

## 15 “Healthy” Foods with High Levels of Sugar

Source: *MSN Lifestyle*



A new World Health Organization guideline recommends adults and children reduce their daily intake of sugar to less than 10 percent of their total energy intake. A further reduction to below 5 percent – or roughly 25 grams (6 teaspoons) per day – would provide additional health benefits. Dropping candy, donuts, soda and baked goods, which are usually the major sources of added sugars, from your diet is not nearly enough.

### **Cereal**

Cereals with marshmallows and chocolate puffs are obviously high in sugar, but just how much sugar may surprise you. The Environmental Working Group examined the sugar content of 84 cereals and found 54 of them contained more than 24 to 26 percent sugar by weight. Kellogg's Honey Smacks, at 55.6 percent sugar, was the worst. Cereal is also surprisingly high in salt.

### **Fruit Juice**

Fresh fruits are good for you because of their fiber, most of which is lost when they turn to liquid, and the sugar in juice can easily reach absurd levels. Researchers compared the amount of sugar in a glass of juice to that in a can of soda. One cup (249 grams) contains 23 grams of sugar, according to USDA. If you want to drink juice, stick to a very small amount and get your fruit fix elsewhere.

### **Flavored Yogurt**

If you want to eat yogurt and fruits, you are better off purchasing them separately and mixing them in a bowl. Flavored yogurts are often filled with added sugar. Just a small 8-ounce serving of the sweet dessert can have as many as 47 grams of sugar. And some varieties contain 30 grams of sugar in a 6-ounce cup. That is more than what the American Heart Association recommends for both men (38 grams) and women (25 grams) of added sugar a day.

## **Frozen Waffles**

This quick and easy hot breakfast option may seem like a good idea, but pay close attention to the nutrition label. Though some frozen waffles are decent options, others like Eggo's Cinnamon Toast waffles can pack in 17 grams of sugar.

## **Sports Drinks**

Just because it says “sports” doesn’t mean what you’re consuming is good for you. A single drink can have as many as 5 teaspoons of sugar and a total of 90 calories, according to a study. Experts advise that you drink those, if you must, “sparingly and infrequently.” Play it safe, and opt out for water, sparkling water, coffee, or tea.

## **Low-Fat Salad Dressings**

They make salads taste so much better but they also turn them from a healthy meal to the worst diet offender. Pay special attention to the dressings labeled “light”—when they reduce the fat, they often replace it with sugar. Some popular dressings, like French and Thousand Island, contain 2.4 grams per tablespoon. Sprinkle some lemon juice on you salad next time.

## **Pasta Sauce**

It’s not enough to cook a pasta meal with whole grain linguine to make it healthy. Pay close attention to the tomato sauce you’re using. They are notorious for being high in sodium (even though many come with “no added salt”), but the sugar content should also be noted. One cup contains about 10 grams of sugar or more – that’s more than 2 teaspoons of the sweet stuff.

## **Peanut Butter**

Just one tbsp. of peanut butter contains 3 grams of sugar, which is slightly less than one teaspoon, according to USDA. Popular brands have even more. Since you’re probably adding jelly to this favorite morning sandwich, you can expect a sugar crash soon. Make sure you check the label and buy a product with no added sugar.

## **Flavored Waters**

Just 8 oz. of this sweetened drink has up to 13 grams of sugar, USDA numbers show. Beware of the word “flavored.” It is usually synonymous with sugar and artificial sweeteners. The popular Vitamin Water packs about 120 calories and 32 grams of sugar, just about half as much as a regular Coke.

## **Instant Oatmeal**

Oatmeal is typically seen as one of the healthiest breakfast choices you can make—but it all depends on the type of oatmeal you’re eating. Some kinds are loaded with artificial flavoring and added sugar (Quaker Instant Oatmeal Maple and Brown Sugar has 12 grams of sugar). To avoid the 8 a.m. sugar rush, either make your oatmeal from scratch or find a lower sugar option.

## **Smoothies**

Smoothies may seem like a nutritious start to your day or a great post-workout pick-me-up and some are, but most contain a lot of unnecessary sugar. Even though some smoothies, like the ones at Jamba Juice, have lots of protein and real fruit, they're also loaded with sugar – 50 to 70 grams in their small 16 ounce cups. If you need a smoothie, it's best to make one at home.

## **Canned Soup**

Canned soups – and everything in a can for that matter – have a lot of sodium because that's how the product is preserved. You probably didn't know that sugar is also used for the same purpose. Just one can of Campbell's classic tomato soup-on-the-go has 20 grams of sugar — the same amount of sugar as two donuts.

## **Bread**

Bread is a sneaky source of sugar. Just one slice of white, commercially prepared bread, has about 2 grams of sugar, according to USDA. Some sugar is formed naturally in the baking process but it is often added too. Most commercial types of bread contain sugar or high fructose corn syrup, just like other processed foods, according to Authority Nutrition.

## **Dried Fruit**

Fruits have sugar. But sugar is often added when they are dried. Most dried fruits, which are a more concentrated source of nutrients, are more than 50 percent sugar, according to Livestrong. That's why the recommendation is to avoid eating more than half the fresh fruit size. Among the dried fruits with the highest sugar content are currants, sweetened dried cherries and sweetened dried cranberries.