

# The TOPS Reminder

## Happy New Year 2016

A newsletter for Western Massachusetts Counties

By Terri Lavigne (413) 532-7664 [losingweight@tlavigne.us](mailto:losingweight@tlavigne.us) January 2016

### **KOPS Honor Society**

Their Party was a great deal of fun. The next meeting is the second Saturday of March. Your new KOPS Kaptain is Ruth Greene. I will still email out their letters for them.

### **Resume Workshop**

Thank you to Greenfield 0395 for hosting my resume workshop. Those chapters that attended did a great job. If there are any questions please don't hesitate to email or call.

### **Workshop**

I sent out a letter to all leaders and everyone that has an email about my 2/6 workshop. I forgot to tell you to bring your lunch. Hope to see you there.

### **Chapter Visits**

0211 Chicopee 1/27

### **Notice**

As far as I know these chapters still need a designate.  
0029 Ware,  
0187 North Adams,  
0383 Easthampton,  
0415 Chicopee,  
Rosie has said this is highly recommended. **This needs to be done yearly**

### **TOPS &KOPS Rules**

In all organization whether it's your child's Girl Scout group or your church group, there are rules to follow to make the group run smoothly.

In TOPS we have rules to follow, please refer to your Chapter Manual. You also received a copy of the TOPS/KOPS rules in your January Tops News. Both these sets of rules over rule your chapter bylaws.

### **The Area Captain's Program**

For 2016 is **LEAN ON ME FOR SUPPORT.**

My program has arrived and I'll soon be calling you to set up a date to visit your' chapter. Maybe we won't get any snow this year. These guys are really cute!!



### **Re-Instated KOPS Congratulations!**

Jacqueline A Jordan &  
Debbie Pelletier 0411  
Westfield

## Tips for Setting Realistic Weight-loss Goals:

- Start slow with exercise and find an activity you enjoy.
- Ask your spouse, family member or friend to exercise with you.
- Make your meal times a family affair. Have your children help with cooking and let them choose healthy foods.
- Recognize your process. Continue a proactive mindset, and remember that each day is another day forward!
- Don't be afraid to ask for help. If you think you're getting off-track, a friend, family member and your doctor can help you get back on pace.



## Contest

If you weighed in the week of Thanksgiving and weigh in the first January meeting that your chapter meets and have a loss, I will recognize you. KOPS need to be at or below goal. Please email me by the first week of February. At:

[losingweight@tlavigne.us](mailto:losingweight@tlavigne.us)

## Raffle Winners

Sandy 0179 Shelburne  
Sandy 0179 Shelburne  
Rebecca 0229 N. Adams  
Jeanette 0412 Westfield

## Best and Worst Sweeteners for Weight Loss

By [Johannah Sakimura, RD](#)

Published Jan 8, 2015



With so many people making a renewed effort to eat better in the New Year, talk of calories — and more specifically, how to save them — is at its annual peak. At Everyday Health, we're getting lots of questions from readers about sugar and which type is best for people looking to lose weight and give their diet a healthy makeover.

Unfortunately, I think these questions about types of sugar obscure the far more important question: Are you eating *too much* sugar? The American Heart Association recommends that women consume no more than 6 teaspoons (24 grams) of added sugar per day, while men should have no more than 9 teaspoons (36 grams). If you're going overboard on sugar, you're putting your health at risk, whether that sugar is coming in the form of maple syrup, agave, or high fructose corn syrup. For these individuals,

the priority should always be to eat less sugar by cutting down on sweetened foods and beverages.

As for the best type, it's difficult to give definitive answers because there haven't been enough high-quality, long-term studies comparing the metabolic effects of different types of sugar in people, and the studies that have been done in animals and humans have been contradictory. Many of the reasons people use to promote or denigrate specific sugars and sugar substitutes are based on scientific theories that aren't well-validated.

With all of that said, here's a brief primer on the most popular sweeteners and some health implications to consider when satisfying your sweet tooth:

### ***The 'Real' Stuff: Cane Sugar (Table Sugar), Maple Syrup, Honey***

I am of the increasingly popular belief that a small amount of real sugar from natural sources is the ideal way to enjoy sweet foods. Adding a few teaspoons of any of these sugars to yogurt, oatmeal, coffee, or tea (but not ALL of these foods on the same day!), or eating one to two foods with added sugar (such as cereal, ice cream, cookies, or candy) per day is a perfectly

reasonable approach. People with diabetes can also enjoy small portions of treats with real sugar as part of an overall healthy diet, provided they account for the carbohydrates in their food plan. But restraint is key for *everyone*, since of all of these sugars add empty calories to the tune of 50 to 60 calories per tablespoon. Since table sugar, maple syrup, and honey are all true sugars, they raise blood sugar quickly (just like white flour and other refined carbohydrates), and if eaten in excess they can make it difficult to maintain a healthy weight.

### **Agave**

Agave deserves special mention because it's higher in fructose than other natural sweeteners — in fact, it can be as high as 90 percent fructose. On the plus side, fructose doesn't raise blood sugars as much as glucose, which means agave has a lower glycemic index than other caloric sweeteners. However, that benefit comes at a cost. Fructose isn't regulated by insulin the same way that glucose is, and there's some evidence that large amounts of fructose raise levels of blood fats called triglycerides, which may contribute to other health problems like heart disease, fatty liver, and

metabolic syndrome. While a few teaspoons of agave is fine (and you shouldn't be using more than that anyway), it's certainly not a sweetener to seek out for its health benefits.

### **High Fructose Corn Syrup**

High fructose corn syrup isn't actually much higher in fructose than regular table sugar (sucrose), and most (but not all) research shows that the body processes them similarly, suggesting high fructose corn syrup is no worse than other added sugars. That said, high fructose corn syrup is usually found in hyper-processed foods that aren't good choices for many other reasons. Treat it like other added sugars, and stick to the daily limits outlined above.

### **Artificial Sweeteners: Aspartame, Sucralose, Saccharin, Acesulfame Potassium**

Artificial sweeteners don't provide calories and carbohydrates, so they don't raise blood sugars after meals the same way that real sugars do. People have been relying on sugar-free foods and diet drinks to help them lose weight for decades, but a 2012 American Heart Association report found there is not enough evidence to

conclusively confirm that substituting artificial sweeteners for sugar is an effective weight loss strategy. Recent research has raised intriguing questions about whether artificial sweeteners have undesirable metabolic effects, but these theories haven't yet been validated. I feel that the best approach to limiting sugar is to reduce the total amount of sugar you eat, rather than replacing sugary beverages and foods with artificially-sweetened versions. That said, for people who absolutely won't give up drinking sweet-flavored beverages, diet drinks are a better choice than sugar-loaded sodas.

### **Stevia**

Derived from the stevia plant, stevia is touted as an all-natural, calorie-free alternative to artificial sweeteners. However, the form used in packaged foods, beverages, and packets is actually a highly processed and refined ingredient, not a straight plant extract. The whole-leaf and crude extract forms of stevia still haven't been approved by the FDA as food additives because of unresolved safety concerns. I prefer small amounts of real sugars to stevia, but

ultimately it's a personal preference.

### ***Sugar Alcohols***

Sugar alcohols are typically found in sugar-free gums and candies. They provide fewer calories and carbohydrates than regular sugar and have less impact on blood sugar because they are poorly digested. While sugar alcohols can be a good option for diabetics, they can cause cramping, diarrhea, and general gastrointestinal distress if consumed in large amounts

### **On-line Members**

Teaching opportunity...it is becoming more apparent as we are working on resumes that when on-line only members transfer to chapters, chapters and the on-line members are not following the proper procedures to get the person on the local chapter's books. Then they show up as division winners and KOPS and/or royalty but you can't find them as a member in the chapter in question.

Then they show up as division winners and KOPS and/or royalty but you can't find them as a member in the chapter in question.

Please review the Chapter Manual on this and keep explaining it to the officers via workshops and newsletters. This is super important. From the Chapter Manual(Page 16):

### **Online Membership**

Online members join as new members at [www.tops.org](http://www.tops.org) and have no immediate chapter affiliation. They are supported by an Online Coordinator. Online membership is valid for 12 months from date enrolled. They receive an electronic voucher to print as proof of membership. Headquarters mails them My Day One and TOPS® Rules. They also receive TOPS News. Online members are welcome at Recognition Days and other events (subject to fees and registration where applicable) but are not eligible for the recognition program. They are allowed a courtesy visit to a chapter, as are any other members. An online member has the option of joining a chapter, using the printed voucher as payment. Here's what to do when an online member wants to join your chapter:

1. Write the online membership number and enrollment date listed on the voucher on the Membership Application. Fill in member's first weight recorded at chapter as member's present weight. (The online enrollment date on the voucher is the starting date; the first weight in a chapter is the present weight.) Once an online member joins a chapter, he or she is eligible for awards and recognition.

2. Complete all other areas of the Membership Application as usual.
3. Attach the voucher to the Membership Application and mail to Coordinator. If the online member cannot print a copy of the payment voucher, simply indicate that on the application, and the Coordinator can confirm payment when processing the membership.

### **Healthy and Active**

Karen Dupuis Thank you



**With baby steps you can climb any mountain to your goal!**

**Terri**



Chapter 0412 Westfield collected clothing, food and hygiene products for “Stockings for Soldier’s.” This is the third year the chapter has participated in this event.

Submitted by Judy Valente, leader,



Springfield 0001 held an ugly/funny Christmas sweater contest to help celebrate the season. Left to right: Jean M., Monique, Sherry M., Angela A and Ann C.

Picture submitted by leader Angela Avery