GUIDE TO SUGAR

Sugar may be tasty, but as we know too much of a good thing can lead to negative consequences. Consistently eating too much sugar (in all its forms) over the course of years can contribute to excess weight gain, elevated triglycerides, increased risk of cancer, and type 2 diabetes.

How Much Sugar Can I Eat?

The American Heart Association recommends that women limit their consumption of added sugars to no more than **6 teaspoons** or 100 calories per day and for men, no more than **9 teaspoons** or 150 calories per day. Note that their recommendation targets *added* - not *natural* sugars. *Natural sugars* are those that are found naturally in a food. For example, fruit naturally contains quite a bit of sugar in the form of fructose. On the other hand, *added sugar* is sugar or sweetener added to foods when cooking, baking, or processing.

The food label does list "sugars", however this includes both added and natural sugars. If you are curious how many total calories from sugar the food has, you just multiply the grams of sugar in the food by 4. (1 gram of sugar = 4 calories.) Another way to monitor sugar intake is to convert grams of sugar to teaspoons as 4 grams of sugar is one teaspoon.

Sugar Has Many Names:

Natural and Processed Sugars:

- Agave nectar
- Beet sugar
- Brown rice syrup
- Brown sugar
- Cane sugar
- Corn syrup
- Corn syrup solids
- Dextrin
- Dextrose
- Evaporated cane juice
- Fructose
- Glucose
- High-Fructose corn syrup
- Honey
- Invert sugar
- Lactose
- Maltodextrin
- Malt syrup
- Maltose
- Maple syrup
- Molasses
- Palm sugar
- Rice syrup
- Saccharose
- Sorghum syrup
- Turbinado sugar

Artificial (Non-Nutritive) Sugars:

- Aspartame (*Nutrasweet* and *Equal*)
- Acesulfame-K (*Sweet One*)
- Mannitol
- Neotame
- Saccharine (*Sweet'N'Low*)
- Sorbitol
- Stevia (*Truvia* and *PureVia*)
- Sucralose (*Splenda*)

Are Maple Syrup and Honey Healthy?

Unfortunately, just like table sugar, maple syrup and honey when used in excess can contribute to weight gain. If you want to use a natural form of sugar in foods, these are a good option. Plus, they do offer a tiny amount of additional nutrients like B6, vitamin C, iron, or zinc - but not enough to really redeem the negative effects of too much sugar.