



The white stuff: Sugar

Sugar is the new demon in the health and fitness world. It's all over the place and it's getting the brunt of the blame for a myriad of health problems such as type II diabetes, obesity, and even Alzheimer's. So how do you know how to find it and reduce your intake?

The many faces of sugar:

| | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Sugar | Agave Nectar | Coconut sugar | Cane Sugar |
| Fructose | Evaporated Cane Juice | Corn Syrup | Raw Sugar |
| Lactose | Maltose | High Fructose Corn Syrup aka HFCS | Fruit Juice Concentrates |
| Anhydrous dextrose | Syrup | Malt Syrup | Rice Syrup |
| Concentrated fruit juice | Crystal Dextrose | Maple Syrup* | Coconut Nectar |

Keep in mind that these are just a few of the things to look for on a nutrition label. It is also important to note that some of these are naturally occurring sugars (maple syrup, honey, etc.) and they don't require a lot of processing. Most of the forms of sugar on this list do however.

Reducing the intake

So what are the secrets to removing unnecessary sugar from your daily intake?

- **Read your labels:** Take a glance over the labels at the grocery store.
- **Don't get caught up in buzz words:** Food companies do their best to throw you off with buzzwords such as "Natural, Organic, and No Sugar Added". These look pretty on labels and help sell a lot of product but they don't necessarily work for your body.
 - Natural just means they may unnecessarily use fruit juice/ rice syrup/ or HFCS.
 - Organic just means the form of sugar they used came from an organic source (but it's still sugar).
 - No sugar added means they may have just used things that already contain a form of sugar like milk (contains lactose), grains (contains maltose), or extra fruit (fructose)
- **Think outside the box:** Choose foods that don't come in a box. It is easy to use the nutrition labels on a box of food as our guide to being healthy but true healthy food doesn't need the label. Fresh produce, nuts and seeds, and seasonal fruits are all great alternatives!

Fact: The average American child consumes 32 teaspoons of sugar a day.