

SUGAR



What is sugar?

Sugar is one of two main forms of carbohydrates along with starch. There are many different type of sugar that all come from different sources.

The main forms are:

Fructose-Sugar naturally in fruit and honey

Lactose-sugar naturally present in milk

Maltose-Malt sugar from barley and wheat

Glucose-sugar, which is the main building block of starch and the body's main energy source.

How much sugar is recommended?

Currently most adults and children in the UK are eating too much sugar. Foods high in sugar do form part of a healthy balanced diet but only 1/12 of our food intake should comprise of these foods. Often foods high in sugar provide energy but very little other important nutrition. For this reason, foods high in sugar are often referred to as empty calories.

It is the added sugars we need to reduce rather than those found naturally in foods such as fruit and milk. Another important reason for this is the effect of added sugars on tooth decay, which can be prevented by reducing the amount of high sugar foods such as fizzy drinks, sweets, cakes and jam.

The Guideline Daily Amount (GDA) for sugar is 90g a day.

Food labelling

Checking food labels is a way to know if product is high or low in high in sugar.

The following can be used as a guide. Look for the Carbohydrates (of which is sugar)'figure in the nutritional information box.

High is more than 15g sugars per 100g: Low is 5g sugars or less per 100g

If the amount of sugars per 100g is in between these figures, then this is a medium level of sugar.

This value is the total in the product (added sugar + sugars found naturally).

The only way of knowing which sugars are added sugars is by checking the ingredient's list. The sugars below are known as added sugars.

Glucose-Glucose Syrup-Fructose-Lactose-Corn Starch-Invert Syrups-Maltose-Raw Brown Sugar-Hydrolysed Starch-Treacle-Honey

If carbohydrates is listed alone this will be a value for all sugars including starch therefore you will need to look at the ingredient's list to establish which types of sugar the products contain.

How to reduce sugars

The following list of high sugar foods and possible alternatives can be used within units to reduce the total amount of sugar served.

Fruit canned in sugar-fruit canned in natural juice.

Pies and crumbles with added sugar-pies and crumbles sweetened with added fruits.

Jam-Reduced sugar jam.

Puddings with high sugar-Puddings made with artificial sweeteners, low sugar yoghurts, jellies, and fruit based desserts.

Sweet snacks-biscuits, cakes and chocolate-fruit, nuts, seeds, fruit loaf-scones muffins.

High sugar breakfast cereal's-High fibre breakfast cereals with dried fruits.

Baking-Reduce the amount of sugars, cooking with artificial sweeteners.