

# Cut Down on Added Sugars

It's important to avoid or limit foods and drinks that are higher in added sugars. If you have a lot of added sugars in your diet, it's hard to get all the nutrients you need without also getting too many calories — and that may make it hard to stay at a healthy weight.

**Learn how to cut down on added sugars.**



## What are added sugars?

**Added sugars** include sugars that are added to foods and drinks — and foods packaged as sweeteners, such as table sugar, syrups, and honey. Added sugars are in foods and beverages such as:



Drinks like regular soda, sweetened coffee and tea drinks, fruit drinks that aren't 100% juice, energy drinks, and flavored milk



Sweet treats like cookies, cake, ice cream, donuts, and candy



Granola bars, flavored yogurt, and many breakfast cereals

Some foods and drinks have sugar naturally — like fruits, 100% fruit juice, plain milk, and plain yogurt. The sugars in these foods are **not** added sugars.



### What about fruit juice?

Most of the time, **choose whole fruits** instead of juice. If you do drink juice:

- Choose 100% fruit juice — which doesn't have added sugars
- Have a small serving

# What's the limit for added sugars?

Try to limit added sugars as much as possible — a simple rule is to aim for **less (or much less!) than 50 grams a day**. And people who get less than 2,000 calories a day, such as younger children and some teens and women, need to limit added sugars to much less than 50 grams a day.

Children under age 2 need to make every bite count to meet their nutrient needs within calorie limits. That's why it's important not to give them any foods or beverages with added sugars.



## Nutrition Facts

8 servings per container

**Serving size** 2/3 cup (55g)

**Amount per serving**  
**Calories** **230**

% Daily Value\*

**Total Fat** 8g **10%**

Saturated Fat 1g **5%**

Trans Fat 0g

**Cholesterol** 0mg **0%**

**Sodium** 160mg **7%**

**Total Carbohydrate** 37g **13%**

Dietary Fiber 4g **14%**

Total Sugars 12g

Includes 10g Added Sugars **20%**

**Protein** 3g

Vitamin D 2mcg 10%

Calcium 260mg 20%

Iron 8mg 45%

Potassium 235mg 6%

\* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

## Check the label

Check the Nutrition Facts label to see if foods are **low** or **high** in added sugars. Look at the % Daily Value (DV):

- **5% DV or less** is a **low** source of added sugars
- **20% DV or more** is a **high** source of added sugars

More often, choose foods that are lower in added sugars.



## Why less than 50 grams?

It's important to get **less than 10% of your daily calories** from added sugars. If you get more than that, it's hard to get all the nutrients you need without getting too many calories. For a 2,000-calorie diet, 10% is 200 calories — and that's about 50 grams of added sugars.

So 50 grams is a simple limit to remember. But try to get even less. And remember not to give children under age 2 any added sugars at all.

Added sugars add up fast! See how many grams of added sugars and calories are in 1 serving (12 ounces) of these drinks:

| Drink (12-ounce serving)       | Added sugars (grams) | Total calories | % DV of added sugars |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Sweetened tea                  | 29                   | 115            | 58%                  |
| Regular soda                   | 37                   | 156            | 74%                  |
| Lemonade                       | 43                   | 171            | 86%                  |
| Fruit drink (like fruit punch) | 59                   | 238            | 118%                 |

## How can I cut down on added sugars?

Small changes make a big difference! Try these healthy swaps:

- Instead of regular soda, drink water, sparkling water, or unsweetened tea
- Instead of sugary cereal, try plain oatmeal or yogurt with fruit
- Replace the candy dish with a fruit bowl

Take small steps to cut back:

- Make your own coffee or order plain coffee — add 1 teaspoon of sugar or less, use a no-calorie sweetener, or don't use any sweetener at all
- Enjoy a smaller serving of dessert — or share dessert with a friend

Remember, small changes make a big difference! So **start simple** — begin cutting down on added sugars today.

- Learn about the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and get more resources to help you eat healthy at [DietaryGuidelines.gov](https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov)
- Find more healthy eating tips and recipes at [MyPlate.gov](https://www.myplate.gov)



## What about low- and no-calorie sweeteners?

Low- and no-calorie sweeteners — like in “diet” sodas and sugar-free syrups — can help cut down on added sugars and calories. But they may not be a good way to manage your weight in the long term. If you have questions about how to manage your weight, talk with your doctor or a registered dietitian.

