

## ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS: PART 1

### THE TRUTH ABOUT WHAT THEY DO TO YOUR SKIN AND YOUR BODY

Hi, I'm Dr. Whitney Bowe, author of *The Beauty of Dirty Skin*. I'm going to start this video with a confession: I used to be a fake sugar "junkie." I'd start my day with a mild blend of coffee with at least one packet of Equal and a tablespoon of sugar-free hazelnut powdered creamer—the sweeter the better! I also was pretty much addicted to one particular brand of diet iced tea, downing up to three a day. I craved my diet iced tea in a bad way... I'd actually get cranky if I didn't have it! Throughout the day, I would put Equal on foods that have no business needing sugar. And then I finished off my night with a diet soda. It's hard to believe, but at that time, many of us actually believed that artificial sweeteners were a better option than real sugar.

Then, through my work and my research, I learned about the effects of artificial sweeteners on my skin and my overall health. After learning about what these chemicals were doing to me, I forced myself to make changes. This was not pretty. This was not easy, but it was absolutely necessary and I'm here to tell you why.

First, what's so bad about fake sugar that poses to be calorie-free? And how does it mess with your skin? Let me give you some basics. Artificial sweeteners don't have calories because we cannot digest them. But guess what: the sensation of sweetness itself triggers some of the same biological responses as does sugar consumption, and the artificial sweeteners still must pass through our gastrointestinal tract.

For a long time, we thought that these fake sweeteners were inert or inactive ingredients in terms of affecting our bodies. We thought that sugar substitutes such as saccharin (Sweet 'N Low), sucralose (Splenda), and aspartame (Equal) did not have a metabolic impact because they do not raise blood glucose levels. But it turns out that they can absolutely have an impact and cause the same metabolic disorders as real sugar. It's shocking.

How? By triggering temporary elevations in insulin levels and changing the composition of bacteria in our gut—our microbiome—to favor unhealthy metabolism. In fact, studies are emerging to show that the gut bacteria of people who regularly consume artificial sweeteners is very different from those of people who do not. Which is why eating artificial sweeteners has been linked with increased weight, higher fasting blood glucose, and elevated risk for developing type 2 diabetes. Many well-designed studies involving tens of thousands of people have definitively proven that these fake sugars over the long term can actually increase your risk for being overweight with serious metabolic disorders. One study in particular revealed that women who drank artificially sweetened drinks over the course of twenty years had double the risk of developing diabetes than women who drank sugar-sweetened beverages.

Now, what does all of this have to do with skin? It's pretty simple: The fact these artificial sweeteners have the power to disrupt the gut's microbial inhabitants so much that they negatively affect metabolism and blood sugar balance, means those diet foods and beverages not only increase the risk of insulin resistance and diabetes, but also skin disorders like acne and rosacea through the domino effects of increased inflammation. High insulin levels are a primary cause of hormonal imbalances and skin disorders, especially acne. Since artificial sweeteners throw your blood sugar balance off, they too are capable of triggering skin issues. Put simply, when your gut is unhappy, so is your skin. And artificial sweeteners make your gut pretty miserable!

My patients are often surprised when I ask them about artificial sweeteners in their diet. They are under the false impression that these sweeteners are somehow better for them than their counterparts made with real sugar. I know I was! But no sooner do I put my patients on a low-sugar diet and no artificial sweeteners whatsoever than they welcome clearer, calmer, smoother skin!

Unlike real sugar, which can be consumed in moderation, I recommend nixing artificial sugars entirely from your life. Go cold turkey on these, folks.

And if you want to learn more about how artificial sugar, real sugar, and your entire diet impact your skin and your overall health, check out my book – *The Beauty of Dirty Skin!* For more info, check out this link on my website!

Thank you so much for taking the time to focus on your most healthy, radiant skin! Until next time!