If you are like most people, you think of sugar as the granulated white substance in the sugar bowl that you put in your coffee or mix into a cake. Actually, granulated white sugar is the most common sugar—it’s called sucrose. However, it isn’t the only type of sugar in the diet. There are over 100 sweeteners that are made of sugars and are added to foods or beverages during processing or preparation.

Sugars are carbohydrates that provide your body with energy. Carbohydrates have 4 calories per gram. Unlike other carbohydrates, however, sugar and most sweeteners, provide calories with few or no other nutrients. Foods that contain most of the added sugars in American diets are:

- Regular soft drinks
- Candy
- Cakes, cookies and pies
- Fruit drinks, such as fruitades and fruit punch
- Milk-based desserts and products, such as ice cream, sweetened yogurt and sweetened milk
- Grain products such as sweet rolls and cinnamon toast

Since sugars provide little more than calories, most health professionals believe Americans would be healthier if they ate less sugar.
GET MOVING . . . Getting Started on your Exercise Routine

Warm-up: slowly begin the type of exercise you’ve selected to get your body ready for more vigorous exercise. For example, walk at a slower pace for about 5-10 minutes before brisk walking. This helps warm up your muscles and joints and helps prevent injury.

Work-out: activity that uses the large muscles of the body in a continuous, rhythmic motion over an extended period of time is called aerobic. Some examples of aerobic activity include brisk walking, bicycling and swimming laps. Recommended to do most days at a moderate to vigorous pace for at least 30 minutes.

Cool-down: Continue your activity at a much slower pace for about 5-10 minutes to gradually bring your heart rate back to normal.

DID YOU KNOW . . . ?

✓ On the average, about a fourth of our calories come from sugar - 20 percent comes from sugars that are added by manufacturers.
✓ It is estimated that each person uses a total of 125 pounds of added sugars per year.
✓ Sugar doesn’t cause diseases or hyperactivity, but it can be linked to dental cavities.
✓ Too many sweets can lead to obesity, which could increase your risk of getting heart disease and diabetes.
✓ Sugar is a preservative. High amounts of sugar will prevent bacteria from growing.

CALL IT WHAT YOU WANT - IT'S STILL SUGAR . . .

Total avoidance of all foods that contain sugars is not practical or necessary. But it is a good idea to cut down on sugar by reading ingredient labels. Here are the most common words for sugar used in nutrition labels:

Glucose  
Corn Syrup  
Fructose  
Maltose  
Honey  
Sucrose  
Maple Syrup  
Brown Sugar  
Lactose  
Dextrose  
Corn Sweetener
FAMILY ACTIVITY

Kid’s breakfast cereals are usually loaded with sugar. Let your child help you evaluate the cereals you eat at home. Check the label to see how many grams of sugar are listed. Four grams of sugar is equal to 1 teaspoon of sugar, so if your cereal has 13 grams of sugar per serving listed on the label, you are eating over three (3) teaspoons of sugar in your cereal. Take your child on your next grocery shopping trip and challenge them to pick out a cereal with less grams of sugar than the current cereal they are eating!

CLIP AND COOK

Banana Muffins

1½ cup whole wheat flour
½ cup oat flour (ground oats)
1½ teaspoons baking powder
½ teaspoon baking soda
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1 teaspoon cinnamon
½ cup chopped pecans
2 tablespoons oil
2 egg whites
½ cup plain yogurt
½ cup concentrated apple juice
½ teaspoon vanilla
2 to 3 mashed bananas

Preheat oven to 425°F. Make oat flour by grinding up quick oats in a food processor or blender. Mix dry ingredients together. In a separate bowl, mix together wet ingredients. Add wet ingredients to dry ingredients and stir until dry ingredients are moist. Do not over stir. Spoon into regular size greased muffin pans. Bake 17-20 minutes. Yield 1 dozen regular size muffins.

Muffins are great to freeze and thaw/heat in microwave as needed. Kids also enjoy miniature muffins. Recipe yields 4 dozen miniature muffins (reduce cooking time).

Nutrition Facts

Amount Per Serving (1 regular size muffin)
Calories 140
Total Fat 3.8 g
Carbohydrate 24 g
Cholesterol 0
Calcium 53 mg
Sodium 106 mg
Total Sugar 6 g
Dietary Fiber 3 g
Potassium 256 mg
Phosphorus 111 mg