

# Sugar and Health

**No more than 12 teaspoons of added sugars per day but aim for 6**

Added sugars provide just that – extra sugar. For both adults and children, the World Health Organization recommends that we should eat no more than 12 teaspoons of added sugar per day. Further reductions down to 6 teaspoons a day could provide additional benefits. Added sugar is sugar that has been added to sweetened and processed foods and drinks.

Sugar in whole fruits or fresh milk is naturally occurring, and does not count as ‘added’. These foods contain other nutrients that are good for the body, such as dietary fibre, vitamins, and minerals.

By adding sugar to foods, or by concentrating natural sugars, we increase the energy (calorie) content in our diet without providing any other nutritional benefits.

**It is recommended to have no more than 12 teaspoons of added sugars each day**



**How many teaspoons of sugar are found in some common food and drinks?**



**A bottle of energy drink**



**A bottle of fruit smoothie**



**A bottle of sports drink**



**A slice of red velvet cake**



**A can of fizzy drink**



**Six pieces of chocolate covered marshmallow**



**A cupcake with frosting**



**A carton of liquid breakfast**



**A container of sweetened yoghurt with fruit jam**



**A small can of baked beans**



**The concentrated sugar in one glass of orange juice**



**is equivalent to:**



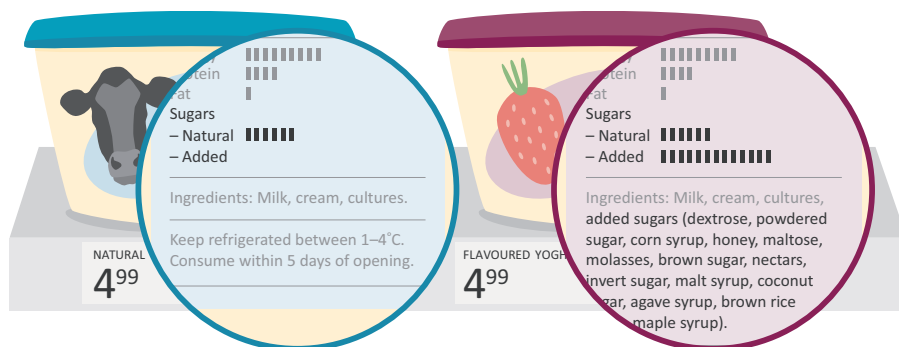
## It is easy to over-consume sugar

It is easy to over-consume sugar in juice and sweet drinks, as they contain mostly water and sugar. One glass of orange juice can contain concentrated sugar from five or six whole oranges. And while it is easy to drink that much sugar, you would be less likely to eat that many oranges in one go.

Fizzy drinks do not make you feel full as quickly as foods do. This makes them easy to over-consume. And a small fizzy drink contains nine teaspoons of added sugar, so drinking just one can means that you have almost reached your recommended maximum intake for that whole day.

## Added sugars hide in food and drink – and are hard to detect in the supermarket

On food labels, only the total sugar content must be declared. This makes it difficult to work out how much sugar has been added, and how much natural sugar is in the food or drink. The added sugars can have many different names...



## Excessive consumption of added sugars can lead to serious illness

Researchers have found many negative health effects that are related to excessive sugar consumption:



### Dental health

Tooth decay increases with sugar consumption, and high-sugar diets are associated with a higher dental caries risk.



### Heart disease

People who consume high amounts of sugary foods or drinks are more likely to be at risk of heart disease.



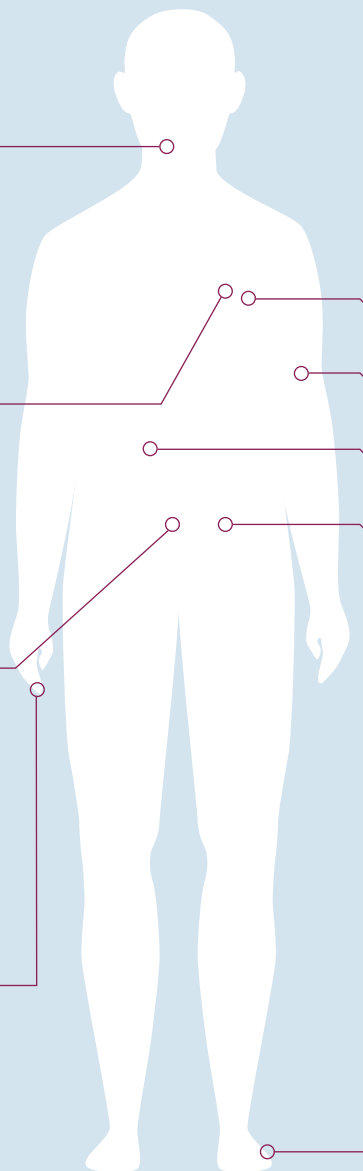
### Weight gain (especially abdominal fat)

Increased sugar intake and consumption of added sugars in sugar-sweetened beverages have been linked to body weight gain.



### Diabetes

Evidence shows that people who consume high amounts of sugary foods or drinks are more likely to be at risk of type-2 diabetes.



There are a number of scientific studies proposing that fructose may have particularly negative effects on health.

If very high doses of fructose are consumed, fat can accumulate in the liver. This, and other mechanisms, could lead to a range of health conditions.



### Fat in the blood



### Increased blood pressure



### Fatty liver disease



### Insulin resistance



### Gout

Researchers are still exploring the exact mechanisms by which different sugars, such as fructose, affect the body. But being aware of how much added sugar you eat is important for health.