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## For The Love Of Food: The Sneakiest Calories

by SHAUNA on DECEMBER 9, 2010

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Calories... they are real and very important to your diet. Calories are sort of like money. You really need to figure out how many calories your body burns all day while you're doing nothing. This is called your Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR). This is super important because it's basically your calorie "income". And just like money income, everyone's individual calorie income is different. (You can raise this calorie income a bit by gaining muscle because muscle burns more!) [Click here to calculate your BMR in a new window](#). With this number you can figure out how many calories you're allowed to "spend" everyday to maintain your healthiest weight. This will change the way you look at food. Just like when you spend money, you budget and spend more on some items and less on others, it works the same with food. Although with food, there is much more to take into consideration- such as what is actually helping your body vs. hurting it. I will go over more concerning calories and portion sizes in a later article. It is important that you have a basic understanding of calories before we go into the dietary changes that you can start slipping in.

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Equally as important, is understanding **acquired taste**. All of us have the ability to *acquire* taste for different things if we **choose** to. As it is, all of your current tastes have been acquired in your life already. It's based on what foods you were exposed to, how long ago you were exposed to them and how often you consume them. It's also true that tastes change as we age. However this doesn't mean that you cannot *acquire* a taste for something if you really want to. With that in mind, let's start with the sneakiest calories...

110 calories:	400 calories:	280 calories:	230 calories:	200 calories:	150 calories:
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It's what you're **drinking!** Do you



out or even cutting back on certain beverages? Some of the things I am going to share in these articles are things that you may already know are terrible for your body. My question to you is, "what is being happy, healthy and looking great worth to you?" Personally, I

can't put a price on being healthy. I've only got one body to use for my entire lifetime and I want to keep it in as good a shape as I possibly can!

So, let's get more into your drinking habits to start! First off, **soda has got to go!** I am

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extremely blessed that I have never really taken to soda. Since I was a young child, I have not enjoyed carbonation. Therefore, growing up, I stuck to water, juice and lemonade. That is a tremendous favor to my health! If you currently drink a lot of soda, I suggest starting by cutting your weekly amount in half. Do that for maybe 3 months (6 at the longest) and then cut it in half again. You really need to get to the point that you are only having a soda every once in a while as a treat. Soda should be treated like all other junk food – it is really a dessert treat and not just another drink!

Let me address "diet" drinks of every kind...I highly suggest you stop the "diet" everything as soon as possible! We all know that high fructose corn syrup is terrible for you and needs to be cut out, but so do all of the chemicals that make up the fake sugars such as aspartame, Splenda, Nutrasweet, etc. Those chemicals are just as toxic, if not moreso than the corn syrup. Did you notice that since the "diet" and "non-fat" products were introduced into our markets that the overall health issues including obesity have skyrocketed? This is partly because we have also had a boom in technology that keeps more and more people at desks and not getting proper exercise. The other part though has everything to do with the toxins our bodies have been inundated with through supposedly "healthier" products. Please do not be deceived.

Let me explain what happens in your body when these chemically made products get into it. First off, our bodies are designed to handle about 20% toxins. It can kick out that much (although I try not to max it out at the 20% myself). The rest of the toxins however, the body has a difficult time processing and getting rid of. Do you know what happens to it? To try to protect itself, the body shoves the toxin onto a fat cell and then starts wrapping layers of water around it...which *causes and cements* weight gain. Your body retains fat and water as a buffer from the toxins. Enough toxins build up in your body and they cause health issues – everything starting from obesity to cancer.

I'm not trying to scare you here. This should bring a healthy concern. You are in control of your body and how you decide to take care of it. You are completely capable of making changes to live healthier. If you decide to cut back on your soda, be sure that the soda you drink is as natural as possible – no high fructose corn syrup or fakey sugars. Trader Joe's has Virgil's Root Beer which is really great. I do enjoy root beer now and then, and Virgil's is my favorite. It is made with all natural ingredients and a very short list at that! Since I found Virgil's, I really don't want other root beers that have the corn syrup. They don't taste nearly as good as the natural Virgil's does!

I'm also not just attacking soft drinks. Check the ingredient labels of what you buy – food and **all** beverages, including non-carbonated drinks **and** juices. There are so many beverages that are now made with fake chemical sugars and high fructose corn syrup it's unbelievable. You need to try to get the most basic, fresh organic food and beverages available. The more natural and unprocessed, the better. That said, let's move on to juices. You should also cut back on juice. You do not get much nutritional value from juice, as it separates the fruit's sugars from its balancing fiber. You are far better off eating actual fruit than you are from drinking the juice, because the juice really just adds to your sugar intake. Even though natural sugar is much better than fakey mcfakerton sugar, you still need to watch the amount of sugar you have on a daily basis. You can lose weight right away when you cut your overall sugar intake. If you want to juice, use a blender like the VitaMix that keeps the whole fruit intact – and while you're at it, you can add whole vegetables for more nutrients.

As for alcoholic beverages, again, keep them to a minimum. It's fine if you choose to cut out alcohol completely, but there are some health benefits to having a quality glass of red wine with dinner.

Now for something slightly more controversial...dairy. I have cut WAY back on my dairy intake in the past few years. I enjoy having some cheese now and then as well as certain dishes that are made with real butter (and again, real butter is better for you than fakey margarine and whatever other fakeys). And every once in a long while, I will have ice cream or custard. So, I have not cut dairy out completely myself. Soy milk is actually not that great for you either. So, I have replaced milk with almond milk. Almond milk is quite good for you and does not have a distinct flavor like soy does. It is a much easier replacement for dairy. I have it with my cereal, in my protein shakes and even heated to make hot cocoa. It tastes delicious and

removes the risks posed by dairy.

If you choose to stick with dairy – get organic skim milk and try to cut it back as much as possible. These days, there are so many hormones and additives in our milk it's scary. The cows are pumped full of hormones to produce more milk. Also (and this is really gross), sometimes as the cows are hooked up to constantly pump milk, their udders become sore and bleed, causing wound secretions (including the blood) to wind up in the milk. You can always take supplements to get the calcium you need without having the extra lactose, hormones and who knows what else that come with cow milk.

On to another one of my favorites...**coffee**. I started drinking coffee when I was about 12 and I would load it up with lots of cream and sugar. About 5 years ago I decided to cut the junk out of my coffee. Every little bit you cut out helps! I started using less cream and sugar a little at a time and gradually I *acquired* a taste for black coffee. Now, I can't stand having cream and sugar put into a cup of black coffee. I think it tastes awful. I really, truly enjoy my coffee black. A regular cup of black coffee a day actually has some good health benefits to it. As far as decaf goes...be careful what kind you get. There are a few different processes to decaffeinate coffee beans. One uses kerosene – which is obviously very unhealthy. There are a couple others that use different processes with just water that would be much better for you. I drink regular coffee, so I have not yet looked into how to find out what process a particular company uses, but I'm sure if you search the internet or call the company, you can find out. When they tell you the name of the process, be sure to look it up on the internet and find out exactly *what* the process involves.

Let's talk Starbucks! I do enjoy a latte every once in a while. During the year it's once a month or less, but during the holiday season, it's about once every week or two because I really enjoy the eggnog latte. 😊 There was a time that I got a Starbucks drink multiple times a week. My weight started to reflect that, so I cut it out! And bonus – it saves me tons of money!

We've discussed what to cut back on and even better, cut out completely, so on to what you need to **increase**...WATER, WATER AND MORE WATER! Everyone's heard the "8 x 8oz. cups of water a day", but you should really aim for even more than that. Water is what will really help flush your system of toxins! That is, provided you stop flooding your body with toxins so that it *can* start flushing them! A great way to start your mornings is to have a cup of hot water with lemon juice squeezed from one whole organic lemon in it. It is cleansing and starts you off with an alkaline state. (The lemon juice is actually alkaline for about 20 minutes before it oxidizes and becomes acidic, so you need to drink it right after you juice it and pour it into your water.) You will also save a TON of money when you stop buying all the other beverages and just drink water!

Back to the calorie "income", it will save you a TON of calories that don't even help you to feel full! You will be truly amazed at how much better you feel when you increase your water intake and drastically decrease or cut out drinking dairy, soft drinks, fruit drinks and juices and coffee that's packed with cream and sugar. You will be shocked at the weight you can lose by cutting these extra calories and toxins from your body.

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