

## Foods you didn't know were high in sugar

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Nutrition and physical activity are important parts of a healthy lifestyle and learning which foods you can add to your diet plan that won't affect blood sugar levels is crucial. Besides numerous benefits, following a healthy meal plan and abiding by an active lifestyle can help you keep your blood glucose level, also called blood sugar, in the target range. To maintain the blood glucose level, you need to balance and monitor what you eat and drink along with physical activity and diabetes medicine. Eating well and being physically active most days of the week can help you keep your blood glucose level, blood pressure, and cholesterol in your target range.

With regard to the ideal sugar intake, it is a lesser known fact that while some foods that are considered extremely low in sugar content or sugar-free, and thus healthy options for consumption, the situation is actually quite the opposite. These foods contain large amounts of hidden sugar and lead to the person exceeding the consumption limit. Sugar is hidden in many edibles that you would never expect it to be in. Some forms of sugar that we generally do not notice are dextrose, high-fructose corn syrup, honey, fructose, glucose, maltose, sucrose, powdered sugar, brown sugar or lactose.

Following are some commonly consumed foods that contain staggering amounts of sugar, which you must watch out for:

### **Red Meat**

You don't have to cut red meat from your diet entirely, but studies say that consuming lot of a red meat and processed meat, such as bacon and cold cuts which are high in saturated fat contributes to the development of type 2 diabetes. It elevates cholesterol levels and increases your risk of heart disease.

You can easily lower your risk by substituting one serving of red or processed meat with healthier sources of protein, such as nuts and avocado, as well as lean proteins like skinless chicken, or low-fat dairy products.

### **Whole Milk**

Out of the pool of saturated fats, red meat and butter organically comes first, but even whole-milk dairy products are loaded with saturated fats, wherein they are the prime suspects in life-threatening conditions like heart disease. Research highlights that a diet high in saturated fats is linked to both obesity and insulin resistance. Rather, shift to a no-fat or low fat dairy products to absorb all the benefits of calcium without the drawbacks, and reduce calories to help with weight loss.

### **Vegetable Oil**

Partially hydrogenated oils are a form of trans fat, which are some of the most inflammatory oils available. Watch out for vegetable oils that are made with partially-hydrogenated palm and soybean oils, which contain trace amounts of trans fats. Instead, you can opt for extra virgin olive oil, avocado oil, or grapeseed oil instead.

### **Protein bars**

A number of fitness enthusiasts consider protein bars a good option to snack on, especially after their workout, or while they are at work. However, these protein and granola bars contain heaps of added sugar. Hence, it is suggested to have nuts instead to avail the required amount of protein or opt for homemade bars made of jaggery.

### **Low-fat yoghurt**

Another product that should be avoided for those steering clear of added sugar is low-fat yoghurt. This is especially in the case of fruit-flavoured yoghurt, as unflavoured yoghurt is found to have about a third of the sugar that flavoured ones have. It is best to stick to healthier homemade yoghurt, rather than consuming it in a packaged form.

### **Salad dressing**

Sugar content of salad dressings varies depending on the brand, as well as the type of dressing. However, a number of these store-bought dressings like mayonnaise, thousand island, ranch, vinaigrette and several others contain excessive amounts of sugar, generally in the form of high-fructose corn syrup. Instead, try making your own healthy dressing at home by mixing olive oil, vinegar, and a few herbs and dash of lime or lemon as an alternative.

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