

SUGAR – NOT SO SWEET ON YOUR HEALTH

Sugar is an addictive carb. Sugar constitutes wasted calories - there is no nutritional value, and overloads the system which leads to weight gain. It is harmful in many ways, causing tooth decay, high blood sugar, obesity, hyperactivity, poor concentration, mood fluctuations, sleeplessness and fatigue, and increases your risk for life-threatening chronic diseases like Diabetes, Hypertension and Heart Disease.

WHERE DO WE FIND SUGAR IN OUR DIET?

Sugars can occur naturally in some foods, the best example of this would be fruits. Some fruit have more than others (e.g. grapes contain more sugar than an apple). It is important to be aware of the types of fruit you are eating. Even if you are following the recommended 2 fruits a day, need to make sure you're not having the fruits that are very high in fruit sugar (fructose), too often. You also need to have the correct portion (for fruits the daily portion size should equal the size of your fist).

Then there are added sugars – sugars that are added to foods, rather than those that are naturally occurring (like fruit). An example is adding sugar to your tea or coffee and cereals. But most times we are unaware of the amount of sugar that has been added in food processing at a factory (secret sugars).

Did you know the recommended daily amount of sugar is only 25g (6 teaspoons). And this isn't just what we added to our tea or coffee it's from all the other foods we eat through the day.

How do you keep track of how much sugar you're consuming? Especially when there are 'secret sugars'. So, the best recommendation is to minimize the amount of sugar you are adding yourself. And to select foods and alternatives which have less sugar in them- reading your food label is a start.

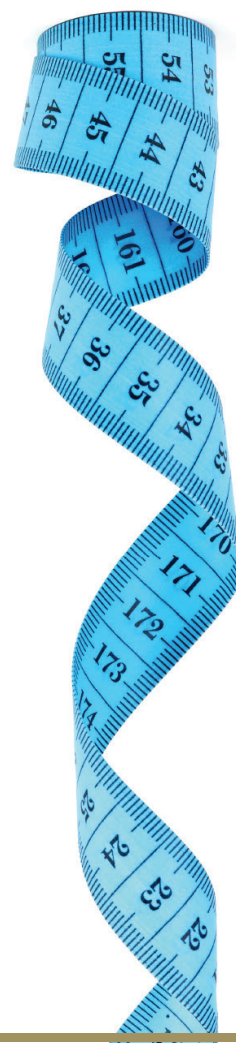


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SMART FRUIT CHOICES

TOTAL NUMBER OF GRAMS OF SUGAR PER 100G SERVING



PORTION WITH CAUTION

Over time, there has been an increase in obesity worldwide. In that same time, there was an increase in food portion sizes. You eat more than you need and more energy than you can burn. This is called portion distortion or super sizing. People are eating more than they should without even realizing it, and tend to oversize their portion of starchy foods, fat, meat or chicken or fish.

The way to overcome is to eat mindfully is to make a meal of it.

- Make a meal of it. Set aside time to eat at the table.
- Serve the right portions of a variety of foods, on a smaller plate.
- Keep the serving dishes, pots, pans away from the table.
- Eat with your eyes. A plate of food that is colourful and has a variety of textures will add to the satisfaction of the meal.
- Be creative. The colour of your plate may influence how much you eat. When a plate and the food on it had a low colour-contrast (like pasta with Alfredo sauce on a white plate), people served themselves more than when there was a higher colour-contrast (like pasta with red sauce on a white plate or pasta with Alfredo sauce on a red plate).
- Plan your daily meal (if you are too busy, you can have healthy home-cooked, dietician inspired, meals delivered to your door. Some supermarkets even prepack ingredients and give you the recipe, so you enjoy the prep too.)
 - Know your food types
 - Know what your body needs to stay healthy.
 - Know what foods to avoid –anything that causes food intolerance or allergic reactions.
 - Don't deprive yourself of your 'guilty pleasure'. Control your cravings. Just eat less of the treat, less often, and substitute it for something on the daily menu (try not to have the treat in addition to the daily serving – e.g. if you have a piece of cake, serve less starch or fat.

BEWARE SUGAR – *it is an addictive carb,
and there is enough in the good,
healthy foods to sustain your energy.*



*Mindful eating sure beats mindless munching
of convenience foods in front of the TV or device screen.*

PORTION CONTROL

Less is more. what you serve on your plate, is not just about eating less. It is about eating the right portion size for each of the different food groups so that you satisfy your daily need for nourishment (nutrients) and energy (calories). Larger portion sizes encourage over eating and cause you to receive more calories than your body actually needs and therefore contributing to weight gain.

THE HEALTHY PLATE MODEL

Here are some guidelines to help you serve a healthy plate for your daily main meal. Allocate space on the plate for the healthy amount of different food groups.

PROTEIN:

One Quarter (25%) of the plate.

1 portion of protein is the size of the palm of your hand.

STARCH:

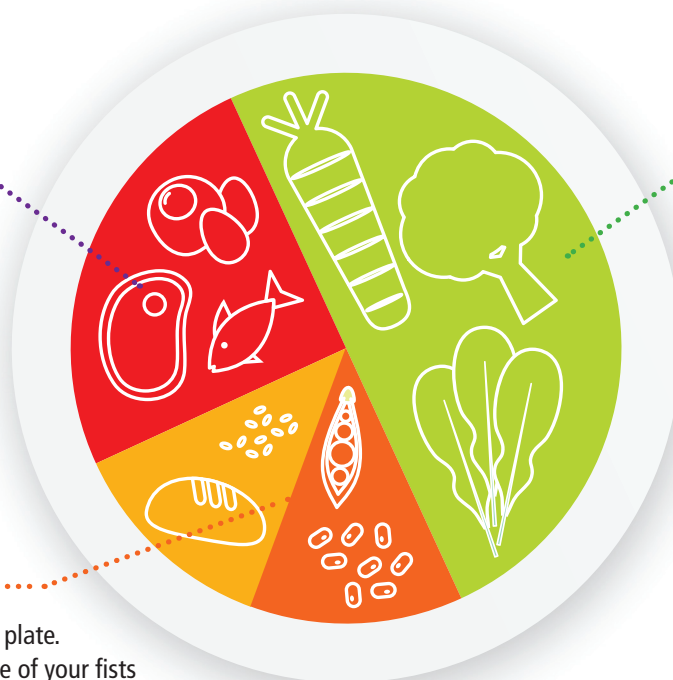
One quarter (25%) of the plate.

1 portion is the size of one of your fists

- 1 slice of Bread **OR**
- ½ cup of cooked Porridge

VEGETABLES:

1 portion of vegetables is the size of two of your fists put together.



.....● **FRUIT:** Fruit can be part of your main meal or as a snack. A portion of fruit is the size of a tennis ball.

- 1 apple or orange; or 2 small apricots/plums **OR**
- ½ a cup of fruit salad would be one portion size.

.....● **DAIRY:** Milk, yoghurt or cheese or any dairy products (choose mostly the low fat options – being aware that some low fat foods have added salt or sugar – so read the food label). Stick to one serving of one of these:

- 1 cup of milk **OR**
- 2 slices/40 g of cheese **OR**
- 175 ml of yoghurt

.....● **FAT:** 1 serving of fat should be the size of the tip of your finger – enough to fill 1 teaspoon. So, 1 teaspoon of oil/butter/margarine/animal fat would be one serving size of fat.