

7TH GRADE | SESSION 2 INFORMATIONAL TEXT ▾

# Living in the Land of Added Sugars



Vocabulary words are in **bold** and underlined

See definitions on p. 4

## Too Much of a Good Thing

You may have heard the expression “everything in moderation,” but what does that really mean? Can there really be such a thing as “too much” when it comes to the things we love to eat? Think about birthdays, and feeling sick after eating too much cake. It turns out we sometimes overeat without even realizing how it's affecting our health. Moderation is important for staying healthy.

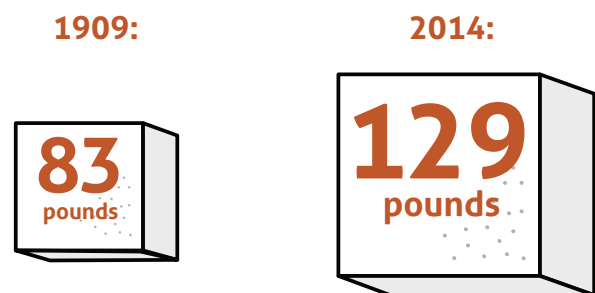
## The Problem With Added Sugars

Some foods have sugar naturally—like fruits, vegetables, and milk. The sugars in these foods are not added sugars. The amount of added sugars in the food supply has grown dramatically over the past century. In 1909, there were 83 pounds of added sugars available per person in the food supply. By 2014, that had increased to 129 pounds of added sugar per person!<sup>1</sup>

The majority of the added sugars in today's food supply end up in beverages like soft drinks, sports drinks, lemonade, sweetened iced tea, and fruit drinks—and middle school students are major consumers of those types of beverages. Added sugars may add flavor, but they also add calories without any nutrients and can make it hard to maintain a healthy weight, a healthy body, and healthy teeth.

According to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA), added sugars are recommended to make up less than 10 percent of calories per day. For example, if a middle school student needs 1,800 calories per day, less than 180 of those calories should come from added sugars.\* One hundred and eighty calories might not seem like a lot, but it can add up quickly. Approximately three out of four middle schoolers are exceeding the daily limit for added sugars.<sup>2</sup>

### ADDED SUGARS IN THE FOOD SUPPLY (PER PERSON)



\*The total number of calories a student needs each day varies depending on a number of factors, including the person's age, sex, height, weight, and level of physical activity. This figure is only an estimate, and approximations of individual calorie needs can be aided with online tools such as those available at [www.myplate.gov/myplate-plan](http://www.myplate.gov/myplate-plan).

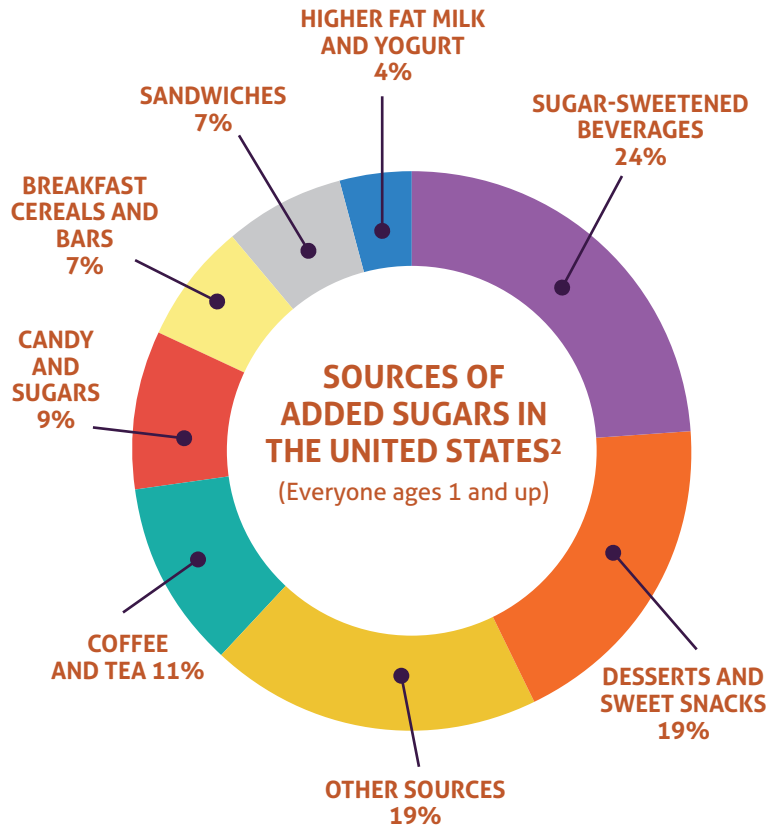
<sup>1</sup> United States Department of Agriculture. Economic Research Service. (2021, January). *Sugars and sweeteners (added)*. Food Availability (Per Capita) Data System. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-per-capita-data-system>.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2020, December). *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020–2025*. 9th Edition. <https://dietaryguidelines.gov>.

## Added Sugars Are Not So Sweet

Sugar-sweetened beverages, desserts and sweet snacks, sweetened coffee and tea, candy, and breakfast cereals and bars contribute to 70 percent of added sugars in the average person's eating pattern!

Healthy eating patterns that are lower in added sugars can help decrease the risk of tooth decay, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, some types of cancers, and obesity. When you choose too many sugary foods instead of healthier choices, you may not get enough of the nutrients your body needs for good health. Or you may consume more calories than your body needs. When you take in more food calories than you use up during physical activity or bodily processes (such as breathing, blinking, etc.), then you gain weight.



## Marketing Sugary Foods to Middle Schoolers

As a middle school student, you may not realize that you are a prime customer for the marketing of sugary foods. Did you know that...

In 2009,

**\$1 BILLION**

was spent on marketing foods and drinks to teens ages 12–17. **\$382 million** was spent on marketing soft drinks to teens ages 12–17. And the vast majority of those beverages contain added sugars. **\$80 million** was spent on marketing soft drinks to kids in school.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 2 on p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Federal Trade Commission. (2012, December). *A Review of Food Marketing to Children and Adolescents*. <https://www.ftc.gov/sites/default/files/documents/reports/review-food-marketing-children-and-adolescents-follow-report/121221foodmarketingreport.pdf>.

### Marketing is everywhere!



Companies market to middle schoolers through television, radio and print advertising, websites, apps, social media, product packaging, in-store marketing, movies, video games, and through celebrity and athlete endorsements.

# The New Nutrition Facts Label and You

Good news! The new Nutrition Facts label provides more information about added sugars to help you take control and make healthier decisions.

In 2016, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration unveiled a new Nutrition Facts label for packaged foods and beverages that makes it easier for you to make informed food choices that support a healthy eating pattern. Manufacturers are now using the new and improved Nutrition Facts label on products nationwide. It has a new design to help consumers make more informed food choices.

## Added Sugars in the Ingredient List

There are many different types of added sugars. Look for added sugars on the ingredient lists of foods or beverages. Added sugars may have these names:

- anhydrous dextrose
- brown sugar
- confectioners' or powdered sugar
- corn syrup
- corn syrup solids
- dextrose
- fructose
- high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS)
- honey
- lactose
- maltose
- maple syrup
- molasses
- nectars (e.g., peach nectar, pear nectar)
- sugar

OLD LABEL

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (228g)  
Servings Per Container 2

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Amount Per Serving

Calories 250 Calories from Fat 110

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% Daily Value\*

Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
Trans Fat 3g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Proteins 5g	
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	20%
Iron	4%

\* 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
Saturated Fat	Less than 20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g	375g
Dietary Fiber	25g	30g

NEW LABEL

Nutrition Facts

2 servings per container  
**Serving size 1 1/2 cup (208g)**

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Amount per serving

Calories 240

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% Daily Value\*

Total Fat 4g	5%
Saturated Fat 1.5g	8%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 5mg	2%
Sodium 430mg	19%
Total Carbohydrate 46g	17%
Dietary Fiber 7g	25%
Total Sugars 4g	
Includes 2g Added Sugars	4%
Protein 11g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 6mg	35%
Potassium 240mg	6%

\* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

The serving size on the label is based on amounts that people typically eat, not what they should be eating. Some packages contain more than one serving.

The new Nutrition Facts label makes it easier to see how many added sugars your beverages and foods contain.

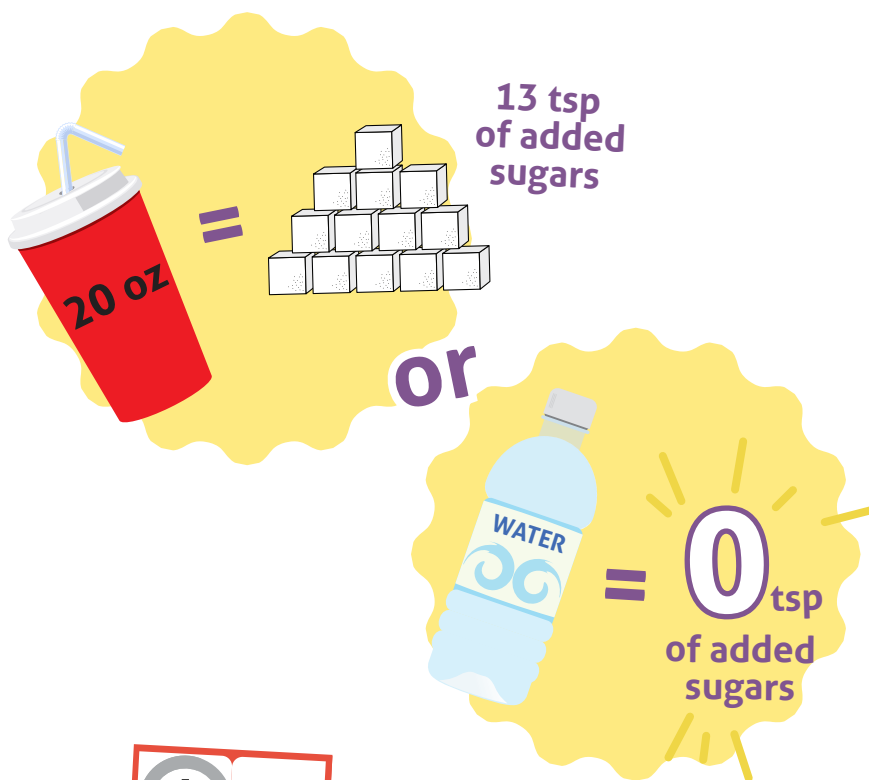
## Choosing Better Beverages

Unlike the old label, the new Nutrition Facts label includes "added sugars" in grams and as a **percent daily value**. Added sugars are different than the "total sugars" amount shown on the label. Total sugars includes both **naturally occurring sugars (like those in fresh fruit)** as well as **added sugars**. With the new label, you can use the added sugars amount on the label to choose foods that are lower in added sweeteners such as corn syrup and table sugar. The amount of added sugars shown on the label is for one serving. If you were to eat or drink two servings, the amount of added sugars would be double.

**INGREDIENTS:** UNBLEACHED ENRICHED FLOUR (WHEAT FLOUR, NIACIN, REDUCED IRON, THIAMINE MONONITRATE {VITAMIN B1}, RIBOFLAVIN {VITAMIN B2}, FOLIC ACID), **SUGAR**, PALM, AND/OR CANOLA OIL, COCOA (PROCESSED WITH ALKALI), **HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP**, LEAVENING (BAKING SODA, AND/OR CALCIUM PHOSPHATE), CORNSTARCH, SALT, SOY LECITHIN, VANILLIN(--))AN ARTIFICIAL FLAVOR. CONTAINS WHEAT, SOY.

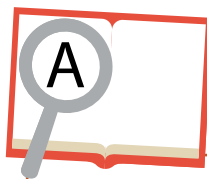
## Switch-It Up with Healthy Beverages

Water is refreshing and has zero calories. By replacing a sugar-sweetened beverage with water, you avoid drinking extra calories from added sugars. This can help you maintain a healthy calorie balance. Unflavored low-fat (1 percent) and fat-free milk are also great options to choose over sugar-sweetened beverages. Each time you reach for water instead of a 20-ounce sugary soft drink, you save 13 teaspoons of added sugars. Reaching for healthier beverages is one healthy step that every middle school student can take.



## Conclusions:

- Middle schoolers are getting too many added sugars, primarily from sugar-sweetened beverages.
- Advertisements for sugar-sweetened beverages use images, slogans, music, characters, and celebrities that appeal to middle schoolers to influence your food-buying decisions.
- Healthy eating patterns that are lower in added sugars can help decrease the risk of tooth decay, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, some types of cancers, and obesity.
- Reading the Nutrition Facts label and ingredient list can help you choose foods that are low in added sugars.
- Choosing plain water or milk instead of sugar-sweetened beverages can help middle school students decrease their consumption of added sugars.



## VOCABULARY

**Added Sugars:** Sugars and syrups that are added to foods or beverages when they are processed by food companies or prepared by you.

**Calorie:** A unit used to measure the energy the body receives from foods and beverages. Calories are also used to measure the energy used by the body.

**Consume:** To eat or drink something.

**Food Supply:** The food available for people to eat.

**Limit:** An amount or number that is the highest or lowest allowed.

**Naturally Occurring Sugars:** Sugars found naturally in foods such as fruit (fructose) and milk (lactose).

**Percent Daily Value:** Shows you how one serving of a food or drink contributes towards what a person might consume in a day. A value of 5 percent or less means the food is low in that nutrient (like added sugars).

**Recommend:** To advise or suggest a certain action because it is beneficial to your health, such as a recommended eating pattern.

# Living in the Land of Added Sugars

Follow the directions to answer the questions below.

**IF YOU ARE USING ADOBE ACROBAT X OR PRO:**

1. Open the form
2. Fill the form out
3. Go to File, Save As, choose where you would like to save the file, and then press Save

**IF YOU WANT TO SAVE IN ADOBE READER:**

1. Select File, Save As, Reader Extended, Enable Additional Features
2. This will allow users with the free Reader to save form data in an existing fillable PDF form
3. Click Save Now
4. Go to File, Save As, choose where you would like to save the file, and then press Save

1. Why do you think added sugars are added to food items?

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2. What are the top two sources of added sugars in the foods you eat and how does it compare with the figure on p. 2?

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3. How do companies try to convince teens to eat or drink sugary items? Which one of their marketing techniques do you think is the most effective?

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4. What are the short- and long-term health consequences of eating a diet high in added sugars?

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5. What beverages can you drink instead of sugar-sweetened beverages?

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6. Circle all types of added sugars in the ingredient lists below.

### Chocolate Sandwich Cookies

**INGREDIENTS:** UNBLEACHED ENRICHED FLOUR (WHEAT FLOUR, NIACIN, REDUCED IRON, THIAMINE MONONITRATE {VITAMIN B1}, RIBOFLAVIN {VITAMIN B2}, FOLIC ACID), SUGAR, PALM, AND/OR CANOLA OIL, COCOA (PROCESSED WITH ALKALI), HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP, LEAVENING (BAKING SODA, AND/OR CALCIUM PHOSPHATE), CORNSTARCH, SALT, SOY LECITHIN, VANILLIN(--)-AN ARTIFICIAL FLAVOR, CHOCOLATE. CONTAINS WHEAT, SOY.

### Snack Crackers

**INGREDIENTS:** UNBLEACHED ENRICHED FLOUR (WHEAT FLOUR, NIACIN, REDUCED IRON, THIAMINE MONONITRATE {VITAMIN B1}, RIBOFLAVIN {VITAMIN B2}, FOLIC ACID), SOYBEAN OIL, SUGAR, PARTIALLY HYDROGENATED COTTONSEED OIL, SALT, LEAVENING (BAKING SODA AND/OR CALCIUM PHOSPHATE), HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP, SOY LECITHIN, MALTED BARLEY FLOUR, NATURAL FLAVOR. CONTAINS WHEAT, SOY.

### Wheat Crackers

**INGREDIENTS:** WHOLE GRAIN WHEAT FLOUR, SOYBEAN OIL, SUGAR, CORNSTARCH, MALT SYRUP (FROM CORN AND BARLEY), SALT, REFINER'S SYRUP, LEAVENING (CALCIUM PHOSPHATE AND/OR BAKING SODA), VEGETABLE COLOR (TURMERIC OLEORESIN, ANNATTO EXTRACT). BHT ADDED TO PACKAGING MATERIAL TO PRESERVE FRESHNESS. CONTAINS WHEAT.

7. Your friends don't understand why they should limit added sugars. How would you convince your friends? Write a paragraph explaining your opinion.

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