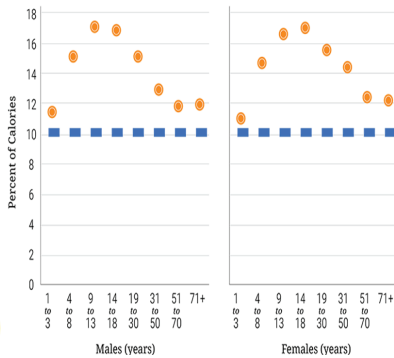




Added Sugars



## The Sugar Challenge

Do you know how much sugar you eat? We have all been told sugar isn't good for us but no one avoids it completely, that would be no fun at all! I can tell you I'm not living without chocolate! But getting an awareness of how much we're eating and what the recommended limits are could help us out.

Sugar intake has been associated with obesity, diabetes and heart disease. This [article](#) reviews a study that showed reducing added sugar improved blood pressure, glucose tolerance and cholesterol levels in children. A healthy diet also supports our microbiome which influences our immune system and general health.

The Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion reports that ~70% of Americans consume more than the USDA's suggested limit of added sugars. Children and young adults age 9 to 19 have the highest intake above the upper limit suggested by the USDA.

Limiting added sugar is important for people of all ages and body sizes.

<https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/img/figure-2-9.png>

**So what are we looking for?** Sugar in foods can be divided into two categories; sugar naturally found in foods such as fruits, grains and vegetables and sugar added to foods such as that in soda and cookies. Most of our sugar intake is from sugared drinks, sweets and snacks. But added sugar is also hidden where we don't expect it in foods such as flavored yogurt, canned fruits and energy/breakfast bars & cereals.

Unfortunately, the Nutrition Facts food label does not easily tell us if sugar has been added to a food. The line for "sugars" includes both added and natural sugars.

Fruits, vegetables and grains all contain carbohydrates some of which are listed as "sugars" on the Nutrition Facts food label.

This is changing with the new food label that is being rolled out slowly. There will be a separate line for added sugars. To identify added sugars look for the following in the ingredients list:

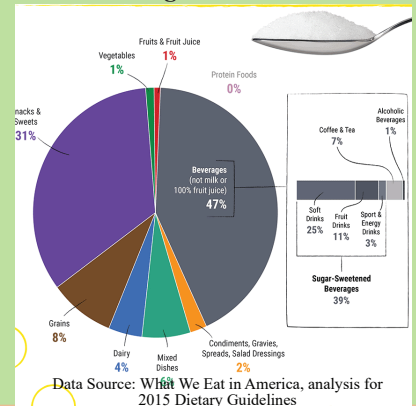
~ Anything ending in "ose" (dextrose, fructose, lactose, maltose, sucrose, glucose), corn sweetener, corn syrup, fruit juice concentrates, high fructose corn syrup, malt sugar, molasses, raw sugar, honey, brown sugar, maple syrup. These items are often found in processed foods that also contain high amounts of sodium, unhealthy fats and additives.

**How much sugar is reasonable?** The American Heart Association recommends limiting added sugars to 6 tsp./day for women (24g or 100 calories) and 9 tsp./day for men (36g or 150 calories). One teaspoon of granulated sugar equals 4 grams.

To put this in perspective a 12 ounce soda has about 33 grams of sugar, about 8 teaspoons. That's over the daily limit for women. A 20 ounce bottle of Mountain Dew has 77 grams of sugar, about 19 teaspoons! A cup of vanilla ice cream has about 28 grams of sugar or 7 teaspoons.

As you can see just one serving of a sugar rich food can easily send us over the recommended limit!

### Added Sugar- American Diet



Try using these guidelines to give yourself a sugar budget. Keep track of your sugar intake for a week and let us know how you do! **Foodtracker** makes it easy.

### Tips for eating less added sugar;

- Stay away from soda, sweet tea, sports drinks and other sweetened drinks. Aim for more water. For variety try sparkling water with a small amount of juice added. Or filtered tap water with added lemon, cucumbers or berries.
- Remove sugar from your table - out of sight out of mind.
- Cut back on the sugar you add to cereal, hot and cold drinks, pancakes etc. Try cutting the amount you usually use in half and go down from there.
- Add fresh or frozen fruit to cereal instead of sugar.
- Go easy on fruit juice. Keep servings to a single 4-6oz glass a day.
- Add flavor instead of sugar. Add cinnamon, ginger, allspice or nutmeg to milks, coffee drinks, cereals, oatmeal and smoothies.
- Buy plain yogurt and add unsweetened fruit and a small amount of honey.
- For dessert have fresh fruit.
- When using canned or frozen fruit make sure it's packed in water with no added sugar.
- Read labels. Look for added sugars.

Email SU University Dietitian Terry Passano with your ideas for lowering sugar intake.

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For a personalized approach to improving your health through nutrition see Terry Passano. Appointments are free of charge to students, faculty and staff.

Click [here](#) for healthy dining options.