

SWEETENERS IN THE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF OBESITY

Summary

Refined sugar is an energy supplying product, but it is not the source of any nutrients. Currently, it is suggested that the delay consumption of energy from sugar should not exceed 10%. An average American ingests over 20% of energy in the form added sugar, which exceeds the current recommendation by 2 times. The replacement of traditional sugar with sweeteners with low energy content or calorie-free sweeteners could be an alternative strategy in the management of obesity. The following sweeteners are allowed: acesulfame K, aspartame, cyclamate and its salts – sodium and calcium cyclamate, saccharin and its salts – sodium, potassium and calcium, thaumatin, neohesperidine DC, sucralose as well as salts of aspartame and acesulfame K. The food industry uses intensive sweeteners mainly for the production of non-alcoholic beverages and beverages with low-alcohol content (e.g. beer), con-

centrates, “table sweeteners”, milk beverages as well as for the production of diet foods, from which sugar needs to be eliminated. When applied, these sweeteners can be useful in the prevention and management of obesity, for people, who are interested in restricting energy consumption without resigning from sweet taste as well as for patients with diabetes mellitus. Paradoxically simultaneously with the increase in the popularity of such products there is an increase in the number of overweight and obese people. It seems that the introduction of low-calorie or calorie-free sugar substitutes into foods can be useful as an additional element of low-calorie diet, but it also seems that the introduction of only light food without lifestyle modification does not lead to a decrease in the prevalence of overweight and obesity.