



Kids in Nutrition

Encouraging the younger generation to
lead healthier, more sustainable lives!

Weekly Newsletter
kidsinnutrition.org

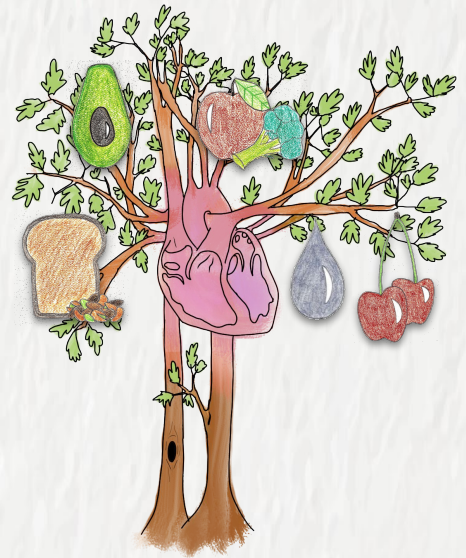
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Week 5: Sugars

There are two main types of sugars: natural sugars from whole foods and added or refined sugars that have been processed and separated from their original plant source. Excess sugar in any form can be detrimental to your health.

In particular, refined sugars should be consumed in moderation. Overconsumption of added sugars can lead to an increased risk of type 2 diabetes, obesity, and heart disease, all of which are on the rise in the U.S. The average American consumes 84g (equivalent to 21 sugar cubes) of added sugar daily. According to the USDA Advisory Committee, the recommended maximum added sugar intake for children is approximately 5 sugar cubes a day or 21g.



KIN's Healthy Heart Tree

Lesson Objectives:

- Describe the effects of sugar on health.
- Explain how to read food labels on packaged foods and how to make choices based on that information.
- Describe the difference between natural sugars and refined sugars.

Natural Sugars

Natural sugars can be found in nutrient-dense foods like fruits. Fresh, whole fruits offer vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and fiber, which not only slows the absorption rate of sugar but also keeps you full for longer. On the other hand, juices and concentrates lack this fiber. Although dried fruit retains the fiber, it contains more sugar by volume, but not by piece, because dehydration reduces its volume. Juices and dried fruit often have added sugars – be sure to check the ingredients list!

Total vs. Added Sugars

Total Sugars 15g	
Includes 7g Added Sugars	14%

Total sugars include natural and added sugars, which are either added during the processing or packaging of foods. These added sugars include concentrated fruit/vegetable juices, syrups, and honey.

Weekly Challenge!

Substitute fruit for dessert at least three times this week! As a bonus challenge, have a healthy breakfast containing no refined sugars at least three times this week!

Refined Sugars

Refined sugars lack all the nutrients, vitamins, and fiber. The top five most common sources of added sugars are as follows:

- ❖ **sweetened beverages** like soft drinks, fruit drinks, sports and energy drinks, smoothies
- ❖ **desserts and sweet snacks**
- ❖ **coffee and tea** with their additions
- ❖ **candy and sugars** like jams, syrups, toppings
- ❖ **breakfast cereals and bars**

Reducing intake of these food categories or consuming low- or no-sugar added versions can help lower your overall added sugars intake. For instance, try substituting instant oatmeal with added flavors with rolled oats that are sweetened naturally with fruit.

Sweeteners (even if from natural sources) have the same effect as refined sugar since our bodies metabolize all added sugars in the same way. Other names for added sugar are high-fructose corn syrup, agave nectar, honey, palm sugar, cane juice, molasses, maltose, sucrose. Food manufacturers may use several of these sweeteners to hide how much sugar is actually present!



Week 5 Recipe: Dark Chocolate Covered Strawberries

Prep time: 10 minutes

Servings: 3-4

Ingredients:



- Fresh strawberries
- 1 bar of dark chocolate (try to find a low-sugar brand!)
- Optional: Chopped nuts, coconut flakes



Instructions



- Wash the strawberries and dry thoroughly.
- Break the chocolate bar into smaller pieces and place in a microwave safe bowl.
- Microwave the chocolate in 30 seconds increments and stir each time.
- Dip the strawberries into the chocolate and place onto a tray lined with parchment paper.
- Optional: Add any toppings, like chopped nuts or coconut flakes.
- Put the tray in the refrigerator for about 15 minutes for the chocolate to set.
- Enjoy!

Note: Although it has some added sugar, dark chocolate is used in this recipe given that it's rich in plant chemicals that protect the heart, support low blood pressure, balance the immune system, and provide other health benefits. Learn more about dark chocolate at

<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/food-features/dark-chocolate>