

OA-HOW GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING H.O.W. ABSTINENCE

1. First, you may not modify it to suit yourself. Any additions or subtractions you make must be with a physician's or certified nutritionist's advice.
2. If you do not consistently follow your food plan, you will find that many of the other problems that brought you to HOW will come back also.
3. You must commit yourself to a black-and-white abstinence so you may deal with the gray areas of living.
4. See your doctor or health care professional. Have him/her completely review this program of eating. Follow all of his/her suggestions concerning this plan. Any recommendations your doctor or health care professional suggests to modify this plan are acceptable.
5. **ALL FOOD MUST BE WEIGHED OR MEASURED.** Use a digital or kitchen scale, measuring cups, and measuring spoons.
6. Food may be baked, broiled, roasted, pan-broiled, grilled, or oven-broiled. Use a non-stick pan for frying. **NO DEEP-FRIED OR BREADED FOODS.**
7. **FOOD IS TO BE WRITTEN DOWN AND COMMITTED** on a daily basis for at least a month. Many successful members continue to write their food down even after they have stopped committing it to a sponsor.
8. **DO NOT SKIP MEALS AND DO NOT COMBINE MEALS** (e.g., breakfast + lunch = brunch).
9. **DO NOT WEIGH YOURSELF** more than once per month. After maintenance weight is achieved, do not weigh more than once per week.
10. If something listed on this food plan becomes a problem, avoid it. **AVOID ALL INDIVIDUAL BINGE FOODS.**
11. If a food item is not listed, check with your sponsor **BEFORE** having it. When in doubt, leave it out.
12. Sit down for meals. Eat slowly; try to relax and enjoy your food. Eat only your weighed and measure portions. Never have a second helping.
13. Foods we **ABSOLUTELY** avoid are: anything containing sugar or white flour, alcohol, sweets of any kind, fried foods, sugared soft drinks, and honey.
14. **LOOK FOR SUGAR!** Sugar must be listed 5th or lower on ingredient lists and should not be in seasonings or soft drinks. Agave, cane juice or evaporated cane juice, concentrated fruit juice, maltodextrin, dextrose, sucrose, fructose, lactose, honey, molasses, and corn syrup are, in fact, **SUGAR!** Please read "Sugar by Any Other Name" for more information.
15. At the end of the first 30 days, continue to call your sponsor while adjusting to grains.
16. Some artificial sweeteners contain large amounts of sugar, **BEWARE!**
17. If fresh fruit is not available, use canned or frozen fruit packed in water or its own juice. When mixing fruits, be mindful that if the serving is $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fruit, then the total mixture must equal $\frac{1}{2}$ cup.
18. Use mayonnaise rather than Miracle Whip-type salad dressing.
19. If you want milk in your coffee, subtract a portion of protein from your morning meal. That will give you a measure amount of milk all day for coffee.

20. Salad should be measured at all times. A salad can be any combination of listed vegetables.
21. Two pieces of chicken (i.e., thigh and drumstick or breast and wing) or 4oz is a portion.
22. Up to three tablespoons of bran per day may be used if needed for regularity.
23. Check any recipe with a Sponsor before you eat it. All recipes may not be within food plan guidelines.
24. NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES.
25. Moderate exercise, 8 glasses of water, and a daily multi-vitamin are suggested daily.
26. Vegetable allowances for lunch or dinner may be reversed so that the larger may be used at lunch and the smaller at dinner.
27. When you are within 10 pounds of your goal weight, you should begin using the OA-HOW Maintenance Food Plan with the help of an OA-HOW Maintenance Sponsor.

SUGAR BY ANY OTHER NAME

The following information is meant to be helpful only and should not be considered complete. Please contact your health care professional(s) for additional information about reading food labels.

All foods contain glucose; it is the basic unit of energy in all living systems. Our bodies cannot function without it. So it is impossible to eliminate all “sugars” from one’s diet. The important thing to watch for is “added sugars”—substances added to natural foods to make them tastier. The best we can do is to eat whole, natural, non-processed foods as often as possible. Amount is also very important, because excess glucose causes a rise in insulin in the bloodstream. Insulin is a hormone that causes excess glucose to be stored as fat. This is necessary for animals that do not eat on a regular basis and must store fat for lean times. Humans today generally eat on a regular schedule and do not need to store fat, but the system that stores excess glucose as fat continues to function anyway.

“Carbohydrate” is a generic term for any sugar or starch. A starch is just a large and complex sugar molecule. The ability of the body to digest a particular starch or sugar depends on whether or not we produce the proper enzyme needed. For example, “amylase” is the main starch in potatoes, and our bodies produce “amylase”, the enzyme that breaks it into digestible glucose units.

Read labels carefully to determine the sugar content of foods. Be on the lookout for words like those listed below. These other names for sugar should be fifth or lower on the list of ingredients.

Any substance that ends in “-ose”, e.g. sucrose—table sugar, fructose—fruit sugar, lactose—milk sugar, etc.

Any substance that ends in “-extrin”, e.g., maltodextrin.

The word “saccharide” is a chemical term that means sugar. There is a sweetener on the market that supposedly has no sugars but has a compound called fructooligosaccharide, which simply means several individual fructose units combined into a larger molecule, but it is still, by definition, a sugar. “Saccharine” is an artificial sweetener based on a sugar structure.

Any substance that ends in “-ol” is an alcohol. Alcohols are formed by the fermentation of sugar; the type of alcohol is determined by the type of sugar. “Sorbitol” is a frequently used artificial sweetener, which can cause severe gas and diarrhea.

The main ingredient in Sweet and Low and Equal are all their clones in “dextrose” even though the package claims it contains no nutritive carbohydrates. Companies can claim this because the dextrose molecule cannot be broken down by the human digestive system and is therefore considered non-nutritive. This is true of cellulose also, though technically a sugar; it is the substance that gives structure to plants. The human body is not capable of digesting cellulose and it passes through the body intact. This is the “roughage” we get from the plants we consume.

WATCH OUT FOR ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS

Many artificial sweeteners contain some form of sugar or highly refined carbohydrate derivative. They are called “nutritive” sweeteners. Saccharin tablets and saccharin liquids are “non-nutritive” and do not contain any sugar or highly refined carbohydrates at all. They are the safest form of artificial sweetener for those members who find their craving increasing with the use of artificial sweeteners. Also, moderation is vital in all aspects of an OA-, HOW food plan. It is recommended that, even if the use of artificial sweeteners does not trigger cravings, a member use only a moderate amount in their food plan. As an example, an abstaining member and their sponsor may determine that 6 packets of artificial sweetener per day is an appropriate amount as a daily limit.