



NOT FOR EVERYONE: According to Harvard Health: not have enough data to strongly recommend avoiding low-calorie sweeteners. We also don't have enough evidence to strongly endorse them. Until we have more research, it might be wise to decrease use of low-calorie sweeteners. The foods that contain these substitutes are typically more processed anyway. And don't forget: the rest of your diet matters too.

Monk Fruit

We are all looking for some sweetness in our life especially in our foods at times. But as I always preach we need to keep the added sugars down as much as possible. The American Heart Association only recommends 100 calories a day for women and 150 for men OF ADDED SUGAR, WHICH IS NOT THE SAME AS NATURAL SUGAR. That is very little AND HARD TO DO FOR MOST. There is much debate of what is safe. The real answer is that they do not know for sure. What I can say is that if you want something natural that is very sweet try using Monk Fruit. It is new on the market, but has been around for awhile. The fruit was first used by Buddhist monks in the 13th century, hence the fruit's unusual name. According to Healthline.com Monk fruit extract is 150 to 200 times sweeter than sugar. The extract contains zero calories, zero carbohydrates, zero sodium, and zero fat. In the United States sweeteners made from monk fruit are classified by the FDA as safe. Here are its Pros and Cons According to [healthline.com](https://www.healthline.com)

Pros

- Sweeteners made with monk fruit don't impact blood sugar levels.
- With zero calories, monk fruit sweeteners are a good option for people watching their weight.
- Unlike some artificial sweeteners, there's no evidence to date showing that monk fruit has negative side effects.
- They're available in liquid, granule, and powder forms.
- They're safe for children, pregnant women, and breast-feeding women.
- According a study it found monk fruit extract has the potential to be a low-glycemic natural sweetener.
 - Another study concluded mogrosides may help reduce oxidative stress. Oxidative stress may lead to disease. Although it's unclear how specific monk fruit sweeteners come into play, the study shows monk fruit's potential.

Cons

- Monk fruit is difficult to grow and expensive to import.
- Monk fruit sweeteners are harder to find than other sweeteners.
- Not everyone is a fan of monk fruit's fruity taste. Some people report an unpleasant aftertaste.
- Some monk fruit sweeteners contain other sweeteners such as dextrose. Depending on how the ingredients are processed, this may make the end product less natural. This may also impact its nutritional profile.
- Mogrosides may stimulate insulin secretion. This may not be helpful for people whose pancreas is already overworking to make insulin.
- They haven't been on the U.S. scene very long. They're not as well studied in humans as other sweeteners.