

# Sugar

Here are some tips for reducing sugar in your diet, which makes more room for more nutritious foods.

## At the Supermarket

Read ingredient labels. Sugar should not be less than the fourth ingredient. Identify all the sugars in a product (sucrose, honey, glucose, molasses, dextrose, corn sweetener, fructose, high-fructose corn syrup, lactose, maltose, sorghum syrup, mannitol, fruit juice concentrate, sorbitol). Select items lower in added sugars when possible.

Buy fresh fruits or fruits packed in water, juice, or light syrup rather than those in heavy syrup.

Buy fewer foods that are high in sugars such as soft drinks, fruit-flavored punches, and sweet desserts. Be aware that some low-fat desserts may be very high in sugar.

In the Kitchen

Use less sugar in the foods you prepare at home. Try new recipes or adjust your own. Start by reducing sugars gradually until you've decreased them by one-third or more. Here's a guide for baking:

## Bake with Less Sugar

For every cup of flour, use only:	
Cakes and cookies	½ cup sugar
Muffins and quick breads	1 tablespoon sugar
Yeast breads	1 teaspoon sugar

As you reduce the sugar in your baked goods, try adding spices like cinnamon, cardamom, coriander, nutmeg, ginger, and mace to enhance the sweet flavor of foods. Spiced foods will taste sweeter if warmed.

## At the Table

Use smaller amounts of sugars, including white and brown sugars, honey, molasses, syrups, jams, and jellies. Choose fewer foods that are high in added sugars like prepared baked goods, candies, and sweet desserts.

## Reach for Fresh Fruit for Desserts or Snacks

- Add less sugar to coffee, tea, cereal, or fruit. Get used to half as much, and then see if you can cut back even more.
- Cut back on sugar-sweetened soft drinks and fruit drinks.

## Using Artificial Sweeteners

Two types of sweeteners—sugar alcohols and no-calorie sweeteners—are used to replace sugars in foods. It's not necessary to use artificial sweeteners to eat less sugar. Many foods taste just fine made with less sugar. Still, artificially sweetened beverages, yogurt, and desserts are a popular alternative to sugary treats.

No-calorie sweeteners currently used in foods include saccharin, aspartame, and acesulfame-K. Saccharin is about 300 times sweeter than table sugar (sucrose). It's used in several brands of tabletop sweeteners, in canned foods, and in low-calorie soft drinks.

Aspartame is 160–220 times sweeter than table sugar. Aspartame loses flavor in foods when heated. Although aspartame contains 4 calories per gram, the amount used is minute. So aspartame generally adds less than 1 calorie to a product per serving. Products that may contain aspartame include low-calorie beverages, sugar-free gelatins, puddings, frozen desserts, and cereals, as well as tabletop sweeteners. Tabletop sweeteners may contain an ingredient used as filler that provides some calories.

Acesulfame-K is 200 times sweeter than sugar. This newest of artificial sweeteners is being used in dry mixes for beverages, gelatin desserts, and puddings.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) must approve artificial sweeteners for use in foods or as a tabletop sweetener before they can be used by food processors or marketed for sale. Ingredient labels list any artificial sweeteners in a product.

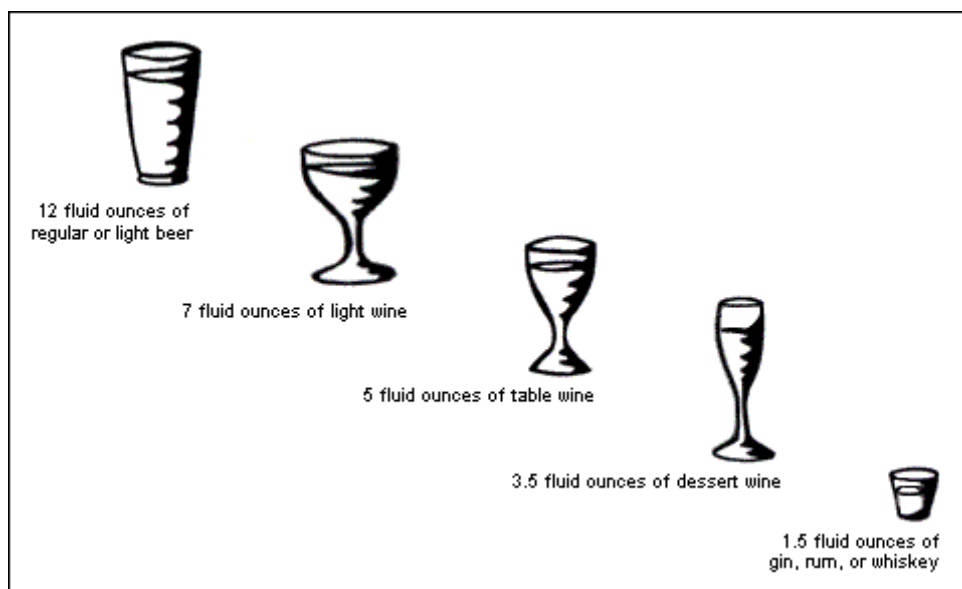
## Drinking Less Alcohol

Alcoholic beverages, like beer, wine, and whiskey, supply calories but few or no nutrients. The calories in these beverages come from alcohol and sugars. People who drink too much may be malnourished because they often do not eat enough food to get the vitamins and minerals they need. Also, their bodies may not be able to absorb all the nutrients in the food they eat. Limiting alcohol makes room for foods that provide important nutrients.

Adults who drink should consider these guidelines:

- Women: no more than one drink a day
- Men: no more than two drinks a day

## What Counts as One Drink?



## Limiting Alcohol Intake

If you choose to drink alcohol, here are some tips for drinking less:

- Stock your refrigerator with low-calorie, nonalcoholic alternatives, such as flavored seltzers and diet sodas.
- Think of alternatives for unwinding after a hard day—a hot bath, a walk, a phone call to a friend.
- At a party, pace yourself. Make an effort to sip your drink slowly. Alternate alcoholic drinks with water or flavored seltzer.
- Dilute mixed drinks with plenty of soda or water.
- If you suspect you have a problem with alcohol, talk to your healthcare provider or call an alcohol treatment counselor.