



THE Y AXIS



### The Sour Truth About 'Sugar-Free'



Grab the sugar-free option. It's zero calories, or lower than the real deal.

That's good, right?

Not so fast. Put down the soda and step away from the sugar-free treats.

Artificial sweeteners might not be as sweet as you think.

A recent study found that foods made with artificial sweeteners may stimulate cravings for more sweets and food.<sup>4</sup>

And that could lead to weight gain and other health problems.

Need something sweet?

Eat an apple. Add some berries to cereal. Or drink a glass of water with a squeeze of lemon.

#### COMMENTS?

Send comments to the editor:

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## How to DASH Away High Blood Pressure

Is your blood pressure naughty or nice?

When Santa Claus finally takes a day off to get his blood pressure checked, he's probably in for a surprise. All those cookies, eggnog, extra pounds, and sitting in the sleigh are bad for the heart.

If your blood pressure (or your belly) looks anything like a jolly, old elf you'll need to make some changes.

**You're on the Naughty List if...**your blood pressure is 120/80 or higher. In case you're wondering, nearly half of all adults in the U.S. have high blood pressure.

But you can change that with the DASH diet... Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension.

Research shows that the DASH diet can help lower blood pressure by 5 points or more in just four weeks.<sup>3</sup> That could be low enough to put you on the Nice List (<120/<80)!

### DASH diet food guidelines

- Eat vegetables, fruits, and whole grains.
- Choose fat-free or low-fat dairy products.
- Include healthy proteins like fish, poultry, beans and nuts
- Use healthy oils for cooking (like olive oil or avocado oil)
- Limit foods high in saturated fats like fried food, red or processed meats, or full-fat dairy products
- Avoid or limit sugary drinks and snacks.

Making changes to your diet can help lower blood pressure and improve your health.

### But don't stop there.

Regular exercise helps control blood pressure, too. Aim for at least 30 minutes of physical activity per day. And you may be on the Nice List soon.

#### MORE

Your guide to lowering blood pressure with DASH <https://tinyurl.com/hbksj8s>

## Manage Your Weight in Just 10-Seconds a Day

Daily weigh-in during the holidays prevents weight gain

What if there was a simple way to prevent holiday weight gain?

You know...something that only takes about 10 seconds out of your busy day...especially during the holidays.

You'd probably do it, right? After all, there's a lot of factors at play during the holidays that can tip the scale in the wrong direction like:

- Food and treats at home or the office
- Parties and dining out more
- Vacation, travel, or hosting guests
- Snacking while you prep food

It can start to feel like an impossible task to prevent weight gain and still enjoy the holidays. But it doesn't have to be that way.

### Take 10 seconds to do THIS everyday...

**1. Step on the scale,** and weigh yourself.

**2. Record your weight.** Write it down on a calendar.

Record it with your phone. Use a mobile app to track your weight. Or keep a log on the refrigerator, bathroom mirror, or in your car.

And make sure it's in a place where you'll see the number on the scale every day. That's it!

