

Nutrition Facts

Sugar in Your Child's Diet

What is sugar?

Sugar is a type of simple carbohydrate that comes in many forms, including: white sugar, brown sugar, honey, maple syrup, agave and corn syrup.

“Added sugar” is sugar that is added to food and drinks during processing. Foods and drinks that contain added sugars include desserts, some breakfast cereals, yogurts, candy, pop, fruit drinks and chocolate milk. Some families will also use sugar in food preparation and baking or have a sugar bowl at their table for added sweetness.



Is too much sugar bad for your child's health?

Yes. Canada's Food Guide recommends limiting food and drinks that are high in sugar. Added sugars like honey and maple syrup are no healthier than white or brown sugar.

Harmful effects of too much sugar:



Eating too much sugar can lead to health problems including cavities (especially if not brushing teeth regularly) and weight gain. Too many sugary foods and drinks can make children feel full, and this leaves less room for healthy foods. Many foods with added sugars offer little or no vitamins and minerals. Parents should limit the amount of sweetened foods and beverages they offer to ensure their kids are eating a variety of healthy foods every day. **The**

whole family should brush their teeth two times per day for two minutes.

Tips to reduce your child's sugar intake:

- ✓ Offer water most often
- ✓ Offer white milk or unflavoured soy beverages daily
- ✓ Offer your child naturally sweet and healthy snacks, such as:
 - Fresh fruit (apple slices with peanut butter or vanilla yogurt)
 - Frozen grapes (cut in half)
 - Frozen fruit and plain yogurt
 - Homemade fruit smoothies
 - Dried fruit (such as dates and raisins) – These should be eaten with meals rather than on their own

Reminder: There are naturally occurring sugars in fruit, vegetables and milk, however these foods are full of nutrients and contribute to good health. They should not be limited due to sugar content.

Reading food labels:

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 (44g)	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 96	
	% Daily Values*
Total Fat 1g	2%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 1mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 22g	7%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 6g	
Protein 1g	2%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2400mg	2400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

- ✓ Look on the Nutrition Facts table to find the sugar (in grams) in one serving size
- ✓ When choosing foods, compare products and choose the one with less or no added sugar
- ✓ 4 grams of sugar = 1 tsp. sugar

Amounts of sugar in common foods:

Food or Beverage	Grams of Sugar	Teaspoons of Sugar
Apple juice (355mL bottle)	39 g	
Pop (355mL can)	40 g	
Tea with 2 tsp. (10 ml) sugar	8 g	
Chocolate bar	28 g	
Granola bar	10 - 15 g	
Sweetened breakfast cereal	14 g	
Store-bought muffin	44 g	
Soft candy (~1/4 cup)	44 g	

References:

Alberta Health Services. (2016) Sugar Shocker Education Kit. <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/nutrition/if-nfs-sugar-shocker-kit.pdf>

Health Canada. (2019) Canada's Dietary Guidelines. <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/guidelines/>

Unlockfood.ca. 2018. Kids, Sugar, and Healthy Eating. <http://www.unlockfood.ca/en/Articles/Childrens-Nutrition/Healthy-Eating-and-Healthy-Weights/Kids.-Sugar-and-Healthy-Eating.aspx>

Unlockfood.ca. 2018. What You Need to Know About Sugar. <http://www.unlockfood.ca/en/Articles/Carbohydrate-and-Sugar/What-You-Need-to-Know-About-Sugar.aspx>