

# Top 5 Sugar Shockers

## Surprising foods you never knew were loaded with sugar

When it comes to sweet treats like doughnuts, cakes, and cookies, it's pretty obvious that they're loaded with sugar. But what about the not-so-obvious foods? Health professionals agree that we need to use more discretion when consuming certain foods.

Reading nutrition labels, checking ingredients and doing, independent research can help us cut back on sugar and practice clean eating. But it's also important to keep in mind that just because something is labeled as a healthy snack, doesn't mean it's true.

Take these common foods for example:

1. **Barbecue sauce.** A summer staple, this sweet and savory sauce could pack up to 9 grams of sugar per ounce, not to mention it's full of sodium. Skip this one the next time you want to dress up your grilled meats and opt for a flavorful dry rub instead. Keep in mind, barbecue sauce isn't the only culprit in your sauce arsenal. Ketchup, mayonnaise, and pasta sauce are also loaded with sugar—a 100-gram serving of pasta sauce could contain a whopping 8 grams of sweetener.
2. **Salad dressing.** Your favorite creamy salad dressing could have up to 6 grams of sugar per 2 tablespoons. And it's not the only one. Oily bottled dressings such as a balsamic vinaigrette or Italian dressing are pre-flavored with sugar too. Try mixing up your own sugar-free version by using olive oil, balsamic vinegar, and a pinch of salt and pepper.
3. **Protein bars.** After a hard workout, the last thing you should do is put a ton of sugar into your body. Many protein bars can contain upward of 15 grams of sugar or more. If you need protein and energy after the gym, trade-in your bar for [heart-healthy](#) almonds or seeds—or help yourself to some freshly ground peanut butter.
4. **Fruit juice.** With all the [buzz about fruit juice](#) lately, maybe you're already familiar with this one. While whole fruit juice is derived from fruit, it contains none of the benefits and all the sugar. A 12-ounce serving of apple juice can contain up to 40 grams of sweet stuff! Ditch the juice, and reach for the fruit next time. You'll get a snack that's full of fiber and antioxidants, and it will help fill you up.
5. **Flavored yogurt.** Regular Greek yogurt is loaded with protein and calcium and makes a filling on-the-go snack. However, flavored varieties diminish their goodness through artificial fruit flavoring and added sugar. If you want extra sweetness in your regular yogurt, add fresh berries or cinnamon.

It's well known that an over-consumption of sugar can lead to health complications such as [diabetes](#), obesity, and high blood pressure. To regulate your daily intake of sugar, the American Heart Association recommends that men limit sugar consumption to around 37 grams and women to 25 grams. For preschool children and teenagers, sugar intake should be no more than 20 and 40 grams, respectively. To avoid any issues in the future, always choose whole fruits

and veggies over high-calorie, high-sugar foods. If you're in doubt about your favorite snack, a good rule of thumb to follow is to avoid processed foods in general.

If a food is high in sugar, salt, and not much else, the chances are that you will eat more of it resulting in poor health down the road. Play it safe and choose clean foods that you know are free of added flavors, sweeteners, and salt.

*By: Providence Health Team*

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