**Reading Labels: Sugar**

**There are two types of sugars** in foods:

*Naturally occurring* sugars are found naturally in foods such as fruit (fructose) and milk (lactose). *Added* sugars include any sugars that are added to foods or beverages during processing like jams, soft drinks, cereals, etc to enhance flavour, colour and texture. We also add our own sugar during preparation (such as putting sugar in your coffee or adding sugar to your cereal).

**Many names for sugar**: Sugars added to food may be labelled as:

* agave syrup, honey, maple syrup, barley malt syrup or fancy molasses
* fructose, glucose, glucose-fructose (also known as high fructose corn syrup), maltose, sucrose or dextrose
* fruit juice and purée concentrates that are added to replace sugars in foods

**Sugars are “empty calories”*.*** Most foods that are high in sugar have *little nutritional value*. Instead, they give your body mostly solid fats and added sugars, which can lead to *weight gain* and nutritional deficiencies.

Our bodies require a certain amount of sugar but unfortunately most Canadians consume an excess amount.  Excess sugar our body does not use for energy right away gets *stored as fat*. Excess consumption of sugar can lead to *obesity*.  Obesity is a risk factor for chronic conditions including *cardio-vascular disease*, *type 2 diabetes* and certain types of *cancer*.  Health Canada recommends that most of your consumption of sugar come from fruits, vegetables and milk.

**How much sugar do we need?**

Because sugar is found naturally in many foods, it is difficult to put an exact number on how much sugar should be in your diet.  For labelling purposes, a daily value for sugar consumption has been set at **100 g**, which is close to the average level of consumption of total sugars in Canada.

**Reading Labels:** Examine the following labels for the sugar content only. There are a number of steps, required to compare these products.

First, you have to set a serving size:  Let's set the serving size to **125 ml**.



Compare the following foods. Use a serving size of **250 mL** for comparison.



A B C

**Part 1 Reading Labels (In class)** Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Calculate the *percent daily value* of sugar for one serving of 250 ml on each of the following labels. Show your work. Comment on whether this is a “little bit” or “a lot”.

a) b) c)

1. Rate the three foods whose labels are shown above from lowest to highest sugar content *per serving.*
2. List 9 common sugars added to processed foods (from the reading above) .

a. f.

b. g.

c. h.

d. i.

e.

1. Why are added sugars called “empty calories”?
2. Why is it difficult to calculate total sugar consumption from the foods we eat?
3. Go to *the link below showing the sugar content of popular soft drinks.* <https://www.caffeineinformer.com/sugar-in-drinks>

Find your favorite beverage from the list. How much sugar are you consuming each time you drink one? (Consider whether you drink only a portion of the beverage or more than one in a day.

Name of beverage: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Total Sugar consumed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Is this “a little bit” or “ a lot”?

1. We all need sugar for energy but too much sugar is bad for us. From the link, what are the 8 health concerns associated with consuming too much sugar in drinks and other foods

**Part 2 Comparing Labels Assignment**

Even if you do not use sugar directly (coffee, tea, cookies), sugar found in many packaged processed foods. Compare sugar content of some processed foods and rate them on sugar content.

Examples of foods that may contain sugar:

* + Condiments: ketchup, mayonnaise, mustard, jam
	+ Pop, energy drinks, juice
	+ granola bar, chocolate bar, protein bar, meal replacement bar,
	+ breakfast cereal, granola cereal, oatmeal
	+ yogurt
	+ salad dressings

**What to do:**

1. Select a category. Take pictures of the labels of *three different foods* from that category. (Try to get a variety and a picture of one you feel is the healthiest option. Ask if you are not sure about this).
2. Bring your pictures to class.
3. In class: **Calculate the sugar content** *per serving* of each product. You will need to choose the same serving size for each.
4. **Graph your results** in a bar graph of *percent sugar* for each food item.
5. Answer the questions below.
6. Self Assess

**Questions:**

1. Show your calculations for the percent sugar content per serving below for each item:
2. Evaluate each product and decide which one you would recommend as the best option. Consider not only sugar content but also taste and convenience. Please use COMPLETE SENTENCES.

**Graph**

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**Self-Assess:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| How did you do?  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Did you show your calculations neatly? |  |  |  |  |
| Did you use complete sentences? |  |  |  |  |
| Is your graph neat and easy to understand? |  |  |  |  |
| Did you give your graph an appropriate title? |  |  |  |  |
| Did you label each axis? |  |  |  |  |
| Will the reader know what serving size you chose?  |  |  |  |  |