

## Sugar Shock: Revealing Hidden Sugar Sources in Food

Sugar is found in many different foods. Some are healthy, and some are not healthy. In general, naturally occurring sugar in foods such as whole grains, legumes, and fruits are good for you; added sugars found in sweets, candies, baked goods, and table sugar are refined and therefore can be harmful to your health.

When we think of sugar, it is common to think of desserts, sweets, and table sugar. But do you ever wonder how much sugar there is in the foods that you eat that you do not see? We call these hidden sugars. Read on to learn more about this!

### Hidden Sugar in Some Common Grocery Items:

- **Flavoured Yogurt**, such as vanilla or fruit contain added sugar. A half cup serving of flavoured yogurt contains 15-22 grams of sugar, most of which is added sugar. This is equivalent to a half cup serving of ice cream!
- **Tip:** Choose plain Greek yogurt which has less than 5 grams of sugar per  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup serving. Sweeten it naturally by adding your own fruit!



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- **Breakfast Cereal and Granola Bars** are often made with refined grains and added sugar. One serving of sugary cereal that contain ingredients like puffed corn or rice with flavouring can contain upwards of 25 grams of sugar per half to three quarter cup serving which is comparable to eating a chocolate bar.  
**Tip:** read the nutrition label and look for cereals or granola bars that have <10 grams of sugar per serving.
- **Bread** can be very nutritious but often has ingredients such as molasses, honey or syrups which are all sugars. Watch out for multigrain breads: some breads have multiple grains, but each grain is refined. Instead, look for breads that have whole grains which are less processed, and therefore contain less refined sugar.  
**Tip:** read the ingredient listing on the packaging. Ingredients are listed in order by weight. If the first three ingredients are not whole grains, such as oats, bran, rye, or wheat, then refrain from buying it, and choose another.

- **Condiments**, such as ketchup, relish and barbecue sauces are all high in added sugar. In fact, many of these condiments contain sugar as its first ingredient on the label! Considering that a serving of ketchup or barbecue sauce is small (1-2 tablespoons), this amounts to a lot of sugar if you are adding generous amounts of barbecue sauce to your burger or drizzling a large amount of ketchup on your fries. More than 2 tablespoons of condiments can add up to be 15-20 grams of sugar, more than the amount of sugar found in a half can of regular pop!



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- **Beverages** can also be a source of hidden sugar. Have you ever wondered how much sugar there is in flavoured coffee, lemonade, or sports drinks? Some have more sugar per serving than a donut or a handful of candies! Let's compare different drinks and their sugar content:



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Drink	Grams (g) of Sugar Per Serving
Cola (1 can or 355 ml)	33 g or 8.25 tsp
Lemonade (1 bottle or 591 ml)	25 g or 6.25 tsp
Sports Drink (1 bottle or 591 ml)	36 g or 9 tsp
Iced Cappuccino (1 small or 355 ml)	36 g or 9 tsp
Slushie (1 large or 650 ml)	49.4 g or 12.3 tsp

Being aware of the hidden sugars in foods can help you meet your healthy eating goals, as well as prevent or manage health concerns such as obesity, heart disease or diabetes. Be sure to check food labels when you are grocery shopping or check nutrition information while eating out. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends 6 teaspoons of added sugar or less with a 2,000 calorie diet.

### References:

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