



**Dear EAT RIGHT MONTANA Friend:**

Welcome to number nine in **EAT RIGHT MONTANA's Real Guidelines for Real People** series. This month we focus on the "sugar" guideline: **Choose beverages and foods to moderate your intake of sugars.**

Soft drinks are the number one source of added sugars in the US. The issue of soft drink intake, especially among young people, is a hotly debated health issue. To form your own opinion, you may want to check out the full-spectrum of viewpoints and perspectives represented by these diverse web sites:

- **USDA Economic Research Service (ERS)** reports food and nutrient intake and compares US diets to Food Guide Pyramid and Dietary Guidelines. Complete data tables can easily be downloaded as Excel spreadsheets @ [www.ers.usda.gov/briefing/DietAndHealth/data/](http://www.ers.usda.gov/briefing/DietAndHealth/data/)
- **USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion** looks at the complex relationship of added sugar intake and the diet quality of American consumers @ [www.usda.gov/cnpp/Insights/Insight21.PDF](http://www.usda.gov/cnpp/Insights/Insight21.PDF)
- **American Dietetic Association (ADA)** position paper on nutritive and non-nutritive sweetener provides excellent (although slightly dated from 1996) background information @ [www.eatright.org/adap0598.html](http://www.eatright.org/adap0598.html)
- **American Medical Association** issues an editorial challenge on soft drink consumption in teens, based on research about bone fractures @ <http://archpedi.ama-assn.org/issues/v154n6/ffull/ped90522.html>
- **National Soft Drink Association** provides an industry perspective ("A Good Part of America") and its analysis of research @ [www.nsda.org/](http://www.nsda.org/)
- **IdeaBeat** offers an insider's look at Coke's Guide on "Beverages: The Power to Grow Business Profitably" @ [www.idealbeat.com/softdrinks/](http://www.idealbeat.com/softdrinks/)
- **Center for Science and the Public Interest** is well-known for an activist approach to concerns about "liquid candy" @ [www.cspinet.org/sodapop/](http://www.cspinet.org/sodapop/)

As always, we welcome your suggestions and comments.

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# Straight Scoop about Sugar on Labels

## How to read and understand info about added sugars

Sugars are carbohydrates, which serve as an energy source for the body. There are many types of sugars. They occur both naturally and as ingredients in many foods.

The nutrition panel on a food label lists the total amount of sugars in a serving of the food. This amount includes sugars found naturally in foods such as the sugars in milk and fruit. It also includes added sugars. The ingredient list must name all added sugars.

### ADDED SUGARS IN INGREDIENT LISTS:

A food is likely to be high in sugars if one of these names appears first or second in the ingredient list, or if several names are listed.

<b>Brown sugar</b>	<b>Fruit juice concentrate</b>	<b>Maltose</b>
<b>Corn sweeteners</b>	<b>Glucose</b>	<b>Maple syrup</b>
<b>Corn Syrup</b>	<b>High-fructose corn</b>	<b>Molasses</b>
<b>Confectioner's sugar</b>	<b>Syrup (HFCS)</b>	<b>Raw sugar</b>
<b>Dextrin</b>	<b>Honey</b>	<b>Sucrose</b>
<b>Dextrose</b>	<b>Invert sugar</b>	<b>Syrup</b>
<b>Evaporated cane juice</b>	<b>Lactose</b>	<b>Table sugar</b>
<b>Fructose</b>	<b>Malt syrup</b>	<b>Turbinado sugar</b>

### LABEL LINGO DEFINITIONS:

<b>LABEL TERM ...</b>	<b>MEANS ...</b>
<b>Calorie free</b>	less than 5 calories per serving
<b>Sugar free</b>	less than 0.5 gram sugars per serving
<b>Reduced or less sugar</b>	at 25% less sugar per serving as compared with standard serving size of the traditional food
<b>No added sugars/no sugar</b>	no sugars added during processing or packing including ingredients that contain sugar such as juice or dried fruit

**NOTE: The term "low sugar" may not be used as a claim on food labels.**

### SWEET COMPARISONS:

In an attempt to lower both added sugars and calories, the food industry continues to develop a wide variety of non-nutritive, intense, or "artificial" sweeteners. Here are some of the sugar substitutes in use today, along with their sweetness compared to table sugar.

<b>SWEETENER</b>	<b>COMPARATIVE SWEETNESS</b>
<b>Sorbitol</b>	0.5 times as sweet
<b>High-fructose corn syrup</b>	1.5 times as sweet
<b>Aspartame</b>	180.0 times as sweet
<b>Acesulfame K</b>	200.0 times as sweet
<b>Saccharin</b>	300.0 times as sweet

Provided by Eat Right Montana



**Real Guidelines for Real People: Straight scoop on sweets**  
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**Healthy Families 2001: Making sensible sugar choices (9<sup>th</sup> in a series of 12)**

Since the beginning of time, it seems that humans have had a sweet tooth. In the melodious voice of Mary Poppins (Julie Andrews), “A spoonful of sugar makes the medicine go down.”

“The problem today is that Americans are eating, and drinking, too many of spoonfuls of sugar for good health,” says Christine Emerson, MS, RD, registered dietitian with the Montana Office of Public Instruction. “Based on USDA surveys, Americans now average 20.5 teaspoons of added sugars per day. That’s 68.5 pounds per year.” Added sugars are sugars and syrups added to foods in processing or preparation. This does not include the naturally occurring sugar in foods like fruit or milk.

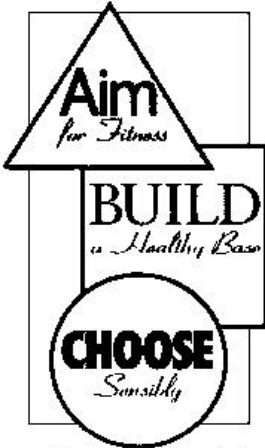
In some age groups, sugar intake is even higher. US teens (11 to 17 years old) consume a daily average of 15 teaspoons of sugar from soft drinks alone. This means 10 percent of teen calories come from carbonated beverages, or fruit-flavored, part juice and sports drinks. These empty calories lack the bodybuilding nutrients, like the protein and calcium found in milk. Health experts also believe that soft drink calories are a major contributor to child and teen obesity, as well as expensive dental problems.

According to Emerson, non-diet soft drinks are the number one source of added sugars in the US. A single can of regular soda pop contains 150 sugar calories. The 40 grams of sugar in 12-ounces of pop are equal to about 10 teaspoons of sugar. “Consumers are often shocked when they realize that drinking a 32-ounce pop is basically the same as eating a half cup of table sugar.”

Eat Right Montana, a statewide coalition promoting healthful eating and active lifestyles, urges all Montanans to sensibly limit their intake of beverages and foods that are high in added sugars. When it comes to added sugars, the nutrition goal is to cut back, not out.

“Sugary foods and beverages become a health problem when they replace other more nutrient-dense choices,” says Emerson. “When it comes to soft drinks, moderation means a can or less per day.”

**ATTACHED: “Making Sensible Sugar Choices” and “The Truth About Kids and Sugar”**



*...for good health*

## Real Guidelines for Real People: Making Sensible Sugar Choices

There's no doubt about it – Americans have a national sweet tooth. We love to eat sugary foods. At the same time, we worry that they are bad for us and often feel guilty about eating them.

The good news about sweets is that you can have your cake – and enjoy it too. To enjoy good taste and good health, all you have to do is eat smaller pieces, less often. Fortunately, when it comes to added sugars, there are many sensible, delicious ways to cut back.

Moderation, the goal in terms of sugar intake, is the place between deprivation and “I can’t believe I ate the whole thing!” You can cut back on how often you eat cakes, pies or cookies – and enjoy more fruit treats. You can cut back on the size of dessert portions – and enjoy more whole grains, veggies, and lean meats at dinner. You can cut back on your intake of soft drinks – and enjoy more sparkling water, herbal ice teas, and 100% fruit and vegetable juices.

### C Choose moderate amounts of SUGAR.

- 1. For liquid refreshment, choose WATER or MILK.**
  - ✓ A single can of regular pop contains 150 calories – all from sugar. Water is calorie-free, sugar-free, fat-free – and very refreshing. Fat-free or low-fat milk offer protein, calcium, and magnesium for minimal calories.
- 2. For a bubbly drink, choose CLUB SODA with juice.**
  - ✓ If you like bubbles in your beverage, try mixing club soda (or sparkling water) with 100% fruit juice – and a squeeze of lemon or lime. You’ll get the phytonutrients from juice – and less sugar than a soft drink.
- 3. For a soft drink, choose SMALL or REGULAR.**
  - ✓ Healthy people can enjoy moderate amounts of sugar and soft drinks – the key is to control the portion size. A super-sized soft drink can have as many calories as a whole meal – 550 calories in a 44-ounce drink.
- 4. For a sensible (sweet) snack, choose FRUIT.**
  - ✓ Satisfying your sweet tooth – and meeting your nutrients needs – is as easy as a piece of fruit. Fresh, dried, frozen or canned, fruit is packed with natural sweetness and the phytonutrients you need for good health.
- 5. For a sensible, satisfying dessert, choose to SHARE.**
  - ✓ When you are tempted with an array of rich, sugary desserts the solution is simple (and less expensive!). Ask for several forks and share a dessert with family and friends. Or take half home to enjoy later.

**6. For a sensible treat, choose a SMALL PORTION.**

✓ Typical dessert portions can leave you stuffed and uncomfortable, especially after a big meal. Try starting out with a smaller portion. Eat half or a third of your usual serving – slowly savoring every bite.

**7. For homemade treats, choose to REDUCE sugar.**

✓ You can cut back on the sugar in home cooking – without sacrificing flavor. In many recipes, you can reduce the sugar by one-quarter to one-third without affecting the texture or the taste of the food product.

**8. For sensible candy indulgence, choose a MINI-BAR.**

✓ Cute, miniature candy bars aren't just for Halloween any more. They're available year-round, in a variety of flavors. Enjoy your favorite candy bar – for a tiny fraction of the sugar, fat and calories in a king-size bar.

**9. For a lower sugar intake, choose SUGAR-FREE.**

✓ Sugar-free foods and beverages, made with non-nutritive sweeteners, can help you reduce your overall sugar intake. Remember that sugar-free does not necessarily mean calorie-free – or packed with nutrition.

**10. For good dental health, choose to BRUSH OFTEN.**

✓ Brush at least twice a day – with fluoride toothpaste. Brush as soon as possible after eating foods high in sugar and carbohydrates, especially sticky, gummy foods like caramel candies or raisins. Floss regularly.

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For more tips on making sensible sugar choices:

- American Diabetes Association's Nutrition pages  
<http://www.diabetes.org/main/health/nutrition/default.jsp>
- International Food Information Council  
<http://www.ific.org>
- USDA Food and Nutrition Information Center  
<http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/>

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**Celebrating  
Healthy Families  
2001**



# The Truth about Kids and Sugar

Sugar is one of the most controversial areas of nutrition. We love to eat sweets – and yet we believe that they are “bad for you.” Some people make unfounded claims that sugar directly causes obesity and behavior problems in children. Here are the facts.

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## The not-so-sweet facts

### **Refined sugar is empty calories.**

\* The sugar found in table sugar, soda pop, Kool-Aid®, and candy provides calories – without the benefit of other nutrients like protein or vitamins.

### **Many kids get too much sugar.**

\* Nutrition experts estimate that many American kids now get almost half their calories from added sugar and fat.

### **Sweets can replace necessary foods.**

\* The problem comes when kids eat sweets instead of nutrient-dense fruits, veggies, and dairy foods. This often happens at snack time when kids fill up on empty calories first.

### **Sugary drinks can be a real problem.**

\* Studies show that kids who drink a lot of soft drinks get more calories (and more caffeine) and less milk and juice.

### **Sugar does cause tooth decay.**

\* Getting too much sugar, especially in sticky foods like some candies, does cause tooth decay.

### **Kids watch adult role models.**

\* Children definitely pay more attention to what you do, than what you say. If you drink lots of pop and eat lots of sweets, your kids will too!!

## Be sensible about sweets

### **Forget the good-food, bad-food mentality.**

\* Sugar is not a bad or evil food. People are born with a natural liking for sweet foods. Eating healthfully means enjoying some sugar without overdoing.

### **Kids can enjoy some sugar calories.**

\* Kids have high-energy needs and can afford some sugar calories. Offer sweets in addition to regular, balanced meals.

### **Look for sweets with nutrient value.**

\* The natural sweetness of fruits can be a bonus for high-energy snacks. Spread a little peanut butter on banana or apple slices. Put sliced frozen or fresh berries on frozen yogurt or ice cream.

### **Go for drinks with kid-power.**

\* Keep pop and Kool-Aid® as an occasional beverage. Make low-fat milk and 100% juices your everyday choices.

### **Offer a wide variety of foods.**

\* Kids' teeth (and their bodies) grow strong when they eat foods from all the layers of the Food Guide Pyramid.

### **Model moderation with sweets.**

\* You can show your kids how to enjoy sweet foods without going overboard. Eat a wide variety of foods – and quench your thirst with water, milk or juice first!

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**Celebrating  
Healthy Families  
2001**



# Healthy Families 2001:

## Real Guidelines for Real People

January 2001

- **The New Dietary Guidelines: What's in them for you?**

February 2001

- **Aim for a Healthy Weight: Getting real about weight management**

March 2001

- **Be Physically Active Each Day: Spring into fun and fitness**

April 2001

- **Let the Pyramid Guide Your Food Choices: Build a tasty eating style**

May 2001

- **Choose a Variety of Grains: Great grains for life**

June 2001

- **Choose a Variety of Fruits and Vegetables: 5 A Day and beyond**

July 2001

- **Keep Food Safe to Eat: Putting safety first**

August 2001

- **Making Sensible Fat Choices: Straight facts on fat**

September 2001

- **Making Sensible Sugar Choices: Straight scoop on sugar**

October 2001

- **Making Sensible Sodium Choices: Straight shake on salt**

November 2001

- **Making Sensible Beverage Choices: A toast to your health**

December 2001

- **Year-Round Health: Real guidelines for real health**

