

“All of our progress is an unfolding, like the vegetable bud; you have first an instinct, then an opinion, then a knowledge, as the plant has root, bud, and fruit. Trust the instinct to the end, though you can render no reason.” Ralph Waldo Emerson

☀️ “Just” a spoonful of sugar?

Sugar is highlighted in both the [FDA's](#) and [Health Canada's](#) food and nutrition labelling regulatory amendments, ratified in May and December of this year, respectively. The FDA mandated inclusion of the amount, and a % DV (base of 50 g), for “added sugars” in the USA’s Nutrition Facts Panel. Health Canada originally proposed the same measure in Canada’s Nutrition Facts Table, however, after public consultation, opted to remove the previous % DV for carbohydrate, and instead, assign a % DV (base of 100 g) for all sugars. Health Canada’s emphasis on added sugars is found in a re-configured List of Ingredients, in which all formula ingredients which are essentially sugars and syrups are grouped together, declared parenthetically as the single ingredient “sugars”, and the aggregate weight assigned to its rightful place within the descending order of ingredients.



Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size 2/3 cup (55g)	
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	12%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	12%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%



Nutrition Facts	
Valeur nutritive	
Per 1/2 cup (125 mL)	
pour 1/2 tasse (125 mL)	
Calories 80	
% Daily Value*	
Fat / Lipides 0.5 g	1 %
Saturated / saturés 0 g	0 %
+ Trans / trans 0 g	
Carbohydrate / Glucides 18 g	
Fibre / Fibres 2 g	
Sugars / Sucres 15 g	15 %
Protein / Protéines 0 g	
Cholesterol / Cholestérol 0 mg	
Sodium 0 mg	0 %
Potassium 200 mg	4 %
Calcium 0 mg	0 %
Iron / Fer 0.3 mg	2 %



Ingredients: Sugars (fancy molasses, brown sugar, sugar)
 • Wheat flour • Vegetable oil shortening (soybean and/or canola and modified palm oil) • Liquid whole egg • Salt • Sodium bicarbonate • Spices • Allura red

☀️ Sifting through the sugar

On December 20th, the *Annals of Internal Medicine* published a multi-author review of the scientific basis cited in support of the dietary guidelines to reduce sugar intake, entitled [The Scientific Basis of Guideline Recommendations on Sugar Intake: A Systematic Review](#). The data analysis spans 21 years (1995 to 2016), and was funded by the [International Life Sciences Institute](#), an organization wholly funded by the agri-food industry.

☀️ Low-quality Evidence

A heads-up story in the online edition of [The New York Times](#) provides the authors’ (some high-profile academics) conclusion “Guidelines on dietary sugar do not meet criteria for trustworthy recommendations and are based on low-quality evidence. Public health officials (when promulgating these recommendations) and their public audience (when considering dietary behavior) should be aware of these limitations.”

☀️ Self-disclosed Review Limitations

As stated: “The authors conducted the study independent of the funding source, which is primarily supported by the food and agriculture industry.”

☀️ “He said...”, “She said...”

The most prominent condemnation of the review is that it was funded by the private sector, followed by a direct comparison to the manner in which the tobacco industry denied, and enlisted scientists to discredit, the health hazards of smoking: “This comes right out of the tobacco industry’s playbook: cast doubt on the science.”

☀️ Ethics and cost: barriers to science

The review is a call for well-designed, controlled, robust scientific studies which deliver conclusive findings. However, would a sugar intervention study, especially one involving children, ever make it past an Ethics Review Board? Moreover, who other than members of the private industry could afford to undertake the studies? **FF**

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