

# Sugar Shockers: Foods Surprisingly High in Sugar

**WebMD takes a look at the sugar content in some popular packaged foods -- and the results may surprise you**

When you read the labels on foods in your supermarket, it's no surprise that you find plenty of sugar in products like cake mix, ice cream, jelly, cookies, and soda. But it can be downright shocking to see 12 grams of sugar in bottled pasta sauce or barbecue sauce -- and even more so to find 50 grams of sugar in a healthy-sounding bottled tea!

To help you ferret out which products are surprisingly high in sugar, I embarked on a mission in the aisles of my local market. Over the course of several days, with my reading glasses close at hand, I examined hundreds of nutrition information labels to check out the sugar content in foods.

One thing's for sure: Just because there's a nutrition-oriented statement on the package (like "contains whole grain," "excellent source of calcium," "fat-free," "100% juice" or "25% less sugar") doesn't mean it *doesn't* contain a shocking amount of sugar. And just because the brand name or product name sounds like it's good for weight loss (Weight Watchers, Skinny Cow, etc.), don't assume the food is lower in sugar.

So how much exactly is a gram of sugar? One teaspoon of granulated sugar equals 4 grams of sugar. To put it another way, 16 grams of sugar in a product is equal to about 4 teaspoons of granulated sugar.

Keep in mind, though, that the grams of sugar listed on the nutrition information label includes natural sugars from fruit (fructose) and milk (lactose) as well as added sweeteners like refined sugar or high-fructose corn syrup. That's why the label on a carton of regular low-fat milk says there's 13 grams of sugar per cup. And that's why the grams of sugar per serving in Raisin Bran (or any cereal with raisins or other dried fruit) seem unexpectedly high.

Further, many beverages that boast of being 100% juice use juice concentrate to achieve their sweet flavor. This is also reflected in the grams of sugar listed on the label.

Touring the supermarket, I found sugar shockers in 14 food categories. Here are some of the foods I found to be surprisingly high in sugar.

## 1. Canned or Packaged Fruit

You don't really expect to find lots of sugar in individual packages of fruit, even if the package says "in light syrup," like the diced peaches or pears, or "made with real fruit" like the Fruit Chillers Sorbet.

- **DelMonte Fruit Chillers Frozen Fruit Sorbet:** 1 small individual cup = 26 grams sugar, 190 calories
- **Motts Apple Sauce (cinnamon or original):** 1 small serving cup (113 g) = 22-23 grams sugar, 100 calories
- **Dole diced peaches in light syrup:** 1 small serving cup = 18 grams sugar, 80 calories
- **DelMonte diced pears or mandarin oranges in light syrup:** 1 small serving cup = 17 grams sugar, 70 calories

## 2. Pudding & Pudding Cups

This line of products is designed with kids in mind. Yet, a snack pack of pudding can add 20 grams or more of sugar to your child's meal or snack. You'll find some sugar-free pudding options on the supermarket shelf as well.

- **Jell-O Instant Vanilla, Chocolate Chip, or Cookies and Creme Pudding:** 1 serving as packaged (not including milk) = 21 grams sugar, 110 – 120 calories
- **Hunt's Snack Pack Pudding, Chocolate Mud Pie:** 1 snack pack = 20 grams sugar, 130 calories
- **Jell-O Fat Free Pudding Snacks, Chocolate Vanilla Swirls 100-Calorie Packs:** 1 small cup = 17 grams sugar, 100 calories
- **Kraft Handi-Snacks Fat Free Vanilla Pudding:** 1 snack pack = 15 grams sugar, 90 calories

## 3. Snack Cakes & Pies

Obviously, the traditional snack cakes, the Twinkie or the Hostess cupcake, are going to be foods high in sugar (19 and 22 grams, respectively). But would you guess that snack pies, or a serving of Ho Hos or Ding Dongs, actually score much higher in sugar content?

- **Store-brand chocolate crème pie or coconut crème pie:** 1 snack pie (4.5 ounces) = 46 grams sugar, 500 calories
- **Hostess Ho Hos:** 3 cakes = 42 grams sugar, 370 calories
- **Store-brand fruit pies (apple, cherry):** 1 snack pie (4.5 ounces) = 36 grams sugar, 480 calories
- **Hostess Ding Dongs:** 2 cakes = 36 grams sugar, 360 calories
- **Little Debbie Swiss Rolls:** 2 cakes (61 g) = 27 grams sugar, 270 calories
- **Pop Tart, Chocolate Fudge:** 1 pastry = 20 grams sugar, 200 calories
- **Pop Tart, Frosted Blueberry:** 1 pastry = 18 grams, 200 calories

## 4. Muffin Mixes

Sugar is the first ingredient listed in Fiber One's muffin mix. A muffin's worth of mix contains 15 grams of sugar.

- **Fiber One Muffin Mix, Apple Cinnamon:** 1/4 cup mix (as packaged) = 15 grams sugar, 130 calories

## 5. Prepared Muffins

Serving sizes of packaged muffins vary quite a bit, but even the smallest ones may contain more than 15 grams of sugar.

- **Otis Spunkmeyer Chocolate Chip Muffins:** 1 muffin (4 ounces) = 32 grams sugar, 420 calories
- **Otis Spunkmeyer Wild Blueberry or Banana Nut:** 1 muffin (4 ounces) = 30 grams sugar, 360-420 calories
- **Weight Watchers Blueberry Muffins or Double Chocolate Muffins:** 1 muffin (2.2 ounces) = 18-21 grams sugar, 180-190 calories

- **Little Debbie Chocolate Chip Muffins or Cranberry & Orange:** 1 muffin (1.9 ounces) = 17 grams sugar, 210 calories
- **Little Debbie Blueberry:** 1 muffin (1.9 ounces) = 16 grams sugar, 190 calories

## 6. Cereal Bars & Healthy-Sounding Cookies

- **Quaker Oatmeal to Go, Brown Sugar Cinnamon:** 1 bar = 19 grams sugar, 220 calories
- **Newton's Minis, strawberry "baked with 100% whole grain":** 1 package = 15 grams sugar, 130 calories
- **Back to Nature Mini Classic Crème Cookies:** (1 pouch = 14 grams sugar, 170 calories)
- **Nature Valley Strawberry (or Vanilla) Yogurt Granola Bars:** 1 bar = 13 grams sugar, 140 calories
- **Quaker Chewy Dippys Chocolate Chip Granola Bars:** 1 bar = 13 grams sugar, 140 calories
- **Nutri-Grain Cereal Bars (all flavors):** 1 bar = 12 grams sugar, 130 calories

## 7. Instant Hot Cereal

- **Instant Cream of Wheat, Apples 'n Cinnamon:** 1 envelope = 16 grams sugar, 130 calories
- **Instant Cream of Wheat, Cinnamon Swirl:** 14 grams sugar, 130 calories
- **Quaker Instant Oatmeal Dinosaur Eggs** (made with whole-grain oats): 1 envelope = 14 grams sugar, 190 calories
- **Quaker Instant Oatmeal, Cinnamon Roll:** 1 envelope = 13 grams sugar, 160 calories:
- **Quaker Instant Oatmeal, Strawberries & Cream or Peaches & Cream:** 1 envelope = 12 grams sugar, 130 calories

## 8. Breakfast Cereal

No shock that the typical "high-sugar" cereals Americans know and love -- like Froot Loops or Reese's Puffs, Trix or Cap'n Crunch -- contain around 12 grams of sugar. So here, I've just listed healthier-sounding cereals that turned out to be as high in sugar as the notoriously sweet ones.

- **Kellogg's Smart Start Strong Heart, Toasted Oat:** 1 1/4 cup = 17 grams sugar, 220 calories
- **Kellogg's Cracklin' Oat Bran:** 3/4 cup = 15 grams sugar, 200 calories
- **Kellogg's Smart Start Strong Heart, Original Antioxidant:** 1 cup = 14 grams sugar, 190 calories
- **Quaker Oatmeal Squares:** 1 cup = 13 grams sugar, 210 calories
- **Frosted Mini-Wheats** (all the different flavors are pretty much the same): 1.8 ounces = 12 grams sugar, 180 calories
- **Special K Fruit & Yogurt:** 3/4 cup = 11 grams sugar, 120 calories

## 9. Bottled Spaghetti Sauce

Some types of bottled spaghetti sauce have double or triple the grams of sugar as other types. Here are a few of the products that I found had almost as much sugar as a granola bar or Pop-Tart.

- **Newman's Own Tomato & Basil:** 1/2 cup = 12 grams sugar, 90 calories
- **Bertolli Vineyard Marinara:** 1/2 cup = 12 grams sugar, 80 calories
- **Prego Fresh Mushroom Italian Sauce:** 1/2 cup = 11 grams sugar, 90 calories
- **Prego 3-Cheese:** 1/2 cup = 11 grams sugar, 80 calories

## 10. Barbecue Sauce

- **Sweet Baby Ray's Honey Barbecue Sauce:** 2 tablespoons = 15 grams sugar, 70 calories
- **Bull's Eye Brown Sugar & Hickory:** 2 tablespoons = 14 grams sugar, 70 calories
- **KC Masterpiece:** 2 tablespoons = 12-13 grams sugar, 60 calories
- **Cattlemen's Honey or Smokehouse:** 2 tablespoons = 12 grams sugar, 60-70 calories

## 11. Beverages

Just 8 ounces of Langers Grape Juice Plus adds 36 grams of sugar to your daily total. Granted, the sugar comes from juice concentrate. But that is still quite a shock when you're reading the label. What would a juice lower in sugar contain? Welch's Light Grape Juice Beverage brings it down to 12 grams of sugar and 50 calories per 8-ounce serving by using Splenda and acesulfame potassium.

### Flavored Milk

- **Nesquik Fat Free Chocolate Milk:** 16 ounces = 54 grams sugar, 300 calories
- **Nesquik Strawberry Milk Shake:** 13.5 ounce bottle = 46 grams sugar, 340 calories

### Juice and Fruit Drinks

- **Langers Grape Juice Plus** (contains grape seed extract) 100% juice: 8 ounces = 36 grams sugar, 160 calories
- **Minute Maid Lemonade, 12% Lemon Juice All Natural:** 8 ounces = 29 grams sugar, 110 calories
- **Simply Lemonade (or Limeade):** 8 ounces = 29 grams sugar, 120 calories
- **V8 Fusion Vegetable Fruit 100% juice, Peach Mango or Acai Mixed Berry:** 8 ounces = 26 grams sugar, 110-120 calories

- **An "organics" store brand of fruit punch with no sugar added (100% juice):** 1 pouch = 25 grams sugar, 100 calories
- **Capri Sun 25% Less Sugar, Wild Cherry:** 1 pouch = 18 grams sugar, 70 calories

### Bottled Tea and Similar Drinks

- **SoBe Energy or Elixir:** 16 ounces = 52-54 grams sugar, 200-220 calories
- **SoBe Green Tea:** 16 ounces = 50 grams sugar, 200 calories
- **Snapple Iced Tea, Peach, Lemon, or Raspberry:** 16 ounces = 46-50 grams sugar, 200 calories
- **Arizona Iced Tea:** 16 ounces = 48 grams sugar, 180 calories

### Vitamin and Energy Drinks

- **Snapple Antioxidant Water, Agave Melon:** 20 ounce bottle = 32 grams sugar, 140 calories
- **Glaceau Vitamin Water:** 20 ounce bottle = 32 grams sugar, 125 calories
- **Gatorade Bring It, Shine On, or Be Tough:** 16 ounces = 28 grams sugar, 100 calories

### Instant Cocoa

You'd probably expect hot cocoa mix to have cocoa, or maybe powdered milk, highest on its list of ingredients. But for Swiss Miss Mocha Cappuccino and Marshmallow flavors, the first and second ingredients are sugar and corn syrup, with cocoa listed as the fourth ingredient.

- **Swiss Miss Mocha Cappuccino or Marshmallow flavors:** 1 envelope made with 6 ounces water = 19 grams sugar, 120 calories

## **12. Yogurt**

To enjoy yogurt without the added sugar, make your own flavored yogurt starting with plain yogurt. Or, buy the light yogurts that use alternative sweeteners.

- **Yoplait Original 99% fat free, Lemon Burst:** 6 ounces = 31 grams sugar, 180 calories
- **Yoplait Thick & Creamy Yogurt, Strawberry:** 6 ounces = 28 grams sugar, 180 calories
- **Yoplait Original 99% fat free, Boysenberry:** 6 ounces = 27 grams sugar, 170 calories

## **13. Frozen Breakfast Foods**

You wouldn't expect to find frozen breakfast products that feature savory items like sausage and cheese to be foods that are particularly high in sugar. And yet the new Jimmy Dean breakfast entrees contain 16 and 21 grams of sugar per serving.

- **Jimmy Dean Breakfast Entrees, Sausage & Cheese Croissant** with diced apples and hash browns: 1 entrée = 21 grams sugar, 560 calories (the sugar seems to mainly be from the sweetened diced apples)
- **Eggo Cinnamon Toast Waffles:** 3 waffles (each with 4 mini waffle pieces) = 17 grams sugar, 300 calories
- **Jimmy Dean Breakfast Entrees, Scrambled Eggs with Sausage & Cheese** with diced apples and hash browns: 1 entrée = 16 grams sugar, 390 calories
- **Eggo French Toaster Sticks Cinnamon:** 2 pieces = 15 grams sugar, 230 calories

## 14. Frozen Desserts

- **Weight Watchers Mint Chocolate Chip Ice Cream Cups (and other flavors):** 1 small cup = 22 grams sugar, 140 calories
- **Weight Watchers English Toffee Crunch:** 2 bars = 20 grams sugar, 220 calories
- **Skinny Cow Low-fat Ice Cream Cone** (different flavors): 1 cone = 19 grams sugar, 150 calories
- **Weight Watchers Giant Chocolate Fudge Bar:** 1 bar = 16 grams sugar, 110 calories
- **Weight Watchers Giant Cookies & Cream Bar:** 1 bar = 15 grams sugar, 140 calories
- **Skinny Cow Low-fat Fudge Bar:** 13 grams sugar, 100 calories

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