



Total Sugars

Diets high in calories from added sugars can make it difficult to meet daily recommended levels of important nutrients while staying within calorie limits. The % DV of Sugars has been included so that the sugar content of different foods can be compared easily and sugary foods with a DV% of 15% or more can be identified.

The %DV is a total of all sugars present in the food and includes both sugars that have been added to the food known as "free sugars" and sugars naturally present. Consuming too much sugar is associated with health issues including heart disease, obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, cancer and dental cavities.

The % DV for total sugar is based on a **maximum** daily intake of 100g.

What They Are

Sugars are the **smallest** and simplest type of **carbohydrate**. They are easily digested and absorbed by the body. Total Sugars on the Nutrition Facts label include:

- **Sugars naturally present** in many nutritious foods and beverages, such as sugar in milk and fruit.
- **Added sugars**, which include sugars that are added during the processing of foods (such as sucrose or dextrose), foods packaged as sweeteners (such as table sugar), sugars from syrups and honey, and sugars from concentrated fruit or vegetable juices.

Where They Are Found

Sugars are found in a variety of foods, including:

Sugars naturally present in food

- Dairy products (such as milk and yogurt)
- Fruit (fresh, frozen, dried, and canned in 100% fruit juice)
- 100% fruit and vegetable juice
- Vegetables

Added sugars

- Baked goods (such as cakes, cookies, pastries, and pies)
- Desserts (such as ice cream and puddings)
- Salad dressings, sauces, spreads, condiments, and gravies
- Sugar-sweetened beverages (such as energy drinks, fruit drinks, soft drinks, sports drinks, and sweetened coffee and tea)
- Sweets (such as candies, jams, sweet toppings, and syrups)
- Single-ingredient sugars (such as table sugar, maple syrup, or honey)

| Nutrition Facts | |
|--|------------------------------|
| Valeur nutritive | |
| Per 1 cup (250 mL) pour 1 tasse (250 mL) | |
| Calories 110 | % Daily Value* |
| | % valeur quotidienne* |
| Fat / Lipides 0 g | 0 % |
| Saturated / saturés 0 g | 0 % |
| + Trans / trans 0 g | |
| Carbohydrate / Glucides 26 g | |
| Fibre / Fibres 0 g | 0 % |
| Sugars / Sucres 22 g | 22 % |
| Protein / Protéines 2 g | |
| Cholesterol / Cholestérol 0 mg | |
| Sodium 0 mg | 0 % |
| Potassium 450 mg | 10 % |
| Calcium 30 mg | 2 % |
| Iron / Fer 0 mg | 0 % |
| *5% or less is a little, 15% or more is a lot | |
| *5% ou moins c'est peu, 15% ou plus c'est beaucoup | |

Added sugars are a nutrient to get less of.

What They Do

- All sugars provide calories, or "energy," for the body. Each gram of sugar provides **4 calories**.
- The human body breaks down sugars and other carbohydrates into glucose. Glucose in the blood (often referred to as blood sugar) is the primary energy source for the body's cells, tissues, and organs (such as the brain and muscles). Glucose can be used immediately or stored in the liver and muscles for later use.
- Sugars are also used to sweeten, preserve, and improve the functional attributes of foods and beverages (such as viscosity, texture, body, color, and browning capability).

Health Facts

- Most Canadians exceed the recommended limits for sugars in the diet. The main sources of added sugars are sugar-sweetened beverages, baked goods, desserts, and sweets.
- There is evidence that diets characterized, in part, by lower consumption of sugar-sweetened foods and beverages relative to less healthy dietary patterns are associated with a **reduced risk of developing cardiovascular disease**. Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in both men and women in North America. Diets higher in all sugars can also **increase the risk of developing cavities**.
- *Health Canada* recommends limiting calories from added sugars. The guidelines note that when sugars are added to foods and beverages, it increases calories without contributing important nutrients. These extra calories can make it harder for people to meet their daily recommended levels of nutrients and stay within calorie limits.

✓ Action Steps

For Reducing Added Sugars in Your Diet

Use the **Nutrition Facts** label as a tool for reducing consumption of added sugars.

The Nutrition Facts Table on food and beverage packages shows the amount in grams (g) of total sugars per serving of the food.

The Nutrition Facts Table on food and beverages shows the % Daily Value of total sugars per serving of the food.

The Daily Value for sugars is 100g per day. This is the maximum amount a person should consume in a day with the goal of consuming less.

- Compare and choose foods to get less than 100% DV of added sugars each day. And remember:
 - 5% DV or less of added sugars per serving is considered low
 - 15% DV or more of added sugars per serving is considered high
- Choose whole fruit (fresh, frozen, dried, and canned in 100% fruit juice) as snacks and desserts and add fruit to salads and side dishes.
- Try unsweetened or no-sugar added versions of fruit sauces (such as applesauce) and plain, fat-free or 1% low-fat yogurt.
- Instead of sugars, syrups, or other sweet toppings, use fruit to top foods like cereal, oatmeal, pancakes, and yogurt.
- More often, choose beverages such as water and fat-free or 1% low-fat milk. Less often, choose beverages that are high in calories but have few or no beneficial nutrients, such as energy drinks, fruit drinks, soft drinks, and sports drinks.
- Limit the amount of sugar you add to foods when cooking, baking, and eating.
- Consume smaller portions of foods and beverages that are higher in added sugars or consume them less often.
- When eating out, request that sugars, syrups, or other sweet toppings be served “on the side,” then use less of them. You can also ask if nutrition information is available to help you make informed choices.