Turning Down Sweets: Rude or Smart

November 3, 2016 By Karen Hoyt

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Liver disease from cirrhosis or Hepatitis C can put us in some sticky situations when it comes to sweets. I threw away a piece of chocolate S'mores cake this week. After taking one sugary bite, my whole mouth was so pinched up that my eyes watered. As a dinner guest at a friend's home, I felt obliged to scoop some on my plate …. But it made me feel anxious. After taking a deep breath and looking around to see if anyone was watching, I made my move. There wasn't a trash can in sight, so I discreetly headed toward a corner of the kitchen. I sat the plate on the counter and gave it a little shove, and then I made a beeline back to my chair.

That's when I saw my niece watching every movement. Her eyes widened, then she looked away.

Rude or Smart?

Well, I don't know about you, but the thought of a sugar high after supper makes my neck hurt. It must be from the tension created when my jaw tries to hold my mouth closed. Honestly, when the big hit of processed sugar hit my mouth, my tongue involuntarily poked out from between my teeth. The chocolate and white melty mess was there for the whole world to see. Clamping my lips together and making chewing motions was painful. But I didn't want to be rude. Good manners are always important, especially when people have gone out of their way to serve something delicious.

In this instance, my brain over rode my conscience and quickly gave me permission to go dump rest of the chocolate goo. I swallowed hard and fast with a bad rush going down my spine. My smart self knew that it was never rude to take care of my body. Settling back in the chair, I wondered what my niece must be thinking about me. I sat up straight, using my best posture just in case she tried to look at me while she decided. My mind kept up the chatter. I was dutiful in my attention to the thoughts that pinged around in my head.

I didn't want to offend anyone or appear rude. My desire to please others is well known. But really? Eating food that could land me in the hospital isn't rude… is it? I was polite. I didn't make any announcements. I simply snuck over and laid the plate down.

When we have liver disease it automatically adds a burden to our ability to process food. Sugar is hard on our liver. Because our liver is a warehouse, storage facility, and processing plant for all of our food, we have to give it the right foods at the right time. Sugar can be eaten, but it should be

done in small, healthy doses. My transplant doctor even got me to give up my Pop Tarts when I had cancer. Now my sugar comes from raisin cereals and occasional dark chocolate. My fruit addiction is legendary also. Let’s be aware of what sugars we are eating, and not just automatically eat something because it’s offered.

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