

# Limit Your Sugar Intake

If you're like many people, you may be consuming more sugar than you realize because it's added to so many drinks and foods. Added sugars are sugars or syrups that do not occur naturally but are added to foods or beverages when they are processed or prepared.

## Why is added sugar a concern?

Added sugar adds calories but typically provides little nutritional value. Consuming too much added sugar sets the stage for potential health problems such as:

- ❖ Poor nutrition
- ❖ Weight gain, obesity
- ❖ Diabetes
- ❖ Heart disease
- ❖ Increased triglycerides
- ❖ Tooth decay

A new study finds that fructose has an evident effect on the brain region that regulates appetite, which suggests that corn syrup and other forms of fructose might encourage over-eating.

## Reported benefits of limiting sugar

- ❖ Increased energy level
- ❖ Improved sleep
- ❖ Improved sense of focus
- ❖ Decreased in blood pressure



## How do I know how much added sugar I am eating?

The American Heart Association recommends that women consume no more than 100 calories a day from added sugar (1 gram of sugar equals 4 calories). This is about equal to one 8oz can of soda. The sugar on a nutrition label (typically listed in grams) does not differentiate between natural sugars and added sugars and currently there are no guidelines for sugars that occur naturally in foods.



Reading ingredient labels on processed foods can help to identify **added** sugars. If sugar is listed among the first few ingredients, the product is likely to be high in added sugar. Names for added sugars on food labels include:

- Anhydrous dextrose
- Brown sugar
- Confectioner's powdered sugar
- Corn syrup
- Corn syrup solids
- Dextrose
- Fructose
- High-fructose corn syrup (HFCS)
- Honey
- Lactose
- Malt syrup
- Maltose
- Maple syrup
- Molasses
- Nectars
- Pancake syrup
- Raw sugar
- Sucrose
- Sugar
- White granulated sugar

## Tips on how to reduce added sugar in your diet

- Drink water or other calorie-free drinks
- If you drink fruit juice, make sure it's 100% fruit juice (not from concentrate)
- Choose breakfast cereals carefully. Skip the non-nutritious, sugary and frosted cereals
- Use condiments sparingly. Salad dressing and ketchup have added sugar.
- Choose fresh fruit for dessert. If you buy canned fruit make sure it is packed in water or juice, not syrup
- Snack on vegetables, fruits, low-fat cheese, or lean protein
- Exercise every day. Exercise helps to reduce cravings for foods containing sugar.

References: Mayo Clinic. (2012). Added Sugar: Don't get sabotaged by Sweeteners. Retrieved from: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/added-sugar/MY00845>