



Navigating Summer Barbecues

By Dr. Tricia Talerico, D.C., M.S., Nutr.

It's almost summertime and we are all about to enjoy outdoor barbecues, concerts, vacations, family and friend get-togethers at the beach-wonderful! Is it really? Well, of course, the socialization part is always nice, but what about the food, the alcohol, the SUGAR? In trying to understand the rising global crisis in obesity and obesity-related diseases, scientists have discovered that a calorie is not just a calorie! It's the source of the calories you consume that makes all of the difference. The increase in total fats and carbohydrates is what's causing the huge weight gain in people worldwide. Actually, there is only one food that is metabolized as both fat and carbohydrate – it's sugar. Sugar is actually the only calorie source that correlates with the worldwide increase in diabetes. Global sugar consumption is currently trending upwards, with 2023 seeing a 200.1 million metric tons consumed. While global consumption is rising, some

higher-income countries like the UK are experiencing a decline in per capita consumption. Interesting!

Now let's examine this information and bring it a little closer to home. In these hot days of summer we all look for something cool, refreshing and sweet to drink? The problem with sweet drinks is that they can contain hundreds of grams of excess sugar.

Let's first look at some of the drinks to avoid:

- *Soda – diet or regular
- *Beer – damage to liver, triggers production of uric acid
- *Sweet tea – can contain up to 22% pure sugar
- *Wine coolers – contain fruit juice, sugar and artificial sweeteners
- *Iced coffees and frappes – Contain HFCS, sugar (up to 100 gms!) and artificial sweeteners.
- *Sports drinks – contain too much sugar and sodium,

artificial sweeteners and HFCS

What are some good alternatives?

- *Sparkling mineral water – add slices of cucumber or fruit
- *Iced green tea
- *Chilled red or white wine – organic is always best
- *Coconut water – contains electrolytes, vitamins, antioxidants and phytonutrients

How about summer grilling?

Who doesn't enjoy a burger, hot dog or chicken on the grill? Unfortunately, there is a downside to grilling. Grilling meat at high temperatures can charcoal the meat – a burning of fat, which produces carcinogenic chemicals. Extended exposure to these chemicals can damage DNA, which over time can develop into tumors. Long-term exposure can increase the risk of prostate, colon and pancreatic cancers.



Grilling can actually be a flavorful and easy way to enjoy delicious, healthy food if done right:

*Choose a healthy protein like chicken, fish, turkey, beef, port or tofu. Chicken can be grilled with the skin on but be sure to remove the skin before eating to avoid excess saturated fat.

*Right size your portions. Fill one-fourth of your plate with a protein (about 4 oz.), fill another fourth with a whole grain, such as brown rice or whole grain pasta or sweet potato then fill the remaining half of your plate with veggies/fruit.

*Season with no sodium marinades or rubs. Consider marinating meat in a citrus-based marinade before grilling. The meat will absorb the citrus and the antioxidants will offset the chemical effects of the carcinogens.

*Add lots of Color. Many vegetables can be grilled. Brush them with avocado or EVOO to prevent them from sticking or use a grill basket. Also, use skewers for vegetable kebabs but be sure to soak wooden skewers in water for 10 minutes

*Trim the fat off the meat and avoid cooking over open flames and/or high temperatures. Avoid eating meats that are overdone or burnt.

*Grill fruits for dessert.

*Lastly, scrub down the grill rack or grill pan after each use.

Most of all have a safe and healthy summer!



IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH... IMPROVE YOUR LIFE!



Tricia Talerico, D.C., M.S., Nutr.
Nutrition and Weight Loss Center of Ocean

Dow Plaza • 1819 Highway 35 North
 Oakhurst, NJ 07755

732-609-3366

www.nutritionandweightlosscenter.com



drtalerico

