

PREVIEW_ Dr. Robert Lustig - Is Sugar Toxic_ (SF 2016)

Everybody says, "Oh come on Dr. Lusting, really... sugar?"

"I mean it's been around for thousands of years, it's natural,

"comes out of the ground... part of our diet for centuries...

How in the world could it possibly be toxic?"

I get this all the time.

I am guilty of hyperbole of, you know,

escalating the argument in some ridiculous fashion.

This is not true, none of this is true.

Now, in order to understand the concept,

you have to understand what we mean by toxicity.

So the definition of toxicity comes straight out of the dictionary,

is "the degree to which a substance can damage an organism."

That's the definition of toxicity.

Now notice that that definition does not distinguish

between acute toxins and chronic toxins.

So you can have acute toxins like sarin or ricin or cyanide...

That will kill you right away.

Right, and in parts per billion, kill over and die right away.

And we have no problem calling those things toxins.

But then we have things called chronic toxins,

like for instance heavy metals, arsenic, tobacco smoke,
where you probably won't die immediately,
but if you're subjected to chronic long term exposure,
you will indeed die.

You don't die from one cigarette, but you might die from 10,000.

So the concept of toxicity is, you know, both of these
and so when we're talking about sugar, we're talking about the chronic side.