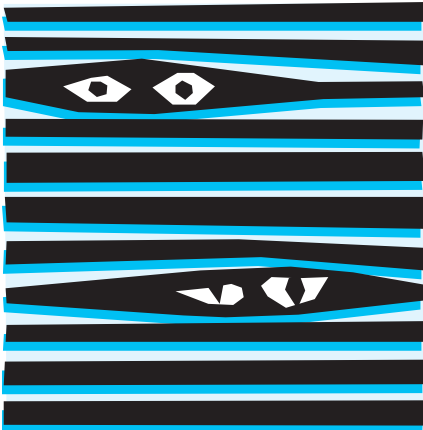




# WELLNESS FEATURE

## Fat-Free and Sugar-Free Foods... but are they?



The diet and weight loss industry makes billions of dollars each year, while the rates of overweight, obesity and related diseases increase every year. What's going on?

### Hidden Sugars

Many Americans buy into what we read and see on TV, believing that they are indeed on a sugar free diet. Just about every food breaks down in the body into some type of sugar, unless all you eat is water and meat! The number one source of sugar in the American diet is soda, followed by breakfast cereals and desserts, averaging to about 20 teaspoons (320 calories) of EXTRA sugar each day.

### Facts about Sugar:

- Sugar is merely one of many carbohydrates, which are present in any plant based food or dairy product. This means wheat, grains, fruits and veggies all eventually breakdown into sugar.
- Carbohydrates are your body's preferred energy source, so you should eat them, but figure out the best kind (which are those that also include vitamins, minerals and fiber, e.g. whole grains, fruits and vegetables) and don't over do it.
- Anything ending in -ose (*fructose, lactose, sucrose, etc.*) is sugar; *molasses, honey, sorghum, concentrated fruit juice, barley malt, high fructose corn syrup, cane sugar or artificial flavoring* all indicate the presence of sugar.
- One teaspoon of sugar is about 4 grams. It is recommended that you consume no more than 10 teaspoons or 40 grams of added sugar each day. This isn't the naturally occurring sugar found in plants, but those found in your "sometimes" foods (which should only be consume 3-5 servings a week) like cookies, cakes and snack foods.

### Fat-Free = High Sugar?!?!

According to law, a product can only claim to be fat-free if it contains less than ½ gram of fat per serving. A careful look at the ingredients list will reveal that the fat has been replaced by either sugar, in fat-free foods like cookies and cakes or sodium in fat-free salad dressings and mayonnaise.

#### Tips:

1. Always look at the ingredients list, which is always in descending order. That means what ever the product is mostly comprised of, is at the beginning. If sugar, or any of its aliases (listed above) are in the top 5, that product should be a "sometimes food".
2. Be aware of what you drink. Liquids should also be consumed according to serving size. Orange juice contains 23 grams of sugar per serving, where most containers are 16 ounces, or two servings. That container of juice has more sugar than a 12 ounce can of soda (41 grams).
3. Always opt for foods that are not processed. Processed foods are full of added sugars. When your are shopping for meals and snacks, try to get as many foods that have the least amount of processing.



### Upcoming events:

**City Place Health & Fitness Expo**  
 Saturday, September 15, 11:00am-3:00pm  
 8661 Colesville Road, Silver Spring, MD  
 Call 240-777-6826 for more information.