

Four low-calorie sweeteners are now approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). This is the group of sweeteners that contain nearly no calories or carbohydrate and don't raise blood glucose.

Acesulfame-K:

Approved by the FDA in 1998, it has been used to sweeten many products. Due to ace-k's slight bitter aftertaste it is most often blended with either aspartame or sucralose and used in either carbonated or non-carbonated beverages.

Aspartame:

Aspartame has been approved by the FDA as a "general purpose sweetener" since 1996. This means aspartame can be used in nearly any food or beverage. Contrary to rumors, the questions about aspartame's safety aren't warranted. The FDA continues to support aspartame's safety. Aspartame has been used for many years and by millions of people. One of aspartame's drawbacks is its loss of sweetness under the high temperatures of food processing or home cooking. The brand names for aspartame are *Nutrasweet*, *Equal* and *NutraTaste*.

Saccharin:

Saccharin has been in use for more than 100 years. Today, the two most popular uses of saccharin are in packets of low calorie sweetener (one popular brand is *Sweet N' Low*) and blended with aspartame in fountain diet soda.

Sucralose:

Sucralose, the sweetening ingredient in Splenda, was approved by the FDA in 1998. The FDA now allows its use in nearly any food and beverage. Sucralose is made from sugar, so it tastes like sugar. But because the body doesn't recognize Splenda as sugar or carbohydrate, it doesn't raise blood glucose levels. Splenda now sweetens more than 100 foods and beverages.

Fit in Foods with Low Calorie Sweeteners:

Just because a food is sweetened with a low calorie sweetener, doesn't mean it is calorie free. True the low-calorie sweetener adds nearly no calories, but other ingredients may add calories and carbohydrate.

Satisfy Your Sweet Tooth:

Below are food options that can help satisfy your sweet tooth as you strive to control your blood glucose and weight. Remember, if they contain calories, count them into your eating plan.

- Sugar-free Popsicles or fudgesicles
- Sugar-free hot cocoa
- Frozen yogurt
- Sugar-free gelatin
- Low or no-sugar jelly
- Sugar-free powdered drink mixes