

The Sweet Deception

Sugar sneaks into our diets in surprising ways, often hiding in everyday foods and drinks. Most Americans consume about 60 pounds of added sugar each year. This excessive intake can lead to excess weight, serious health issues, zap energy, and affect mood and performance. Our food makes it easy to overlook how much sugar we're really eating. By understanding where sugar comes from, you can make smarter choices to cut back.

Hidden in Plain Site

- **Condiments and Sauces:** Ketchup, BBQ sauce, and pasta sauces often with high-fructose corn syrup.
- **Coffee Creamers and Beverages:** Flavored creamers, sodas, energy drinks, and many fruit juices can be sugar bombs.
- **Processed Foods:** Breakfast cereals, oatmeal, flavored yogurts, and packaged snacks.
- **Breads and Soups:** Even savory items like store-bought bread or canned soups can sneak in sugars.
- **Canned Fruit, Fruit Preserves, and Jams:** Can be packed in syrup or contain added sugars. Opt for fruit canned in juice or no-added-sugar versions.
- **Beverages:** Soda, energy drinks, and fruit juices (e.g., fruit punch) are major contributors, usually with high-fructose corn syrup.
- **Processed Foods:** Packaged soups, breads, and snacks frequently contain added sugars, with processed foods accounting for a significant portion of daily sugar intake.
- **Dressings and Marinades:** Some salad dressings and marinades include added sugars, often listed under various names like dextrose.
- **Snack Foods:** Items like granola bars, trail mix, and crackers can have added sugars.

Read the Label

It's important to read labels to understand how much sugar (or alternative sweetener) has been added. Look at the grams of sugar and check the ingredients list.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size oz.	
Serving Per Container	
Amount Per Serving:	
Calories	Calories From Fat
% Daily value*	
Total Fat	
Saturated Fat	
Trans Fat	
Total Carbohydrate	
Dietary Fiber	
Sugars	
Protein	
Ingredients:	

Sugar Target
Ideally look for foods with less than 9 grams of sugar. Less is better!

Sugars: dextrose, fructose, galactose, glucose, lactose, maltose, sucrose, dextrin, maltodextrin, sucanat, agave

Artificial Sweeteners: aspartame (Amino-Sweet), sucralose, saccharin

Sugar Alcohols: erythritol, isomalt, lactitol, maltitol, mannitol, sorbitol, xylitol

More Natural Sugars: stevia, monk fruit, honey, maple syrup, molasses



Why Does It Matter?

It may not seem that important, but excess sugars can lead to serious disease over time. Just the increase in daily caloric intake of 100 calories per day can lead to 10 pounds of weight gain over three years. It's so slow, you barely even notice.

- **Obesity:** Adds empty calories, leading to weight gain and higher body fat.
- **Blood Sugar Spikes and Crashes** causing irritability and shakiness
- **Mood Impacts:** Mental fog, anxiety, depression, impaired memory
- **Increased Appetite:** Disrupts hunger hormones, leading to sugar cravings
- **Digestive Discomfort:** May cause bloating or diarrhea
- **Type 2 Diabetes:** Promotes insulin resistance, increasing diabetes risk.
- **Heart Disease:** Raises triglycerides and bad cholesterol, increasing risk for heart attack and stroke risk.
- **Fatty Liver Disease:** Overloads the liver with fructose, contributing to NAFLD
- **Dental Issues:** Fuels cavity-causing bacteria, causing tooth and gum disease.
- **Reduced Endurance:** Sugar crashes sap stamina for exercise or daily tasks.
- **Inflammation:** Promotes inflammation, slowing muscle recovery, and raising injury risk.
- **Short-Lived Boosts & Chronic Fatigue:** Provides quick energy followed by sluggishness and fatigue.
- **Sleep Disruption:** Affects sleep quality, reducing daytime energy.

Tips for Cutting Back

- **Read Labels:** Spot sugar aliases and choose low-sugar options.
- **Go Whole:** Opt for fresh fruits, vegetables, and protein over processed foods.
- **Drink Smart:** Swap sugary drinks for water, herbal tea, or unsweetened coffee.
- **Portion Control:** Enjoy sweets sparingly, balancing with nutrient-rich foods.

