



TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY

## How Sweet It Is - The Sugar Content of Food

We need to build awareness of the sugar content of various foods so that we may learn to make sensible choices when it comes to sugar. Let's test our knowledge of the sugar that is present in the foods we choose every day. The answers may surprise you. I will read two choices – see if you know which one has a higher sugar content than the other:

### 8 ounces of regular cola or one 20-ounce bottle of citrus-flavored, vitamin-enhanced water?

One 20-ounce bottle of citrus-flavored, vitamin-enhanced water has about 32.5 grams of sugar, while 8 ounces of regular cola has about 27 grams of sugar. Always check the serving size and amount of sugar on the nutrition facts label of these so-called “enhanced” waters. They are often filled with as much – or more – sugar and calories as soda or juice.

### 1 ounce of dried cherries or 1 ounce of fresh cherries?

1 ounce of dried cherries has 16 grams of sugar, while 1 ounce of fresh cherries has about 4 grams of sugar. Given that most of the water is removed from dried fruit, the amount of sugar-per-ounce is higher for dried fruit compared to its fresh equivalent. Dried fruit is still considered a healthy and vitamin-packed snack, just be mindful of portion size.

### 1 small orange or 1 cup of orange juice?

1 cup of orange juice has around 23 grams of sugar while 1 small orange has 9 grams of sugar. 100% fruit juices do count toward your daily recommended servings of fruit, just be aware of how much juice you are pouring. Each 1/4 to 1/2 cup (depending on the fruit) provides the same number of calories as the whole fruit. Try adding a splash of your favorite fruit juice to sparkling water for a low-sugar alternative.

### 1/2 cup of baked beans or 2 Snickers miniatures?

1/2 cup of baked beans actually has more sugar – at 12 grams – than 2 Snickers miniatures, which have 9 grams total. So, should you opt for candy bars instead of baked beans? Not exactly. This simply demonstrates that sugar is not limited to candy and cookies and can pop up in some unexpected places, such as canned goods and prepared sauces. Always check the Nutrition Facts Label!

### 1/2 cup of peaches canned in 100% juice or 1/2 cup of peaches canned in heavy syrup?

1/2 cup of peaches canned in heavy syrup has about 24 grams of sugar, while 1/2 cup of peaches canned in 100% fruit juice has around 14 grams of sugar. When it comes to canned fruit, words like “heavy syrup” on the front of the label indicate higher amounts of sugar. Look instead for labels that read “light syrup,” “water,” or “100% fruit juice.”

### Small changes can make life sweeter!

We do not have to deny ourselves the sweets we enjoy. Depriving ourselves of the foods we enjoy often times only makes us want them that much more! Instead, we can make simple modifications or substitutions and remember that small changes can add up to big savings on sugar and overall calories.

<b>Instead of</b> 1/2 cup of strawberry ice cream with 2 T of chocolate (44 g of sugar),	<b>Try</b> 1/2 cup of vanilla ice cream with 1/2 cup of fresh, chopped strawberries and 1 T of chocolate syrup (27 g of sugar)
<b>Instead of</b> a medium, iced, blended mocha with whipped cream (47 g of sugar)	<b>Try</b> a medium iced coffee with sugar-free vanilla syrup (2 g of sugar)
<b>Instead of</b> 1/2 cup of chocolate fudge ice cream (25 g of sugar)	<b>Try</b> a low-fat Fudgsicle bar (9 g of sugar)
<b>Instead of</b> 2 T of raspberry jelly for a topping (24 g of sugar)	<b>Try</b> topping with 1/2 cup fresh raspberries (3 g of sugar)
<b>Instead of</b> 1/2 cup canned pineapple chunks in heavy syrup (22 g of sugar)	<b>Try</b> 1/2 cup canned pineapple chunks in 100% juice (13 g sugar)
<b>Instead of</b> 3/4 cup dry Cinnamon Crunch cereal (10 g of sugar)	<b>Try</b> 1 packet instant, plain oatmeal made with skim milk and sprinkled with cinnamon (5 g of sugar)
<b>Instead of</b> 1 cup of cranberry juice cocktail (33 g of sugar)	<b>Try</b> 1/4 cup cranberry juice cocktail mixed with sparkling water (8 g of sugar)
<b>Instead of</b> 1 small box of raisins (25 g of sugar)	<b>Try</b> 17 grapes (13 g of sugar)
<b>Instead of</b> 1/2 cup baked beans (12 g of sugar)	<b>Try</b> 1 cup green beans (1 g of sugar)