

Decoding Ingredient Lists and Nutrition Claims

**“NO SUGAR ADDED”
“SUGAR-FREE” and
“FAT-FREE” doesn’t mean
“CALORIE-FREE”**

Ingredient Lists

Ingredient lists and nutrition claims on food labels can help you identify foods with hidden sugars, trans fats or those rich in fiber. Ingredients are listed by weight from highest to lowest, meaning the first ingredient is the largest amount and the last ingredient is the smallest amount. A good rule of thumb—the fewer the ingredients the better!

Sample Ingredient Lists

Key Words for Added Sugars

Corn Sweetener	Lactose
Fructose	Molasses
Fruit Juice Concentrates	Other words ending in “ose”
Glucose	Sugar
High-Fructose Corn Syrup	Sucrose
Honey	Syrup

Nonfat, Plain Yogurt (contains NO added sugars)

INGREDIENTS: Cultured Grade A pasteurized skim milk, fruit pectin. Contains live active cultures including *L. acidophilus*.

Low-Fat Strawberry Yogurt (NO added sugars)

INGREDIENTS: Cultured Grade A pasteurized low-fat milk, strawberries, high fructose corn syrup, natural flavor, pectin, modified corn starch. Contains live active cultures including *L. acidophilus*.

Ingredient with largest amount used

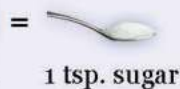
Ingredient with the smallest amount used

Added sugar

How Much Sugar?



small apple



1/2 cup apple juice



slice of apple pie



Fruits, beans, starchy veggies and milk contain natural sugars!

Helpful Hints

Don't be fooled by low fat and fat free. These foods can have more carbs than their full-fat versions—check labels and compare. Rule of thumb—choose healthy fats like olive oil and walnuts, limit saturated fats and avoid trans fats.

Go for the whole grain. Boost nutrients and fiber by choosing grains with the word whole attached to the first few ingredients—like whole oats or whole wheat.

Be aware of added sugars. Added sugars provide calories and carbs but don't fill you up or provide many nutrients. A smarter choice—eat foods that have added sugars listed in the first three ingredients less often.

Fill up with fiber. Look for breads with 2 or more grams of fiber and cereals with 4 or more grams per serving. Fruits, veggies, whole grains and beans are natural sources of fiber.

Avoid Trans fats. Trans fats raise bad cholesterol levels (LDL) and lower good cholesterol levels (HDL). Fried foods, doughnuts, stick margarines, crackers and packaged desserts often contain Trans fats. Code word for Trans fat = partially hydrogenated vegetable oil.