

That Has Sugar???

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Sugar, high fructose corn syrup, and honey are all easy to recognize added sugar ingredients but what about dextrin, dextrose, glucose, maltose, xylose or sorghum? Currently there is no requirement to separate sources of sugar on a food label so it is important to look at the label closely to determine if an ingredient is a naturally occurring sugar or an added sugar. Some items commonly found in an American child's diet are widely known to contain sugar, but do you know how much? Not all sugar sources are so well known though. Sugar sneaks into your diet in some unsuspecting ways.

“Juice” Drinks

Many children’s juice drinks are loaded with sugar! Capri Sun fruit punch contains 16 grams of sugar (4 grams of sugar=1 teaspoon), nearly as much as a fun size snickers bar, with high fructose corn syrup listed as the second ingredient! You might think that Capri Sun’s Roarin’ Water is a sugar free choice because it has water right in the name but it still has 8 grams of sugar or about as much as 2 Hershey miniatures. Another childhood favorite, Classic Hawaiian Punch contains 14 grams of sugar and



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its reduced sugar version has 13 grams. That’s as much sugar as a single serve pack of Chips Ahoy chocolate chip cookies. If you are choosing juices, look for 100% juice as it will contain natural occurring sugars. Limit juice to 4-6 oz. per day. For an even better alternative, try infusing water with fresh fruit. Don’t stop at just lemons. Try apples, berries, and watermelon!

Cereal

Many cereals are being promoted as “reduced sugar”. This statement means the product contains less sugar than the original. It does not mean the product is low in sugar or sugar free. Fruit Loops checks in at 12 grams of sugar. That’s an entire tablespoon! Lucky Charms has 10 grams of sugar, about as much as in a Reese’s cup. For a low in sugar breakfast cereal try Kix with only 3 grams or Cheerios with just 1 gram. You can also make oatmeal using old fashioned oats or oat groats.



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Yogurt

Plain yogurt has naturally occurring sugar from milk called lactose (about 1 gram of sugar for each ounce of yogurt). Trix yogurt, often served in schools, has an additional 2.5 grams per ounce. In a 4 ounce serving container, that would be an additional 2.5 teaspoons of sugar. Go-gurt, marketed towards kids with their fun tube containers, has nearly 3.5 grams of sugar more per ounce than plain yogurt. In a 2.25 ounce tube, that is an extra 7 grams, or as much as 3 Starburst candy pieces. For a healthier option, stick to plain yogurt and try adding your own fresh fruit for natural sweetness.

Condiments



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Sugar sneaks itself into condiments too. Barbeque sauce would probably be on your radar as containing sugar because of its sweet taste, but would you guess that a 2 tablespoon serving contains about a tablespoon of sugar? Regular ranch dressing contains less than a gram of sugar for a 2 tablespoon serving. However, if you swap it for fat free ranch dressing that jumps up to 3 grams per serving! With Ketchup's saltiness, you might not think it has sugar but 1 tablespoon actually has 4 grams of sugar! Peanut butter has about 3 grams for a 2 tablespoon serving. Pair that with jelly at 12 grams of sugar per tablespoon and you have a sandwich with as much sugar as half a cup of soda. Natural peanut butter, with just peanuts and salt, has only 1 gram of sugar, but read the label for added sources of sugar! For a few sugar free condiment choices, try hummus with vegetables or olive oil and vinegar for salads.

This list could continue with everything from lunch meats to spaghetti sauce. Be a wise shopper and look for those key words in the ingredients that will let you know how sugar is making its way into your day.

If you'd like to learn more about label reading and finding sources of hidden sugars in your child's diet, contact a registered dietitian today. For some kid friendly recipes that are low in sugar, check out the recipes at www.eatright.org/kids.



Helenia is a registered dietitian who works with pediatric and adolescent patients and their families. As the nation's food and nutrition experts, registered dietitians are committed to improving the health of their communities. To find a registered dietitian in your area, visit www.eatright.org and click on, "Find a Registered Dietitian."