Join us for the Fitwize

Nutrition Session

Friday, July 26

4 to 5 PM!

Does the type of sugar we eat matter? This month we'll look at various foods to consider the type of sugar we are consuming.

MILLER METHOD
BECAUSE WEIGHT LOSS IS A MATH PROBLEM

Stephanie Mull, MS, RD, CSSD, CSCS
Miller Method for Fitwize
6.19

Fitwize Newsletter
July 2019

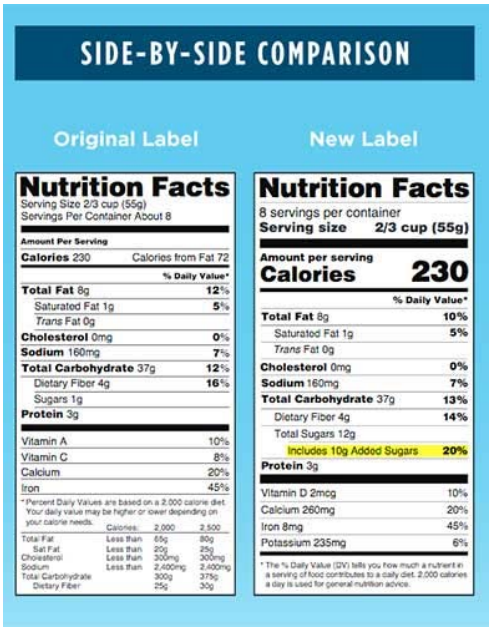
Does the Type of Sugar Matter?

By Stephanie Mull, MS, RD, CSSD, CSCS

A recurring hot topic in the nutrition world is how much sugar is found in the foods we eat. The overconsumption of sugar can lead to an excess intake of calories without also receiving vital nutrients. In children, drinking sugar-filled drinks can lead to cavities and other teeth-related problems. On the Nutrition Facts label, sugar grams must be listed. However, food products fail to tell us the difference between added sugar and naturally occurring sugar. Foods, such as those that are fruit or dairy based, are going to have sugar grams listed due to the fructose and lactose present, but it doesn't mean these foods are unhealthy for us.

So how can you tell the difference between a naturally occurring sugars and sugar that has been added to the food? Don't rely on the front of the packaging to tell you. Rather, flip the product over to look at the Nutrition Facts Label and follow these guidelines:

- Look to see how much sugar is present in the product. The newer food labels will be noting the difference between added sugar and natural sugar. The added sugars are what you want to limit.
- If the added sugars are not listed on the food label, look at the ingredient list. Ingredients are listed in order by weight, with the heaviest being listed first. If sugar or any other word that indicates a source of simple sugar is listed as the first or second ingredient, you should try to avoid that food or limit its consumption to a small quantity.
- Sweet treats are perfectly fine to consume in smaller quantities. What you should try to increase your awareness of is the amount and source of sugar in other products, such as drinks, sugar-based snacks such as fruit snacks or cookies, and other packaged goods. Be aware of all sources of sugar in your diet and do your best to balance them every day with lean proteins and fiber.


SIDE-BY-SIDE COMPARISON
Original Label
New Label
Nutrition Facts
Serving Size 2/3 cup (55g)
Servings Per Container About 8
Amount Per Serving
Calories 230
Calories from Fat 72
% Daily Value*
Total Fat 8g 12%
Saturated Fat 1g 5%
Trans Fat 0g
Cholesterol 0mg 0%
Sodium 160mg 7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g 12%
Dietary Fiber 4g 16%
Sugars 1g
Protein 3g
Vitamin A 10%
Vitamin C 8%
Calcium 20%
Iron 45%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily value may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.
Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat Less than 65g 80g
Sat Fat Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate 300g 375g
Dietary Fiber 25g 30g
Nutrition Facts
8 servings per container
Serving size 2/3 cup (55g)
Amount per serving
Calories 230
% Daily Value*
Total Fat 8g 10%
Saturated Fat 1g 5%
Trans Fat 0g
Cholesterol 0mg 0%
Sodium 160mg 7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g 13%
Dietary Fiber 4g 14%
Total Sugars 12g
Includes 10g Added Sugars 20%
Protein 3g
Vitamin D 2mcg 10%
Calcium 260mg 20%
Iron 8mg 45%
Potassium 235mg 6%
* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Kids know of the word "sugar" and they associate it with being unhealthy. However, it can be dangerous to assume all sugar is unhealthy. There is a time and place for simple sugar (fun occasions or fueling before/after long duration sports). We don't want to demonize sugar. We need to understand it, including food sources, purposes, and appropriate quantities. This month during the nutrition session, we will talk about what foods contain added sugar but what we'll focus on is the difference between added sugar and natural sugar. We'll look at real foods as examples (e.g. fresh fruit vs. fruit snacks), and understand the purpose of each.