

# Sweet Facts on Added Sugar



Natural sugar is a part of a healthy diet and is found in fruits, vegetables, dairy and many other foods we eat. Sugars provide energy and offer a taste that naturally satisfies us. During food production or processing or even at the table, sugars or syrups may be added to sweeten or enhance flavor or taste. These added sugars provide energy that needs to be used through physical activity if we want to maintain our weight. Added sugars provide calories but few nutrients, and eating excess sugar can lead to tooth decay. Health experts believe we should get our energy from the food groups, not from added sugar.



## What foods and drinks have added sugars?

Most added sugar in the American diet comes from the consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks. Carbonated sodas, fruit drinks and 'ades' are all high in sugar. The larger the size, the greater the amount of sugar. Candy, cakes, cookies and pies are another major source of added sugar. The average American consumes 22 teaspoons of sugar (355 calories) each day.

That's HUGE!

Each can = 10 teaspoons of sugar

## Did you know?

The American Heart Association found that the amount of added sugars in Americans' food options increased 19 percent between 1970 and 2005. The *2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommends less than 8 teaspoons per day of added sugar based on a 2,000 calories/day diet. That's 32 grams if you're reading labels and about 6 percent of your total calories for the day.



# How to Be Sugar Wise



## How to find added sugars in packaged foods

Labels can be confusing when it comes to sugar. A food can be labeled “sugar free” or “sugarless” and still contain calories from sugar alcohols such as xylitol, sorbitol and mannitol. To limit added sugars read the food label’s ingredient list and look for these terms. They add up to one thing—**sugar**:

- brown sugar
- corn sweetener
- corn syrup
- dextrose
- fructose
- fruit juice concentrates
- glucose
- high-fructose corn syrup
- honey
- invert sugar
- lactose
- maltose
- malt syrup
- molasses
- raw sugar
- sucrose
- sugar
- syrup



## Tips for adding great flavor without sugar

Food can taste sweet without adding sugar or honey. Try these ideas to bring out flavor in your favorite foods.

- Add cinnamon to cooked cereals.
- Nutmeg in cookies and rice brings a new and sweet taste.
- Vanilla can sweeten coffee and baked goods.
- Carrots love ginger and cinnamon lifts sweet potatoes.
- Use juice from citrus fruits to flavor fish, chicken and salad dressing. Your kids will love the taste!

