



Drop the sugar?

First, let's define "sugar" because, technically, if you want to "cut out" all sugar, you'd be left eating just meat and salad, which is, quite frankly, totally boring, and would leave some serious gaps in meeting your RDI's (Recommended Dietary Intake), which is probably the opposite of what you'd like to achieve.

Sugar is essentially carbohydrates; so oats is a banana is a biscuit is the white sugar you (possibly) sprinkle on your oats. Once it's in your gut it's broken into the same molecules of mainly glucose and fructose, however what you get "on the side" is what makes all the difference.

High nutrient vs low nutrient

I divide up my carbs into high nutrient (everyday) and low nutrient (sometimes) carbs. Think about fruit, let's go with a beautiful, crunchy, green apple; 15g carbs or 3 teaspoons of sugar. BUT with it you get B and C vitamins, soluble and insoluble fibre and apples are low GI (so the three teaspoons of sugar are released slowly into the bloodstream, not dumped in all at once). Low GI foods leave you feeling fuller with longer lasting energy. Yes there is sugar there but with it comes so much goodness. Remember we actually need carbohydrates to function, it fuels our brain, muscles, our immune system and keeps our gut healthy.

What to drop then?.....Do I need to?

Low nutrient carbs provide sugar.....and not much else. Focus on **reducing** these foods from your daily intake, rather than dropping them completely.

Let's start with fluids; flavoured water (eg: nutrient water or smart water), juice, softdrink, cordial, iced tea, flavoured mineral water ALL contain sugar usually about five to ten teaspoons per serve. Foods such as rice crackers, biscuits, muffins, cake, the extra spoon of sugar that gets stirred into your coffee or onto your cereal I would also suggest are low nutrient. It's important to note that replacing sugar with many sugar "alternatives" like honey, maple syrup, agave or rice syrup will not mean you are reducing your carbohydrate intake...they are all the SAME thing. Just have the sweetener of your choice less often or in smaller amounts.

what “sugar” to keep

Fresh and frozen fruit and vegetables (even potatoes), a wide range of grains such as multigrain bread, wraps, oats, quinoa, barley, legumes, plus dairy and its alternatives.

Finally, there are many people who have dropped some carbs, like bread, and felt heaps better. Why is that? The gluten? Probably not, it's more likely that they malabsorb certain sugars like fructose, fructans (the one in wheat) and sugar polyols. Following a low FODMAP diet will help with this – not dropping ALL sugar. See an Accredited Practising Dietitian for guidance as you can still eat a wide range of fruits, vegetables, grains and dairy without getting the associated bloating, wind, nausea or other gut symptoms.

Dropping excess sugar from your daily intake is a great idea but

make smart choices and leave your high nutrient options alone (just manage your portions of course!) so that your healthy eating goals are enjoyable and maintainable.

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