

Sugar

1. Where does sugar in my diet come from?

Naturally occurring sugars are found in fruit (fructose) and milk (lactose). **Added sugars** are sugars and syrups *added* during preparation, processing, or at the table. Many processed foods have added sugar (see examples listed on the right).

2. What are the daily recommendations for sugar?

The American Heart Association recommends:

- **Men:** Up to **9 teaspoon** (36 grams) per day
- **Women:** Up to **6 teaspoon** (24 grams) per day

For example, a 12-ounce can of a typical soda has 39 grams of sugar, and 1 cup (8 ounce) of fruit juice has 30 grams of sugar.

3. Is adding too much sugar harmful for me?

- Added sugar has almost no nutritional benefits
- Sugar may give you a short energy spike but usually is followed by a “crash” when the sugar (glucose) runs out
- Too much sugar can also increase the chance of having one or more chronic health problems such as weight gain (that may lead to obesity), diabetes, heart disease, and tooth decay.

4. What are some tips to reducing sugar in my diet?

- Add less sugar to what you eat such as coffee, tea or cereal.
- Rethink your drink: if you choose sugary drinks, choose a smaller size and drink less often.
- If you use canned fruit, buy those that are canned in water or its own juice. Avoid fruits canned in heavy or light syrup.
- Add fresh fruits (bananas, strawberries) or dried fruits (apricot, raisins) instead of sugar to hot or cold cereal and plain yogurt.
- Substitute unsweetened apple sauce for oil and sugar in recipes when baking muffins and cakes.
- Enhance flavor with spices instead of sugar—try ginger, nutmeg, all spice, or cinnamon.

5. What are some examples of less sugary snacks?

- **Fruit Pops:** Freeze fruit juice in ice cube trays or paper cups with wooden sticks for holding. Try orange, mango and grape juice.
- **Frozen banana:** Push a wooden stick into a half of a peeled banana, roll in non-fat yogurt, and then in cereal and/or nuts.
- **Frozen chips:** Freeze sliced bananas, berries, grapes on a flat cookie sheet.



Foods containing added sugar:

- **Sweetened beverages:** Sodas, fruit drinks, sports drinks, coffee drinks, and energy drinks
- **Desserts:** Cakes, cookies, pies, and candy, pastries, custards
- **Dairy desserts:** Ice cream, sweetened yogurt, flavored or sweetened milk
- **Grains with added sugars:** Sweet breads such as pan dulce, sugary cereals, and granola
- **Condiments:** Ketchup and BBQ sauce
- **Other sugar names:** high fructose corn syrup or honey, beet sugar, sucrose, maple syrup, molasses, dextrose, maltose, barley malt, cane sugar, glucose, rice syrup.

For more information:

**Los Angeles County
Department of Public Health**
<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/> or
call (213) 351-7889

American Heart Association
<http://www.heart.org>

**Centers for Disease Control and
Prevention (CDC)**
www.cdc.gov/diseasesconditions

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