



## Sugar

About half of your daily calories should come from carbohydrates however it is important that they come in the form of complex carbohydrates which come from whole grains, fruits and vegetables. Sugar is a carbohydrate however foods that have added sugars don't add anything other than empty calories meaning there is no extra nutritional benefit.

### Sugar's Effects

One of the major drawbacks of sugar is that it raises insulin levels, which inhibits the release of growth hormones, which in turn depresses the immune system. An influx of sugar into the bloodstream upsets the body's blood-sugar balance, triggering the release of insulin, which the body uses to keep blood-sugar at a constant and safe level. Insulin also promotes the storage of fat so that when you eat foods that are high in sugar you are allowing the opportunity for rapid weight gain and elevated triglyceride levels, both of which have been linked to cardiovascular disease. Complex carbohydrates tend to be absorbed more slowly, lessening the impact on blood-sugar levels.

### Tips To Reduce Sugar in Your Diet

Buy fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables, whole grain breads and pasta, plain oatmeal, lean meats, poultry, fish and dairy products (other than sugar-sweetened yogurts). Avoid the overly processed foods and read the labels on packaged foods to look for added sugar.

A major contributor to childhood obesity is the over consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks. To help children maintain a healthy body weight, Canada's Food Guide recommends limiting their intake of soft drinks and other sweetened beverages. Encourage them to quench their thirst with water.

*\*\*\*Sugar-sweetened beverages in this context are defined as liquids that are sweetened with various forms of sugars that add calories. These beverages include, but are not limited to fruit flavored drinks, soft drinks, sports and energy drinks and sweetened hot or cold drinks\*\*\**



### Nutritional Facts Labels

Manufacturers can make their product "look like" its low in sugar by using a combination of sweeteners. With so many different types of sweeteners in the product, the total sugar value may not be listed on the nutritional facts label. Reading the ingredients label is a good way to find the nutritional value of the packaged food. Other sweeteners, which have the same effect on the body as sugar may come in the form of cane sugar, evaporated cane sugar, dextrose, sucrose, corn syrup and high fructose corn syrup. According to FDA regulations, ingredients of the highest concentrations have to be listed on the food label first.

### Resources:

Health Canada <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca>

### Fun Food Facts!



The smaller the size of the berry the sweeter the taste!



### Did You Know?



Although honey is a natural sweetener, it is considered a refined sugar because 96% of dry matter are simple sugars: fructose, glucose and sucrose.

The honey bear is the only animal found in nature with a problem with tooth-decay (honey decays teeth faster than table sugar).

Honey has the highest calorie content of all sugars with 65 calories/tablespoon, compared to the 48 calories/tablespoon found in table sugar.