



— KNOW THE DIFFERENCE — Natural Sugars vs. Added Sugars

Your body uses the food you eat for energy. When you eat foods that provide carbohydrates, your body breaks them down into sugars, such as glucose. **While sugar is often seen as something to avoid completely, your body needs glucose to power virtually every biological process in your body** - from blinking and walking to breathing and even sleeping.

However, there are some differences in the types of sugar found in food.

Natural Sugars

- Found in nutrient-dense foods such as fruits, vegetables, grains, beans, legumes, low-fat dairy.
- These foods are packaged with beneficial nutrients like vitamins and minerals.
- These foods also have fiber, protein, and/or fat that helps slow the absorption of sugar.
- Natural sugars don't spike blood sugar the same added sugars do, due to being digested more slowly.



Added Sugars

- Added sugars are sweeteners that are added to foods for flavor during cooking, baking or processing.
- Common sources of added sugar found in foods include agave, coconut sugar, honey, malt, maple syrup, molasses, raw sugar, fructose and other ingredients that end in "-ose".
- Some added sugars have small quantities of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants.
- The number of calories from added sugar you would need to consume to get a significant amount of those nutrients negates any health benefit.
- Most foods with added sugars are low in fiber, protein, and fat.
- The 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends keeping added sugar to less than 10% of your daily calories (for someone who eats 2,000 calories per day, that is about 50 grams of added sugar (or about 4 tablespoons), per day.
- Too much added sugar may cause tooth decay and weight gain and put you at higher risk for heart disease, diabetes and cognitive problems.



Understanding the Sugar in Your Food

Reading Nutrition Fact labels helps you make informed choices about your food. Total Sugars include both naturally occurring sugars and added sugars, while Added Sugars identify only the amount of sugar added. Labels will list the number of grams and the percent Daily Value (%DV) for added sugars. The Daily Values are reference amounts of nutrients to consume or not to exceed each day.

TO HELP GUIDE YOUR CHOICES:

- 5% DV or less is considered LOW in added sugar
- 20% DV or more is considered HIGH in added sugar

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	8 fl oz (240mL)
Amount per serving	
Calories	110
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	0%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 5mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 27g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 25g	0%
Includes 23g Added Sugars	
Protein 0g	46%
Vitamin D 0mcg	
Calcium 0mg	0%
Iron 0mg	

Ways to Reduce Added Sugars

Be mindful of portion sizes and aim to only occasionally enjoy foods that are high in added sugar like regular sodas, candy, sugary cereals, cookies and other baked goods.

Added sugars can sneak into flavored yogurt and condiments like ketchup and salad dressings, so check the Nutrition Facts label! Fruit contains natural sugars, which can be used in place of added sugars to sweeten recipes, and provides additional fiber. Try these recipes with no added sugar:



Avocado Banana Horchata-Style Smoothie



Heart-Healthy Frozen Avocado Banana Paleta



Agua Fresca de Aguacate



Avocado Piña Colada



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Unlike most other fruits, **avocado contains zero gram of naturally occurring sugar per serving** and does not affect the glycemic response.

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NUTRITIOUS FAMILY MEALS MADE EASY WITH FRESH AVOCADOS

Create the plate to manage weight

Incorporating foods from all food groups into meals and snacks is essential for good health and weight management. Start by making half your plate fruits and vegetables. Then, aim to make half your grains whole grains, vary your sources of protein, such as lean meat, poultry, seafood, or beans and opt for low- or non-fat dairy. Find what works for you and your family's personal and cultural preferences, health goals and budget, while prioritizing foods lower in saturated fat, sodium, and added sugars.

Make half your plate fruits and vegetables

Fruits and vegetables add vibrant color, flavor, texture and of course, essential nutrients like potassium, dietary fiber, vitamin C, folate and others to meals. When eaten as part of an overall healthy diet, they can help maintain health and reduce disease risk. Consuming a healthy eating pattern and increasing physical activity prevents weight gain and promotes weight loss. Avocados are nutrient-dense and can be embraced in a healthy eating pattern.

Including fresh avocados in meals is a tasty step toward meeting the recommended daily intake of fruits and vegetables. One-third of a medium avocado contains only 80 calories and contributes nearly 20 vitamins, minerals, and beneficial plant nutrients to enrich the nutrient quality of the diet. They're also a good source of fiber, which can help you feel fuller faster and manage weight.

Step up nutrition and flavor with fresh avocado

Simple tweaks to family favorite recipes can add loads of flavor and nutrition. Liven up your meals with fresh avocado:

- Add fresh, sliced avocado to soups, salads, or sandwiches/burgers
- Combine avocado with green, leafy vegetables and fruits in smoothies
- Use avocado as a spread on toasts, crackers, or bagels
- Top grilled fish with a refreshing avocado and fruit salsa
- Include avocado in scrambled eggs or omelet
- Bake with avocados instead of butter



HEART-HEALTHY SLOW COOKER AVOCADO LIME CHICKEN SOUP

Take your homemade chicken soup up a notch with fresh avocado, using this simple recipe that you can prep ahead and enjoy at dinnertime.

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 1 tsp. chili powder
- 1/2 tsp. ground cumin
- 6 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 cup jarred salsa verde
- 2 Tbsp. fresh ginger, minced
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 ripe, fresh avocado, halved, pitted, peeled, and diced
- 2 scallions, sliced on a diagonal
- 1/4 cup cilantro leaves
- 2 Tbsp. lime juice

Instructions:

Season chicken with chili powder and cumin. Place on bottom of slow cooker. Add broth, salsa verde, ginger and garlic and cook in slow cooker for 3 hours on high or 6 hours on low. Remove chicken from slow cooker. Using two forks, shred chicken. Return chicken to slow cooker and stir in avocado, scallions, cilantro, and lime juice.

Nutrition Facts:

10 servings per recipe

Serving Size: 1 serving (229 g)

110 Calories

4.5 g Fat

1 g Saturated Fat

35 mg Cholesterol

280 mg Sodium

4 g Carbohydrate

1 g Fiber

12 g Protein





USING FRESH AVOCADOS

AS A **CULTURALLY-APPROPRIATE** INTERVENTION TO IMPROVE NUTRITION STATUS OF **HISPANIC AMERICAN FAMILIES**

Hispanic Americans are disproportionately more likely to be overweight or obese than non-Hispanic white adults, making them more susceptible to heart disease and stroke risk factors.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends healthy eating patterns to minimize the risk of chronic diseases. Unfortunately, adherence to the guidelines among all Americans is low, with added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium exceeding suggested limits and even higher among Hispanic Americans. Educational dietary interventions that encourage the consumption of culturally-appropriate fruits and vegetables may be a strategic alternative to a dietary elimination approach.

Nutrient-dense, fiber-containing foods like healthy avocados also provide substantial amounts of vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients with only 80 calories per serving.

1/3 of a medium avocado (50g) is one serving size



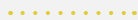
WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS



A clinical trial¹ randomized 72 Hispanic American families (97% Mexican) to receive one of two levels of avocado allotment plus nutrition education based upon MyPlate for six months.

The lower avocado control allocation provided three avocados/family/week, representing habitual avocado intake in the cohort. The higher avocado allotment provided 14 avocados/family/week or up to 2 avocados/family/day. Families eating 3 (720 extra calories) or 14 (3,360 extra calories) avocados per week experienced no changes in body weight, BMI, or waist circumference.

Yet, nutritional status changed with a higher avocado allotment. Specifically, those families that received 14 avocados per week reported a reduction in total calories, carbohydrates, protein, saturated fat, and sodium compared to those with low avocado allotment. Participants also reported lower animal and vegetable protein, total fat, polyunsaturated fat, vitamin D, and mineral (calcium, magnesium, potassium, iron) intakes with the higher avocado allotment. The Avocado Nutrition Center funded the study, and study limitations, including drawbacks of all validated food frequency questionnaires, prevent the generalization of the findings.



The results support including fresh avocados in nutrition education to support weight management while reducing the overconsumption of saturated fat and sodium for Hispanic families.



Fresh avocados are a staple in most Latin American cuisine. Though technically a fruit, MyPlate counts avocados as a vegetable and recommends that adults consume 2-3 cups of vegetables per day, depending on calorie needs. One avocado counts as one cup of vegetables.

References:

1. Pacheco, L et al. "Effects of Avocado Intake on the Nutritional Status of Families: A Cluster Randomized Controlled Trial." *Nutrients*. 2021

Simple tips to encourage fruit and vegetable intake

USING **FRESH AVOCADOS** IN LATIN AMERICAN CUISINE

Fresh avocados are a healthy and versatile ingredient to add flavor and nutrients to various meals and snacks.



Serve guacamole with quesadillas, enchiladas or tacos



Add avocado slices to rice and beans



Toss fresh avocado into salads, soups, and breakfast dishes



Boost veggie intake by adding avocado to tortas



Swap avocado for meat in vegetarian burritos and enchiladas

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