

Topic 5: How to Decrease Added Sugars in Your Diet

Almost all the foods that we eat contain sugar. Some are natural, meaning the sugars already exist in the food, such as cow's milk and fruit. Other foods have sugars added in during preparation or processing such as cookies and ketchup, or are added when the food is ready to eat, like the syrup on your morning pancakes. The major sources of added sugar in the American diet come from sugary breakfast cereals and sugary beverages (sodas, coffee drinks, sports drinks, fruit drinks). Most households keep these foods in their homes which means Americans eat way too much sugar!

Added sugar in our foods is completely unnecessary for our health since it provides zero nutrients. The only impact that added sugar provides is excess calories that can lead to many health complications like heart disease, diabetes and obesity.

The only way to determine if your food has added sugar is to read the Nutrition Facts label. The new nutrition label will show a line as "Includes Added Sugars" so you can see how much extra sugar has been added to your food. Choose foods with less than 10 grams of added or less. Also, reading the ingredients list is another way to determine if sugar has been added. Keep in mind, there are many names for sugar.

agave nectar/syrup	corn syrup	lactose
barley malt	date sugar	malt syrup
beet sugar	dextrose	maple syrup
blackstrap molasses	evaporate cane juice	organic raw sugar
brown rice syrup	fructose	pancake syrup
brown sugar	fruit juice	powdered sugar
cane sugar	fruit juice concentrate	rice syrup
caramel	glucose	sorghum syrup
carob syrup	high fructose corn syrup	sucrose
castor sugar	honey	sugar
confectioner's sugar	icing sugar	treacle
coconut sugar	invert sugar	turbinado sugar

Learn how much sugar is in your foods when you read the Nutrition Facts label.
4 grams of sugar equals 1 teaspoon of sugar.

Plain yogurt does not have added sugar, but flavored yogurts will.
Fresh whole solid fruits and 100% fruit juice do not have added sugar, but limit fruit juice since they do not contain all the nutrients found in whole solid fruits, especially fiber. Be careful, some dried fruits will contain added sugar, like dried cranberries/blueberries/cherries.

The added sugar limit per day is:

- Women: less than 6 teaspoons, or 24 grams of added sugar
- Men: less than 9 teaspoons, or 36 grams of added sugar

Topic 5: How to Decrease Added Sugars in Your Diet – Patient Form

Part 1: Test Your Knowledge

1. What foods in your kitchen have you noticed contain added sugar?

2. Which meal has added sugars?
a. grilled chicken salad with Ranch dressing b. plain oatmeal with dried cranberries
c. plain Greek yogurt with frozen blueberries d. both a and b

3. When reading a nutrition label, you should choose foods with less than (how many) grams of added sugar?
a. 10 grams b. 3 grams c. 6 grams d. 24 grams

Part 2: Diet Log – Pick 3 days and log your food and drink intake

Meals, Snacks and Drinks	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Breakfast			
Snack			
Lunch			
Snack			
Dinner			
Snack			
Drinks			

Part 3: Exercise

Did you exercise this week? YES NO

If not, why: _____

If yes, what did you do and how often: _____

Part 4: Weekly Weigh-in

What is your weight today? _____

Today's Date: _____

Print Your Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Dietitian Signature: _____ (Lin Lin Shao RD LD)