

The Skinny on Sugar



The 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans were recently released. The new guidelines recommend that added sugars be limited to less than 10 percent of calories per day. The Dietary Guidelines can be viewed: <https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/>.

What are added sugars?

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines added sugars as “all sugars used as ingredients in processed and prepared foods, and sugars eaten separately or added to foods at the table. The Dietary Guidelines recognizes this as sugar in soft drinks, fruit drinks, sweetened coffee and tea, energy drinks, alcoholic beverages and flavored waters. These beverages account for almost 50% of all added sugars consumed by the US population. The other major source of added sugars is from cakes, pies, cookies, brownies, doughnuts, sweet rolls and pastries; as well as ice cream, other frozen desserts, puddings, candies, jams, syrups and sweet toppings. Good news! These items are NOT found in school cafeterias! Remember – sugars found in milk (lactose) and fruit (fructose) are sugars naturally occurring; and are not the sugars that the Dietary Guidelines are concerned with.

Why is concern about added sugars important?

Cardiovascular disease has been identified as the number one killer of men and women in the United States; overweight and obesity appear to be a key factor for heart

disease, type 2 diabetes and many cancers. Added sugars have little place in the American diet, and controlling added sugars is one way to curb obesity, thus avoiding many of diseases connected to the dangers that obesity can create.

How much added sugar is ok?

The 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends limiting calories from added sugars to no more than 10% each day. If you follow a 2,000 calorie a day diet,

that’s 200 calories.

Added sugars add up....

- One can of regular soda (12 oz) = 126 Calories of Added Sugars
- One serving of chocolate cake = 200 Calories of Added Sugars
- One cup of sugared cereal = 48 Calories of Added Sugars
- One bottle of Sports Drink (20 oz) = 122 Calories of Added Sugars
- One chocolate bar (1.6 oz) = 74 Calories of Added Sugars

Healthy tips to follow...

- Subscribe to the theory of balance, variety and moderation.
- Read and understand food labels.
- Know the difference between natural sugar - fruits, milk, etc. and added sugars.
- Don’t forget to watch the fat, saturated fat and sodium.
- Pay attention to portion sizes.
- Substitute water and other beverages with no added sugar in place of sugar sweetened beverages.
- Maintain ideal weight.

Enjoy good health!

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