

Choose Beverages and Foods to Moderate Your Intake of Sugars

Sugars are carbohydrates and a source of energy (calories). Dietary carbohydrates also include the complex carbohydrates starch and dietary fiber. During digestion all carbohydrates except fiber break down into sugars. Sugars and starches occur naturally in many foods that also supply other nutrients. Examples of these include milk, fruits, some vegetables, breads, cereals and grains.

Foods containing sugar and starch can promote tooth decay. The bacteria in your mouth uses the sugars and starches in foods to produce the acid that decays teeth. The more often you eat foods that contain sugars, and the longer these foods remain in your mouth before you brush your teeth, the greater your risk for tooth decay.

| Nutrition Facts | |
|--|-----|
| Serving Size 1 cup (228g) Servings Per Container 10 | |
| Amount Per Serving | |
| Calories 190 Calories from Fat 10 | |
| % Daily Value* | |
| Total Fat 1.0g | 2% |
| Saturated Fat 0g | 0% |
| Cholesterol 0mg | 0% |
| Sodium 0mg | 0% |
| Total Carbohydrate 45g | 15% |
| Dietary Fiber 6g | 0% |
| ⇒ Sugars 12g | . |
| Protein 5g | |
| Vitamin A | 4% |
| Vitamin C | 2% |
| Calcium | 15% |
| Iron | 4% |

The sugars value listed on the food label includes both naturally occurring and added sugars. The naturally occurring sugars in fruit (fructose, glucose and sucrose) and the sugar in milk (lactose) are examples. Other foods that contain naturally occurring sugars include some vegetables, legumes and cereals. In addition to providing energy (calories), all of these foods also provide vitamins and minerals needed for good health.

Added sugars are sweeteners added to foods and beverages during processing. Examples include table sugar, also known as sucrose, and high fructose corn syrup. The average American consumes almost 20 teaspoons (80 grams) of added sugars a day in the form of soft drinks, donuts, cookies, candy, baked goods and frozen desserts – up 20 percent since 1986. The number one source of added sugars is soft drinks. The problem is these foods provide few nutrients besides calories and often replace healthier foods, contributing to poor diets and our growing problem with weight gain in this country.

Some food with added sugars, like chocolate milk, fruited yogurt, and presweetened cereals also are high in vitamins and minerals. These foods may provide extra calories along with the nutrients and can be part of a healthy diet if you need the extra calories.

Here are some names of added sugars. A food is likely to be high in sugars if one of these names appears first or second in the ingredient list, or if several names are listed.

NAMES FOR ADDED SUGARS THAT APPEAR ON FOOD LABELS

| | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| brown sugar | Glucose | molasses |
| confectioners sugar | high fructose corn syrup | powdered sugar |
| corn sweetener | honey | raw sugar |
| corn syrup | invert sugar | sucrose |
| dextrose | lactose | syrup |
| fructose | malt syrup | table sugar |
| fruit juice concentrate | maltose | white sugar |



How much sugar should I have in a day?

There is no Daily Reference Value for sugars so there isn't an easy answer to this question. One common recommendation is that you limit your intake of added sugars to 10% or less of total calories. For example, if someone needs 2000 calories a day they should get no more than 200 calories of that from the sugars added to foods. Since each gram of sugar has 4 calories, this person should limit their added sugar intake to about 50 grams of sugar a day. See the table below for the amounts of added sugars in some common foods.

Foods High in Added Sugars

| Food | Serving Size | Added Sugar |
|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Soft drink, cola | 12 oz. | 36 grams |
| Chocolate shake | 10 oz. | 36 grams |
| Kool-Aid | 8 oz. | 25 grams |
| Chocolate Bar | 1.5 oz. | 21 grams |
| Frosted Cold Cereal | 1 cup | 12 grams |
| Lowfat yogurt, fruited | 1 cup | 28 grams |
| Sherbet | ½ cup | 20 grams |
| Cake, Frosted | 1 piece | 24 grams |
| Sugar, jam, jelly | 1 tsp. | 4 grams |

Tips to Moderate Your Intake of Added Sugars

- Keep track of your sugar intake. Use the Nutrition Facts Panel to learn about the sugar content of the foods and beverages you consume during the day. A bowl of presweetened cereal, a soft drink and a candy bar can add up the sugar grams quickly.
- Drink water to quench your thirst. Soft drinks, fruit punch, lemonade and kool aid are all sources of sugar. Water is a vital nutrient and is the perfect choice for a beverage. Add lemon or lime slices for flavor. Between meals, offer water to children instead of fruit drinks or soft drinks.
- When eating out order milk, water, unsweetened ice tea or a diet soft drink as a beverage. If you do order a regular soft drink, stick to the small sizes. A “biggie” soft drink can have over 100 grams of sugar in it.
- Choose fruit instead of candy or cookies when you want something sweet.
- When buying canned fruit, choose fruit that is packed in its own juice.
- Mix a low-sugar cereal (like Cheerios) with other presweetened cereals to lower the amount of added sugars in your cereal bowl.
- Make your own fruited yogurt. Add fresh or canned fruit (packed in juice) to plain yogurt. Sweeten to taste with honey or sugar. It will be a lot less than the 5 teaspoons most manufacturers add.

