

Sugar Rule #1: 15 Grams or Less



Snacking has become a mindless activity. No wonder we have an obesity crisis. I never once saw my dad snacking on a bag of chips. My mom, either. They ate their meals at the prescribed time and that was it. On rare occasions I would see them indulge in a small dessert. We might be at a restaurant, or having a holiday meal. Even more rare, was when my mom and dad would have a dessert after dinner, later in the evening.

In our current culture it seems harder and harder for most people to resist a regular dessert. It's like we feel we deserve to have something every day instead of it being a treat on occasion. I am going to suggest we eat more like my parents did, and save dessert for special occasions. But, if you are going to have that occasional dessert I wanted to give you a few ideas for how to pull that off without having to go buy a bigger pair of pants.

Here are some rules of thumb for dessert without the consequences:

1. Make it yourself and use low carb recipes. I have published

scads of them over the years. Here's another one for you today.

2. Freeze the leftovers. If you have to think far enough ahead to thaw it out, you're less likely to be eating this kind of dessert too often. At least you won't mindlessly grab it off the kitchen counter and just stuff it in your mouth. And if you take it out of the freezer and start to eat it immediately, at least the frozen aspect will slow you down.

3. Keep the total carb count below 15 grams. This is the most important part. Your liver can process SOME sugar. The trick is to figure out how much before you go into overload and start gaining fat.

On days when I eat a dessert with 15 grams or less, I limit my carbs the rest of the day. So that means very little bread or crackers. No plates of pasta. I watch the potatoes. I behave, and my body can take the time to process that sugar and go back to normal. If I eat dessert at night I am very careful the next day to factor that sugar consumption into my carb count.

There are times when there is no time, and you just want something quick to satisfy a sweet tooth. Don't worry, there are options. They are all processed foods. That means they contain artificial sweeteners and preservatives and maybe even sugar. They are made by some big manufacturer instead of by you in your own kitchen so I will never recommend you eat them regularly, but on occasion you might let one slide through.

Here are a couple of brand-name items I have indulged in on occasion and can vouch for. These, (when eaten in moderation) can be allowable and still maintain your weight. They are all 15 grams of carbs or less and are decadent enough to satisfy even a food writer.

Lacey's Cookies. A Lacey Cookie is a nut cookie glued together

with chocolate. I buy the almond ones with the dark chocolate. Dark chocolate has fewer carbs. These cookies come in at about 12 grams of carbs. I eat mine like a little hamster. I nibble and I can make it last about 30 minutes. Try the hamster technique.

So Delicious Vanilla Ice Cream. This ice cream is made from coconut milk. It's all natural and good for you (in moderation). One half cup has 19 grams of carbs. That's too much. So what I do is take out a little bowl (I bought some that won't hold more than a half-cup full). I put in about a quarter to 1/3 cup of ice cream. That leaves me a little room for a slight drizzle of caramel or chocolate sauce; or instead I put on some fresh berries. I even use a teeny spoon to eat it. It lasts longer that way and I'm satisfied.

Bisco Wafers (made by Nabisco). Those of you born in the 50's and 60's will remember these. This is the kind of cookie that was put on the top of your ice cream sundae that you got at the local drugstore ice cream counter. Good news is 4 of these cookies only add up to 10 grams of carbs! If you are the kind of person who has to have 'more than one' of whatever you're going to eat, you'll like these.

Baby Snickers. I'm talking the Halloween treat size. Really little ones. If you freeze a bag of them you can have one once in a while. Better yet, check out the freezer section for the mini-ice cream bars put out by Snickers. They are about 2" long. They are only 9 grams of carbs per bar. Honestly, one does it for me. I eat it in little bites and that's just the perfect amount of caramel, peanuts and ice cream wrapped in a light layer of chocolate.

Reese's makes snack sized peanut butter cups at Halloween and Christmas. Again, employ your freezer so you don't just grab a

handful and go at it. Be reasonable. And if you have 15 minutes it's so much better if you make your own. These, absolutely taste just a good! They are homemade and you can have a MUCH bigger portion!

Pizzelles. With this one you are going to have to be very careful and read labels. And do the math! The options sold at Whole Foods are an amazing 3 grams of carbs per cookie. I have seen several other brands though which contain as much as 20 grams per cookie! That's insane. Someday I'll come up with a low carb recipe for these but in the meantime this makes a packaged dessert that is actually fancy enough to serve to company.

Now you have plenty of options so you can be 'bad' and still be 'good' come morning when you step on the scale. Remember: On Occasion. In Moderation.

Cheers,