



SUGAR AWARENESS IS HEALTH AWARENESS.

Let's make something clear: Sugar isn't inherently evil. In fact, your body needs sugar to function properly. The problem is, most of us get too much of a good thing.

Sugar helps to fuel our body, but most of us consume more "fuel" than we need. To make matters worse, much of the sugar we consume is "added sugar" (sugar that doesn't occur naturally in the food we eat). As a result, it comes without the benefits of natural sources of sugar, including fiber, vitamins, and minerals.

Think of it this way: If you bite into a wonderfully sweet strawberry or a juicy apple, you're getting the right kind of sugar. If you chug a soda, spoon up cartoon-character cereal, or even squeeze ketchup onto your burger, you're getting added sugar ... and added sugar has been linked to health problems including diabetes, obesity, and heart disease.

<https://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2016/06/08/is-sugar-really-bad-for-you-it-depends/>. Accessed 5 July 2019. <https://familydoctor.org/added-sugar-what-you-need-to-know/>. Accessed 5 July 2019. <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/324854.php>. Accessed 5 July 2019.

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So, obviously, cutting back on added sugar is good for you. Unfortunately, it's not that easy: It's estimated that about 80 percent of all food sold in the U.S. has added sugar. So, how can you cut back? Here are some quick tips:

- Eat more sources of natural sugar, including fruits and veggies.
- Cut back on processed foods.
- Drink more water instead of soda and sports drinks.
- Cut back on candy bars, donuts, and dairy desserts.
- Look for reduced-sugar recipes when cooking.

Smart Facts

12 TEASPOONS

Are the recommended daily amount of added sugar (approx. 50 grams).

10 TEASPOONS

Is the amount of added sugar in a typical can of soda.

80%

of food items sold in the U.S. contain added sugar.



MORE WAYS TO ENJOY FRUITS & VEGGIES .

We all know we should eat more fruit and vegetables, and who doesn't like a juicy slice of watermelon or a steaming baked potato?

Nonetheless, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say only about 12 percent of Americans eat the recommended 1½ to 2 cups of fruit every day, and only 9 percent get the 2 to 3 cups of veggies we should eat daily.

Why? Many of us perceive it to be difficult to eat fruit and veggies. You can't get them readily at the drive-through, they won't sit on the pantry shelf for months and there's all that washing, peeling, and chopping you have to do. Plus, for a nation that's developed a real preference for sugary and fried foods, they just aren't that appealing.

Still, it is possible to introduce more fruits and veggies into your diet without wrinkling your nose. The following list will get you started:

- **Rise and Shine.** Throw some berries onto your morning cereal. Add a banana to your morning routine. Stir some spinach and tomato into your scrambled eggs.
- **Let Them See It.** Buy a nice fruit bowl and keep it filled. Keep a dish of carrot sticks in the fridge. People will eat more of what they see more.
- **Freeze It.** Fruits and veggies keep most – if not all – of their nutritional value when frozen, and they're easy to throw into a steamer, add to a recipe, blend into a smoothie, or simply thaw and eat.
- **Go Halfsies.** In theory, half your plate should be filled with fruit and vegetables. So, instead of starting with protein and starch and adding a little fruit or veggies on the side, flip the plan and use the good stuff as your starting point.
- **Gulp It Down.** You can get a lot of your recommended daily allowance of fruits and veggies in juices – but be careful. Some “juices” are little more than flavored sugar water. Look for “100 percent” fruit or vegetable juice.
- **Make It Dessert.** “Fruits are nature's candy,” says Heather Mangieri, a nutrition consultant and spokeswoman for the American Dietetic Association. Throw fruit in with ice cream, puree it into a sauce to pour over desserts, make a smoothie, or just let the natural sweetness of fruit provide your desired post-meal sugar fix.



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<https://www.livescience.com/35730-five-easy-ways-eat-more-fruits-vegetables.html>. Accessed 5 July 2019.

<https://www.today.com/series/one-small-thing/americans-don-t-eat-enough-fruits-vegetables-cdc-finds-t118925>. Accessed 5 July 2019.

BACK TO SCHOOL HEALTH.

School is where your kids go to get an education, participate in sports, and enjoy new experiences. Unfortunately, it's also where they might go to pick up the latest bug or suffer an injury. Prepare your child for the good and the bad by getting the school year off to the right start from a health perspective.

The best way to do that? Preparation and prevention. Here are some tips:

- **Get a check-up.** All kids need regular check-ups, and the approaching school year is a good excuse to make appointments with the doctor, dentist, optometrist, and other healthcare providers. Don't wait until the last minute, though. You might not be able to get an appointment before class begins.
- **Get all the shots.** Love 'em or hate 'em, immunizations save and improve lives. To help your kids avoid the flu and worse, make sure their shots are up to date.
- **Sight and sound.** Vision and hearing play a big role in academic success. Make sure to have your child's eyes and ears checked annually.
- **Fill out the forms.** Having the right information on hand helps schools deal with – and even prevent – illnesses or injuries. Ensure the information on your school's emergency and medical information forms is up-to-date and remember to include an updated list of medications your child takes, especially if they need to take them during the day.
- **Stock up.** Have your child's prescriptions filled before the school year starts, and be sure to have needed inhalers, epinephrine injectors, or other drug delivery devices on hand.

<https://www.webmd.com/parenting/features/back-to-school-health-checklist#1>. Accessed 5 July 2019.

<http://www.emergencycareforyou.org/health--safety-tips/child-emergencies/homework-for-parents--your-childs-back-to-school-health-checklist/>. Accessed 5 July 2019.



Immunization Awareness Month

So many serious, even deadly, illnesses and diseases can be prevented through vaccinations. That's why the nation observes National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM) every August: To get out the word about the importance of vaccinations for people of all ages. Use this as an opportunity to make sure all your family members, young and old, are up to date on recommended vaccinations. It could be a life-saving safety check.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/niam.html>. Accessed 5 July 2019.

HARVEST OF THE MONTH: HONEYDEW MELON

Smooth and creamy on the outside, and crisp and sweet on the inside, honeydew melons are rich sources of natural sugar. Best of all? While they are wonderful when used in recipes, they can be eaten alone and fresh from the vine as a side dish, snack, or quick pick-me-up. Here are some honeydew facts to savor as you slice up your next melon:

- Honeydews are thought to have originated in West Africa, and they've been cultivated for about 4,000 years.
- Christopher Columbus brought honeydew melon seeds to the Americas.
- The top nations for honeydew melon production are China, Turkey, and the U.S.
- The top U.S. states for honeydew melon production are California, Arizona, Texas, Georgia, and Indiana.
- Honeydew melons are members of the gourd family, along with cucumbers.
- Honeydew melons are also known as "temptation melons."

How to Select a Honeydew Melon. When choosing a honeydew melon, look for a smooth, waxy-looking rind that has subtle



ridges to the touch. If the exterior is shiny or green, keep looking as it's not quite ripe. A ready-to-eat honeydew also will have a nice aroma at the stem end, a buttery color and a heavy feel for its size. Be aware that a ripe melon will continue to ripen after harvesting, while an underripe one will not.

How to Store Honeydew Melon. Refrigerate your honeydew melon before slicing, and place slices in a sealable bag or container to keep them moist.

<https://cals.arizona.edu/fps/sites/cals.arizona.edu/fps/files/cotw/Honeydew.pdf>. Accessed 5 July 2019. <https://www.farmersalmanac.com/selecting-and-storing-melons-115>. Accessed 5 July 2019. <https://www.leaf.tv/articles/how-to-know-when-a-honeydew-melon-is-ripe/>. Accessed 5 July 2019.



Recipe: Honeydew Cucumber Summer Salad

Honeydew melon can partner with savory meats, salty nuts, and other ingredients to create surprising flavor combinations, as in this summer salad.

Ingredients:

1 honeydew melon, peeled, seeded and cut into bite-sized pieces
1 large cucumber, peeled and cut into bite-sized pieces
½ cup diced red onion
½ cup sliced almonds
1 (4 ounce) container crumbled feta cheese
½ cup heavy whipping cream
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons poppy seeds

Directions:

1. Mix honeydew melon, cucumber, red onion, almonds, and feta cheese together in a bowl.
2. Beat cream, olive oil, and poppy seeds in a bowl using an electric mixer until thickened. Stir dressing into salad; refrigerate until flavors blend, 2 hours to overnight.

Nutrition Information:

CALORIES: 214; **SUGARS:** 14G; **SODIUM:** 182MG; **FAT:** 14.3G (SATURATED 3G) **PROTEIN:** 5G; **CARBS:** 18.9G; **FIBER:** 2.5G; **CHOLESTEROL:** 26MG; **POTASSIUM:** 499MG