

MEDICAL MINUTE

COFFEE CREAMER



If you are a true card-carrying Lutheran, you drink coffee. It may not be in the official bylaws, but it is strongly implied somewhere between the potluck committee and the Jell-O salad. Some drink it black, which I will do if I am desperate, but a lot of us like cream in it—and some of us, yes please, prefer the flavored creamers that make coffee taste like dessert wearing a disguise. Unfortunately, these creamers are not low in calories or sugar, with some having 30–40 calories or 4–6 grams of sugar per tablespoon. Of course they do. That’s why they taste like happiness with a screw-top lid.

Also noted: not all “zero sugar” creamers are automatically innocent little angels in the dairy aisle. Many get their sweetness from sucralose and acesulfame potassium, which some sources rate as “avoid” because they may pose health concerns like being a cancer risk. So apparently even the creamer wearing a halo may have tiny horns hidden under the cap.

News flash: there is a crop of zero-added-sugar creamers now out from Silk, Natural Bliss, and Chobani. They use stevia instead of sugar, and the oat milk creamers have that creamy taste going for them, too. Oat milk always sounds so wholesome, like it should arrive wearing sensible shoes and carrying a reusable grocery bag.

Like almost everything you buy these days, read the label. The headline may shout “low sugar!” but what it’s using instead may be more questionable than real sugar. Basically, if the ingredient list looks like it was written during a chemistry final, you may want to put the bottle down slowly and back away before your coffee starts needing a dictionary and a medical chart.