

Beware of the Sugar Monster

It seems like we are inundated these days with warnings that all our favorite foods are bad for us. From hamburgers to pizza, all the good stuff is off limits. The good news is sugar, in moderation, causes no negative health problems. It is often blamed for our society's weight problems, when actually, our fat intake is the primary culprit.

There is no conclusive evidence that high sugar intake is a risk for heart disease. And eating sugar does not cause diabetes, though excessive sugar consumption is dangerous for diabetics. The key phrase, however, is moderation. When all sweeteners are taken into consideration, including corn syrup, fructose, honey, etc., the average American consumes 150 pounds per year, or about 20-25 percent of our daily calories. And remember, these calories carry no nutrients.

So what's moderate? The FDA recommends no more than 15 percent of your total calories from sugar. For someone eating 2000 calories/day, that's 300 calories, or 75 grams.

Sugar, Sugar Everywhere.

But it's tough to get away from sugar. Sugar, in all its various forms, is the number one food additive. It is in everything from our pasta sauce to our pork 'n beans. And some foods (see chart) have enormous amounts of sugar in even moderately- sized portions.

Can you imagine putting 10 teaspoons of sugar on your morning cereal? This is exactly what you do every time you drink a can of coke!



Why You Need To Control Sugar Intake

There are three reasons for shunning sugar:

1. Empty calories – sugar provides none of the nutrients you need for good health.
2. It makes you hungry – soon after consuming sugar your blood sugar dramatically increases, then begins to plummet, typically below normal levels. Then you feel hungry, low in energy, irritable and crave more sugar.

3. It Turns to fat – unused calories from sugar turns to fat in your blood as triglycerides and on your body as blubber.

"How Sweet It Is"

Product	Tsp
Snapple (16 oz)	6.5
Coke (12 oz)	9.75
Mountain Dew (12 oz)	11.5
Capri Sun (1 pouch)	6.5
Fruit Smoothie (16 oz)	6.5
Orange Juice (8 oz)	5.75
Ultra Slim Fast (1 can)	7.0
Snickers Bar	4.25
Cheerios (1Cup)	0.25
Kellogg's Raisin Bran	4.5
Sugar Frosted Flakes	4.25
Ragu Spaghetti Sauce	4.35
Haagen Dazs Frozen Yogurt (4 oz)	5.25
Dannon Light Frozen Yogurt (4 oz)	1.25
Sara Lee Cherry Cheesecake (Slice)	8.75

There's No "Magic" Sugar

If you've eaten one sugar you've eaten them all. Whether the ingredient is honey, corn sweetener, fructose, sucrose or brown sugar, it's all the same. Even products that have been sweetened with fruit juice concentrate are void of the vitamins and minerals in the natural juice. Only the fructose has been extracted. Beware of claims that honey (or other sugars) are "healthy" for you because they are "natural." Again, all sugars are the same once they reach your bloodstream.