How Much Sugar Is in Your Drink?

Learn the Facts About Sugary Drinks

NYC Health

Sugary Drink Facts

- Sugary drinks include soda, sweetened iced tea, and energy, sports and juice drinks.
- Drinking sugary drinks can lead to diabetes, heart disease, cavities and weight gain.
- Blended coffee drinks, smoothies, milkshakes and hot chocolate are drinks that are also high in calories.
- 100% fruit juice does not have added sugar, but it is still full of natural sugar and calories.
- Beverage companies spend hundreds of millions of dollars each year to get you to buy sugary and other high-calorie drinks.

Pop Quiz!

HOW MUCH SUGAR IS TOO MUCH?

An active 8-year-old should have no more than _____ teaspoons of sugar per day.

a) 10

b) 15

c) 20

Answer:

10 TEASPOONS!

- The right amount of sugar for your body depends on your age and activity level.
- An active 8-year-old should have no more than 10 teaspoons of added sugar per day from all foods and drinks.
- Added sugars have no vitamins or minerals, so they don't add anything good to our diets.
- One teaspoon equals 4 grams.

Pop Quiz!

WHICH OF THESE DRINKS IS SWEET AND HAS LOTS OF CALORIES? (HINT: COULD BE MORE THAN ONE!)

Soda

Energy drink

Juice drink

Blended coffee drink

Iced tea

Sports drink

100% fruit juice

Answer:

ALL OF THEM!

- All of these drinks have lots of calories and sugar.
- 100% fruit juice should *not* be the first choice for a child. It doesn't have added sugar, but it is still full of calories and natural sugar. Water and skim or 1% plain milk are best for your child.
- Juice drinks may sound healthy, but they are full of sugar and don't contain any real fruit!
- Be aware! Blended coffee and tea drinks, energy drinks and many sodas have caffeine.

Let's take a look at how much sugar is in each of these common drinks.

Try this:

Choose whole fruit instead of juice, even 100% juice. Whole fruit has more fiber and fewer calories.

Pop Quiz!

HOW MANY TEASPOONS OF SUGAR ARE IN...

A 6 ¾-ounce box of juice drink?

a) 1 teaspoon

b) 3 teaspoons

c) 6½ teaspoons

Answer:

6½ TEASPOONS!

- Juice drinks can have a lot of added sugar and not much fruit juice.
- Drinking just two juice boxes a day provides children with more added sugar than they should have.

Try this:

Give your water a splash of 100% fruit juice for more flavor and less sugar.

Choose 100% fruit juice as an occasional treat and keep the portion small — 4 to 6 ounces.

Pop Quiz!

HOW MANY TEASPOONS OF SUGAR ARE IN...

A 20-ounce bottle of cola?

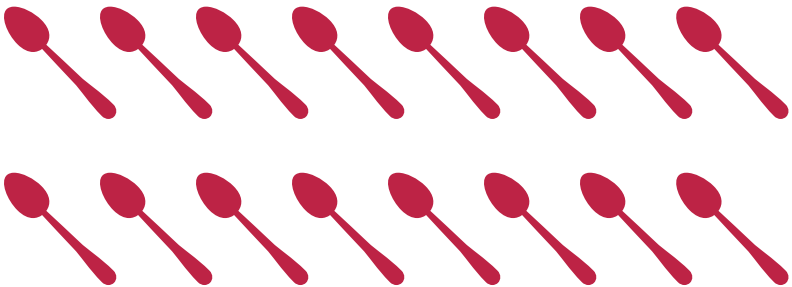
a) 6 teaspoons

b) 16 teaspoons

c) 20 teaspoons

Answer:

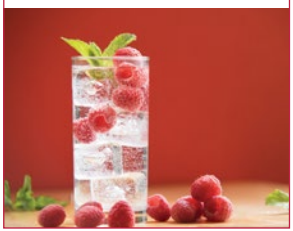
16 TEASPOONS!



- This is more than a child should have in an entire day.

Try this:

Drink seltzer water flavored with a splash of 100% fruit juice for a bubbly treat.



Pop Quiz!

HOW MANY TEASPOONS OF SUGAR ARE IN...

A 20-ounce bottle of sweetened tea?

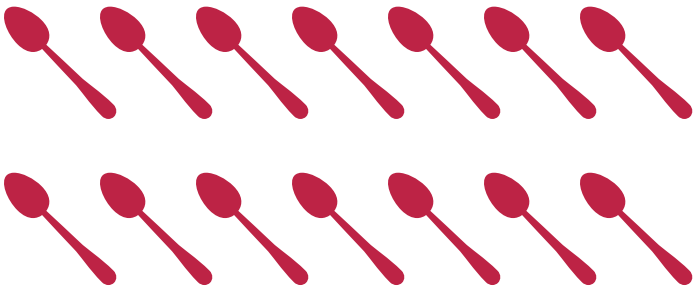
a) 3 teaspoons

b) 10 teaspoons

c) 14 teaspoons

Answer:

14 TEASPOONS OF SUGAR!



- Many iced teas have lots of added sugar. When buying iced tea, always choose unsweetened iced tea.

Try this:

Make iced tea at home using your favorite herbal tea. Add slices of fruit for a sweet taste without the sugar.

Pop Quiz!

HOW MANY TEASPOONS OF SUGAR ARE IN...

A 20-ounce sports drink?

a) 4 teaspoons

b) 7 teaspoons

c) 9 teaspoons

Answer:

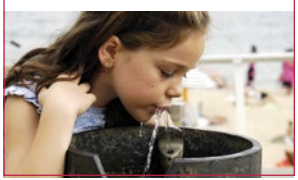
9 TEASPOONS OF SUGAR!

- Skip sports and energy drinks. They might sound healthy but they often contain high levels of added sugar.
- Many energy drinks are often high in caffeine.

Try this:

If you're thirsty, drink water! Water is all you need to stay hydrated.

Flavor your water with lemon, lime or other fruits.



Pop Quiz!

HOW MANY TEASPOONS OF SUGAR ARE IN...

A medium blended coffee drink?

a) 6 teaspoons

b) 12 teaspoons

c) 15 teaspoons

Answer:

15 TEASPOONS!

- Don't be fooled: Blended coffee drinks, smoothies, milkshakes and hot chocolate are high in sugar and calories.
- Blended coffee and tea drinks (like a frappuccino or chai latte) often have caffeine, which may make it harder for you to sleep at night.
- Store-bought drinks are expensive! Save some money by making a healthy fruit smoothie at home, without adding sugar.

Try this:

Fruit Smoothie: the Healthy Way

FLAVOR-INFUSED WATER:

1. Start with a pitcher of cold tap water.
2. Slice your favorite fruits or vegetables.
3. Add your fruit to the water and shake or let sit for at least 30 minutes. Don't add sugar.
4. Enjoy!

FRUIT SMOOTHIE THE HEALTHY WAY:

1. Add to blender:
   - 1 banana
   - 1 cup of your favorite frozen fruit
   - ¾ cup low-fat plain milk
   - 1 cup low-fat plain yogurt
2. Blend until smooth.
3. Enjoy!

Sugar and Food Labels

- **Sugar is written in grams on food labels.**
  - **4 grams of sugar = 1 teaspoon of sugar**

- **Sugar may also be listed in the ingredients as a different word. Look out for:**
  - Brown sugar, honey, syrup, maple syrup, raw sugar, molasses, agave
  - Corn sweetener, corn syrup, high-fructose corn syrup
  - Fruit juice concentrate, evaporated cane juice, invert sugar, malt sugar
  - Words ending in "ose," such as dextrose, fructose, glucose, lactose, maltose, sucrose

Sugar and Food Labels

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 (567g)
Servings Per Container 1

Amount Per Serving

Calories 240	Calories from Fat 0
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 0g	**0%**
Saturated Fat 0g	**0%**
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	**0%**
Sodium 75mg	**3%**
Total Carbohydrate 65g	**22%**
Dietary Fiber 0g	**0%**
Sugars 65g	
Protein 0g	**0%**

Riboflavin 0% • Niacin 0%
Vitamin B6 0% • Vitamin B12 0%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2400mg	2400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

INGREDIENTS: CARBONATED WATER, HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP, CARAMEL COLOR, PHOSPHORIC ACID, NATURAL FLAVORS, CAFFEINE.

Check the number of servings per container. A container may have more than one serving. (This cola has one serving.)

The whole bottle (one serving) has 65 grams of sugar, which is about 16 teaspoons of sugar!

4 grams of sugar = 1 teaspoon

Remember to look for sugar listed in the ingredients as a different word!

Try this:

Always read the Nutrition Facts label to find out how much sugar is in your drink.

Tips to Avoid Sugary Drinks

Take these small steps to reduce the amount of sugar in your drinks and stay on the path to a healthier life!

- **Drink water.**
  - Try NYC tap water — it's free and tastes delicious.
  - Keep water in your refrigerator so it is cold and ready to enjoy.
  - Make water more exciting by adding fruits or herbs for flavor.
  - Use a refillable water bottle so you always have water on the go.
- **Eat whole fruit instead of drinking 100% fruit juice or a fruit drink.**
- **Read food labels to see how much sugar is in your drink.**
- **Drink healthy beverages together as a family.**
  - Have healthy drinks like water, seltzer, skim or 1% plain milk at family meals. Put fruit slices or berries in water to provide a touch of sweetness.
  - Keep healthy drinks within easy reach.
  - Don't keep sugary drinks in your home.