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**
- Find more healthy eating tips and recipes at **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.