



How to read a food label Part 3: Sugar

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In the past few decades, Americans have drastically increased their calorie intake, largely from an increased intake of carbohydrates, mostly in the form of added sugars. Naturally occurring sugars, such as those in fruit and milk, are obviously healthier than the artificially-added sugars that can be found in non-diet soft drinks, candy, cookies, and fruit drinks. Although some "good" sugars are easy to differentiate from "bad" sugars, here are a few tips on what to look for on a food label. The simplest way is to glance at the bottom of the Nutrition Facts Label. Compare the first ingredient on each of the labels below. The first is for Oreo cookies and the other for Kashi Chewy Granola



bars.

It's easy to see and contrast the two main ingredients: sugar versus rolled whole grain

Kashi®
Chewy Granola Bars
Honey Almond Flax

Nutrition Facts			
Serving Size		1 Bar (35g)	
Amount Per Serving			
Calories 140		Calories from Fat 45	
% Daily Value*			
Total Fat 5g		8%	
Saturated Fat 0g		0%	
Trans Fat 0g			
Polyunsaturated Fat 1.5g			
Monounsaturated Fat 2.5g			
Cholesterol 0mg		0%	
Sodium 105mg		4%	
Total Carbohydrate 19g		6%	
Dietary Fiber 4g		15%	
Soluble Fiber 1g			
Insoluble Fiber 3g			
Sugars 5g			
Protein 7g		9%	
Vitamin A	0%	• Vitamin C	0%
Calcium	0%	• Iron	8%
* 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
Sat 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
Protein		50g	65g

OUR TASTY INGREDIENTS: ROLLED WHOLE GRAIN BLEND (HARD RED WHEAT, OATS, RYE, TRITICALE, BARLEY), ROASTED SALTED WHOLE ALMONDS, BROWN RICE SYRUP, SOY PROTEIN ISOLATE, SOY GRITS, DRIED CANE SYRUP, CHICORY ROOT FIBER, WHOLE FLAX SEEDS, CANE SYRUP, RICE STARCH, CORN FLOUR, HONEY, EXPELLER PRESSED CANOLA OIL, VEGETABLE GLYCERIN, OAT FIBER, NATURAL FLAVORS, EVAPORATED SALT, KASHI SEVEN WHOLE GRAINS & SESAME FLOUR (WHOLE: OATS, HARD RED WHEAT, RYE, BROWN RICE, TRITICALE, BARLEY, BUCKWHEAT, SESAME SEEDS), MOLASSES, SOY LECITHIN, PEANUT FLOUR, WHEY PROTEIN ISOLATE. CONTAINS WHEAT, ALMOND, SOY, PEANUT AND MILK INGREDIENTS. MAY CONTAIN OTHER TREE NUTS.

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blend.

The ingredient list on a food label is listed in order of the most prevalent to the least. A food is likely to be high in added artificial sugars if one of the following appears first or

second on the list:Raw sugarBrown sugarFructoseGlucoseHoneyLactoseSucroseHigh-fructose corn syrupCorn sweetenerFruit juice concentrateWhen looking at food labels, choose carbohydrates that are high in fiber and low in added sugars. Foods that have 10% or more of fiber per serving are beneficial. Instead of ingredients listed above, look for the following listed in the beginning of that list:Brown rice, cracked wheat, whole wheat, whole oats, graham flour, oatmeal, and anything with the word "whole."A conversation about added sugars cannot be isolated from one about soda drinks. In the United States, this is the number one source of added sugars. The more soda pop one consumes, the less likely he or she will consume more nutritious drinks with natural sugars such as milk. If you consume plenty of sugary beverages, you are also consuming plenty of empty calories meaning, you are getting calories without nutrients.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 12 fl oz (355 mL)	
Servings Per Container 8	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 140	
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Sodium 45mg	2%
Total Carbohydrate 39g	13%
Sugars 39g	
Protein 0g	
Not a significant source of calories from fat, saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, dietary fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium and iron	
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet	

Coca-Cola

CARBONATED WATER, HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP, 200MG COLOR, PHOSPHORIC ACID, NATURAL FLAVORS, CITRIC ACID, CAFFEINE CONTENT 35 MG PER 100 ML (11.3 FL OZ) PER 355 ML (12 FL OZ) BOTTLE. WWW.COCA-COLA.COM ©2009 THE Coca-Cola COMPANY. CONSUMER INFORMATION: CALL 1-800-438-2663

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Here is a Nutrition Facts Label for Coca-Cola. Simply put, the carbohydrate base in a Coke is all sugar. Also notice that the second ingredient is high fructose corn syrup. An

occasional soda is fine, but if you're one of those folks who drinks three to four cans a day, you can see the sugars add up. Sugar substitutes such as aspartame are very low in calories. These can be helpful if you are looking for something sweet with less calories. I've witnessed plenty of patients lose weight merely by cutting out soda and thus their overall daily caloric intake. Try flavored water such as Sparkling Ice or Crystal Light. Diet sodas use sugar substitutes and are often a viable option. Diabetics especially need to watch their sugar intake. Although it is impossible to cut out all sugar, again the best option is to choose carbohydrates high in fiber and low in simple sugars. Lisa James, certified diabetic educator at Alton Memorial Hospital, explains that "food in its most natural state is healthier." She explains that fresh fruits and vegetables, although they have carbohydrates and sugars, are much better than processed or canned foods." Consume foods that are fresh, frozen, canned, and processed - in that order," she adds. Stay tuned for future nutrition facts and tips.

Michele Brannan is a certified Physician Assistant and has been in practice in the Riverbend area for 10 years.

The health information provided herein is not intended to replace the advice or discussion with a healthcare provider and is for educational purposes only. Before making any decisions regarding your health, speak with your healthcare provider.