

# Sugar, sugar everywhere

## BACKGROUNDER FOR EDUCATORS

Sugar exists in many foods we eat, either naturally occurring (as in whole fruits) or as added sugar (as in the syrup that canned fruits are packed in). Though naturally occurring sugars in fruit, vegetables, and milk are part of a healthy diet, consuming too much sugar is associated with multiple health risks such as heart disease, stroke, obesity, diabetes, and cavities.<sup>vi</sup> The World Health Organization recommends a maximum daily intake of added sugar should only be 5% of our daily caloric intake. This equals about 6 teaspoons for kids; Canadian children consume more than five times the recommended amount<sup>vii</sup> (with adults consuming the equivalent of almost 40 kg a year).<sup>viii</sup> Over two thirds of packaged and highly processed foods contain added sugars, including snacks and beverages.<sup>ix</sup> Look for these names on the labels: molasses, barley malt, corn syrup, evaporated cane juice, glucose, fructose, dextrose, maltodextrin, maltose, or sucrose. Many of these products are marketed specifically to children via cartoons, colourful branding, and elaborate packaging, with the sugar industry resisting efforts to reduce sugar intake.

*\*One teaspoon of sugar is equal to 4 grams of sugar*



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Kids will gain a greater awareness of just how much “hidden” sugar is in many foods and drinks, and discover snack alternatives with less sugar.



## SPECIAL MATERIALS NEEDED

- 4 large bowls
- 2 sets of measuring spoons
- 2 liquid measuring cups
- A collection of popular drink containers (e.g., pop, energy drink, sports drink, iced tea, fruit flavored drink, chocolate milk, 100% unsweetened juice) and snack or candy packaging.
- A large bag of granulated sugar
- Clear glasses
- Enough teaspoons for your group



## SAMPLE TIMING AND FLOW

10 min	Sugary Facts
10 min	Measuring Relay Race
20 min	Sugar Shock
40 min	Meal Preparation
20 min	Garden Activity
15 min	Meal Sharing
5 min	Clean-up

## ACTIVITIES

### SUGARY FACTS

Get your group warmed up by seeing what they know. Split the group in two teams and have them “buzz in” if they know the answer.

- Q:** From which food or drink source do people get most of their sugar?
- A:** *Pop and sugary drinks are very high in sugar and have little to no nutrients<sup>x</sup>*
- Q:** An 8 year-old should have a maximum of how many teaspoons of sugar (from foods containing added sugar) a day?  
6 tsp, 8 tsp or 12 tsp?
- A:** *6 teaspoons<sup>xi</sup>*
- Q:** How many teaspoons of sugar are in a regular (355 ml) can of pop?
- A:** *About 10 teaspoons*
- Q:** Average amount of sugar teenage boys in Canada consume daily?
- A:** *41 teaspoons<sup>xii</sup>*
- Q:** When sugar is added to food, it must be listed on the ingredients label, but added sugar comes in many different forms with different names, which can make it hard to find on the label. How many different names of sugar can be listed on food labels?
- A:** *152 different names!<sup>xiii</sup> Bonus points if they know some of the common examples: sucrose, high-fructose corn syrup, maltose and dextrose.*
- Q:** Sugar is produced from sugar cane and what else?
- A:** *Sugar beets*

## MEASURING RELAY RACE

Brush up on your measuring skills with this fun relay race.

### What you'll need:

- 4 Large bowls
- 2 sets of measuring spoons
- 2 liquid measuring cups

### What to do:

- Practice reading the fractions on both the measuring cups and measuring spoons.
- Place two bowls full of water at one end of the table with the measuring tools. Place the two empty bowls at the other end of the table.
- Divide kids into two groups and have them line up next to one another along the length of the table.
- The leader will read off a series of measurements written on paper so the kids can practice reading them too. The child closest to the water bowl will have to use the appropriate tool to measure the correct amount of water and then pass the water down the line. Careful, don't spill! The goal is to empty your water bowl before the other team (and/or be the most exact team).
- Have kids rotate between each measurement to make sure everyone has the chance to measure.

## SUGAR SHOCK

This measuring activity provides a shocking visual of just how much sugar is in many of many of our drinks and foods.

### What you'll need:

- A collection of popular drink containers (e.g., pop, energy drink, sports drink, iced tea, fruit flavoured drink, chocolate milk, 100% unsweetened juice) and snack or candy packaging
- A large bag of granulated sugar
- Clear glasses
- Enough teaspoons for your group

### What to do:

- Have a collection of drink containers and food wrappers displayed on the table.
- Ask the group to guess and put the drinks and food in order from most to least amount of sugar. Take a picture to remember the order.
- Ask each kid to choose a package and look up the amount of sugar in their item.
- Then, using the teaspoons, measure the amount of sugar in each item into a clear glass (make sure your glasses are the same size and shape for comparison).
- Compare your items. Line up each item, as well as their glass of measured sugar. How does this line up compare to your original prediction?
- Also measure out the recommended daily intake and compare this glass to the rest

*Ask: What surprised you the most and why? Do you think you have more sugar than the daily recommended amount? What are some things we can drink and eat instead of sugary drinks and snacks?*



## RECIPE SUGGESTIONS

Pick snacks light in sugar like smoothies, kale chips or beet muffins.



## SUGGESTED GARDEN ACTIVITY

When your taste buds aren't being overwhelmed by sugar, you'll actually be able to taste more of food's other ingredients! This is good week to introduce and start working on an herb spiral or play the Follow Your Nose-herb guessing game.



## FOOD FUN FOR ALL!

Know your kids. It's important to go beyond knowing who has an allergy to really get to know each child. This helps you to be aware of who may need extra help with reading, who does better in a quieter group, or who needs to be kept busy. Make sure everyone on your team (volunteers!) are also made aware.



## EXTRA RESOURCES

- Discover ways to sweeten food **without sugar**
- Countries like **Mexico**, the **U.K.** and some areas of the **United States** have been experimenting taxing sugar-sweetened drinks with the hope that by reducing consumption of these drinks they can reduce obesity rates.