

clips on sugars

FOR UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION ON SUGARS IN HEALTHY EATING

Calories and Body Weight

While we often hear that we should be "cutting back" on calories, it is important to understand that our bodies need calories for energy – to grow, function, and be active. A *calorie* is a unit of measurement. Calories measure the energy in foods as well as the energy used by our bodies. To reach and maintain a healthy body weight, it is important to find the right balance of "calories in" from the foods you eat with "calories out" that your body uses.

Managing Your "Calories In"

Foods and beverages containing carbohydrate, fat and protein all provide energy in the form of calories. The number of calories in a food or beverage depends on the calories coming from a combination of these nutrients.

- **Carbohydrates: 4 Calories per gram.** Carbohydrate foods are made up of starches and sugars and include bread, cereal, pasta, rice, legumes (peas, beans, lentils), fruits and fruit juices, starchy vegetables like potatoes, table sugar, and other sugars like honey or corn syrup.
- **Protein: 4 Calories per gram.** Foods that contain protein include meat, fish, poultry, eggs, milk products and soy products.
- **Fat: 9 Calories per gram.** Examples of foods that contain fat are butter, margarine, oils, salad dressings, fried foods, meats, cheeses, and nuts.

Don't forget about alcohol! It has 7 Calories per gram.

DID YOU KNOW? Since fat contains over twice as many calories as protein and carbohydrate, foods that are higher in fat often have more calories than lower fat foods. For example, one teaspoon of butter or margarine (pure fat) contains 35 Calories, whereas one teaspoon of sugar (pure carbohydrate) contains 15 Calories.

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide can help you figure out how many servings of each food group you need on average each day based on a **sedentary activity level**. If you are more active, you will have more flexibility in your food choices. Because different foods within each food group have different calorie contents, your daily calorie intake can vary by as much as 500 to 600 Calories. Calorie awareness is promoted throughout the food guide and you are encouraged to use the nutrition facts found on food packages.

Using Information on Food Packaging

The Nutrition Facts table on food and beverage packaging can be used to find out how many calories are in each serving. The packaging may also display calorie claims, such as:

"**Low Calorie**" = 40 Calories or less per serving

"**Reduced Calorie**" or "**Lower in Calories**" = At least 25% fewer calories than the regular version.

Everyone has different energy needs based on basic body functions and levels of physical activity. The number of calories you need for your basic body functions depends on many factors, including body size, muscle mass, age, and gender. The chart below will give you a sense of the number of calories you need each day depending on your activity level.

Estimated Energy Requirements

(Calories per Day)*

Age	Sedentary	Low Active	Active
MALES			
19-30 y	2500	2700	3000
31-50 y	2350	2600	2900
51-70 y	2150	2350	2650
FEMALES			
19-30 y	1900	2100	2350
31-50 y	1800	2000	2250
51-70 y	1650	1850	2100

* Estimated based on Canadian median heights and weights. Individual values may be different.
Sedentary: Typical daily living activities (e.g., household tasks, walking to the bus); Low Active: Typical daily living activities PLUS 30-60 minutes of daily moderate activity (e.g., walking at 5-7 km/h); Active: Typical daily living activities PLUS at least 60 minutes of daily moderate activity.
Source: Health Canada, 2007

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 3/4 cup (30 g)

Amount	% Daily Value
Calories 110	
Fat 0 g	0 %
Saturated 0 g + Trans 0 g	0 %
Cholesterol 0 mg	
Sodium 230 mg	10 %
Carbohydrate 23 g	8 %
Fibre 1 g	4 %
Sugars 7 g	
Protein 4 g	
Vitamin A	0 %
Vitamin C	0 %
Calcium	0 %
Iron	30 %

For example, if a regular cheesecake has 300 Calories per serving, the "reduced calorie" version of the same cheesecake could have no more than 225 Calories per serving.



Managing Your “Calories Out”

Between 20-50 percent of your daily calorie needs are determined by physical activity. These are all actions that are in your control, like walking, jogging and playing sports. Adding any amount of physical activity to your day will increase the amount of calories your body uses. Here are a few examples of activities you can do in just 30 minutes.

Activity	Calories used
Washing dishes	80
Cycling at a leisurely pace (<16km/h) to work or the store	140
Walking briskly on your lunch break	140
Playing with your children outside	140
Mowing the lawn	160
Playing in a recreational soccer game	250
Jogging at a moderate pace (8km/h, 7½ min/km)	280

*Calories seen here are for a person weighing 70kg (154 lb). Calories used will be higher for people who weigh more than 70kg and lower for people who weigh less. Source: Ainsworth B.E. et al. Compendium of physical activities: classification of energy costs of human physical activities. Med Sci Sport Exer; 25 (1): 71-80, 1993.



Balancing “Calories In” with “Calories Out” for a Healthy Body Weight

If you balance your calories from food with the calories used for basic body functions and physical activity, you shouldn't notice large changes in body weight. Eating more calories than you use each day may lead to weight gain over time. Eating fewer calories than your body needs may result in weight loss over time. If your body weight and body size have not changed over a long time, you are likely doing a good job of balancing your calories!

If you need to lose weight, a slow and steady approach is needed for long-term success. The total number of calories you eat and the amount of physical activity you do over several days is what is most important.

Sugar and Calorie Myths

When it comes to food and nutrition, it is sometimes difficult to separate fact from fiction! See below for the truth about some common sugar myths about calories and body weight.

MYTH: Sugar is fattening.

FACT: Sugar does not cause weight gain. Weight gain is a result of an imbalance between energy intake from all foods and energy output (basic body functions and physical activity). Sugar, like other carbohydrates, contributes calories. However, in terms of body weight, there is nothing unique about the calories from sugar. The same holds true for other sources of carbohydrate as well as protein and fat. Because no single factor causes weight gain, avoiding specific foods or nutrients will not stop weight gain, or lead to weight loss.

MYTH: Sugar provides “empty calories”.

FACT: Sugar is a source of energy (calories) for the brain and working muscles. Sugar is seldom eaten alone, but more often as an ingredient in foods that contribute vitamins and minerals such as bread and cereal products, milk products and preserved fruits. In fact, sugar improves the flavour and appeal of many nutritious foods. For example, small amounts of sugar can improve acceptance of tart fruits like rhubarb or grapefruit and many ready-to-eat and hot cereals.

DID YOU KNOW? One pound of fat contains 3500 Calories, so to lose one pound in a week, you need to use on average 500 more calories than you consume each day (500 Calories x 7 days = 3500 Calories). You can achieve this by eating fewer calories, increasing your physical activity or a combination of the two!

Simple Tips for Changing Food and Physical Activity Habits:

- Keep a record of food intake to remind you of how much you are eating.
- Eat breakfast. Breakfast can get the “engine” of your body (metabolism) started to help you use more energy during the day.
- Eat regular meals. If you skip meals and cut too many calories, your body will try to conserve calories, rather than use them.
- Gradually reduce food portions as a way to cut back on “calories in”.
- Get moving! If you are not active, start with just a few minutes of daily activity and slowly increase the duration from there.
- Keep a physical activity log to motivate you to stay active.



This fact sheet, developed with the collaboration of Registered Dietitians and Nutrition Researchers, is published by the Canadian Sugar Institute. If you have any questions about sugar and its relation to nutrition and health, feel free to contact:

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