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Healthy Eating



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# Sugars



# Healthy Eating – Sugars

When you're trying to make a healthy choice, for most people the aim should be to **eat more** fruit and vegetables, and starchy foods such as bread, pasta and rice. And **cut down** on fat (especially saturates), salt and sugar.

## What types of sugars are there?

Sugars can occur naturally in food and they can be added to food. Try to cut down on added sugars, especially those in processed foods and soft drinks.

## How can I tell how much sugar is in a food product?

Sugars, together with starches, make up carbohydrates. So, to find out how much sugar there is, you should look for the **Carbohydrates (of which sugars)** figure in the nutrition information panel on the product's label.

But sometimes only the combined figure is given for carbohydrates, in which case you can check the ingredients list. This will list any added sugars and starts with the biggest ingredient first.



Carbohydrates provide us with the energy we need to live. You should try to get most of your energy from starchy carbohydrates such as bread, pasta, rice, potatoes and cereals, rather than sugars. Starchy foods contain less than half the calories of fat.



## What is a lot or a little?

If you want to make a healthy choice when you're choosing which products to buy, you might find it useful to check the nutrition information on the label.

You'll see figures for the sugar content on many food labels.

**This is A LOT of sugar**  
10g sugars or more per 100g

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**This is A LITTLE sugar**  
2g sugars or less per 100g

If the quantities fall between these figures, this is a moderate amount of sugar.

## Are sugars the same as sweeteners?

Unlike sugars, sweeteners are very low in calories and less likely to cause tooth decay. They are used in place of sugar in products such as fizzy drinks, yoghurt and chewing gum. Some have the same sweetness as sugar, such as sorbitol. Others are many times sweeter so they are used in very small amounts, such as aspartame and saccharin.

