

spot the sugar



find the hidden sugar..

Are You Eating More Than You Think?

What Are Hidden Sugars?

Hidden sugars are sugars added to foods and drinks that may not taste obviously sweet.

They are often added to improve flavour, texture, colour, and shelf life and can be found in foods we don't usually think of as sugary.¹

Many New Zealanders consume more free sugars than recommended, often without realising it.²



Sugar Detective Tip:

Sugar can hide in everyday food and drinks.

Common Names For Hidden Sugars

Sugar can appear on food labels under many different names:

- Sucrose
- Glucose
- Fructose
- Dextrose
- Maltose
- Cane Sugar
- Corn Syrup
- Rice Syrup
- Fruit Juice Concentrate
- Honey
- Molasses



Sugar Detective Tip:

If one of these ingredients appears in the first three ingredients listed, the product may be high in sugar.

Surprising Sources of Sugar

1

Breakfast Cereals



Some cereals can contain high amounts of added sugar.

2

Flavoured Yoghurt



May contain several teaspoons of sugar per serving.

3

Sauces and Condiments



Tomato sauce, BBQ sauce and sweet chilli sauce can contain added sugar.

4

Baked Beans



Some varieties contain added sugar to improve flavour.

5

Muesli and Snack Bars



Often promoted as convenient snacks but may contain concentrated sugars.

6

Flavoured Milk



Can contain similar amounts of sugar to some soft drinks.

7

Takeaways and Prepared Meals



Sugar is commonly added to sauces, marinades and dressings.

SWEET DRINKS ARE A MAJOR SOURCE OF SUGAR

Common sources include:



Soft drinks



Energy drinks



Fruit drinks



Sports drinks

Even drinks that look healthy can contain large amounts of sugar.^{1,2}



Why it Matters

Too much free sugar is associated with:

- Tooth decay
- Overweight and obesity
- Type 2 diabetes
- Heart disease

Research shows free sugars are the most important dietary factor associated with dental caries (tooth decay).³

REFERENCES

- ¹ World Health Organization. (2023). WHO Guideline on Carbohydrate Intake for Adults and Children.
- ² Kibblewhite, R. (2016). Estimating Free Sugars Intake in New Zealand.
- ³ Moynihan, P., & Kelly, S. (2014). Effect on caries of restricting sugars intake: systematic review to inform WHO guidelines. Journal of Dental Research, 93(1), 8–18.

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spot it, swap it

Small changes can make a big difference.



New Zealand
Dental Assoc.

