basic understanding changed their life. A new program, called NutriBee, is being developed by Ingrid Kohlstadt, MD, of Johns Hopkins University in conjunction with Met Life. This is like a spelling bee national competition, but with nutrition.

-Nutrition Business Journal

