

Making Sense of Added Sugar

5 or more
fruits &
vegetables
every day

WHAT IS IT?

The human body uses glucose — or sugar — as fuel. Glucose breaks down into simple and complex carbohydrates. Here's what that means:

Simple carbohydrates offer a quick burst of energy. They make our blood glucose levels spike, and then quickly fall back down. You may know this phenomenon as the “sugar high.” It is important to limit simple carbohydrates in the diet, such as soda, candy, white bread and white rice.

Complex carbohydrates contain larger sugar molecules. These larger molecules take longer to break down than simple carbohydrates, so they do not cause large fluctuations in blood glucose levels. Complex carbohydrates, consumed in moderation, are part of a healthy diet. Examples are whole grains, such as brown rice, whole wheat bread and quinoa.

WHERE IS IT FOUND?

- Sugar either occurs naturally in foods or it is added to a product during the manufacturing process.
- Added sugars, like those found in soda, candy bars and sugary cereal should be consumed less frequently than foods with natural sugars.
- Fruit and milk have natural sugar.
- Fruit has fiber and nutrients that slow down the digestion process of the natural sugar.

HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

- Adults and children should limit fruit intake to three to four servings per day.
- Adult women and children under 18 should limit added sugar intake to 25 grams per day.
- Adult men should not exceed 37 grams per day.



HOW TO MONITOR IT

Both natural and unnatural sugar consumption should be monitored on a daily basis. Here are some tips on how you can monitor your sugar intake:

1. Look at the nutrition facts label. The total amount of sugar in the product will be listed in grams.
2. Look at the ingredient list and search for sources of sugar.
 - As a rule of thumb, any word ending in “ose” is a sugar.
 - Other names for sugar include agave nectar, corn syrup, fruit concentrate, high fructose corn syrup, etc.
3. Avoid purchasing pre-sweetened items because they are typically high in sugar. Instead, add sweetness on your own by adding naturally sweet foods. This method is better because you can control the amount of sugar in your food. Plus, you can make things sweeter using fruit, which has added benefits of fiber and vitamins.
 - Add fresh fruit to plain yogurt.
 - Buy plain cereal and add honey or fruit.
 - Use unsweetened applesauce as a substitute for sugar in certain recipes, such as cakes or cookies.



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Download more 5-2-1-0 resources at letsmovepittsburgh.org/5210. To start a 5-2-1-0 campaign at your home or organization, please contact letsmove@phipps.conservatory.org.



Let's Move Pittsburgh is a program of Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens. This program is adapted from Let's Go! www.lets-go.org.