

Hidden Sugar & Salt: What Are You Drinking?

Are you cutting down on sugar & salt? It's good for your health.

But not all the trouble is in the salt shaker & the cookie jar.

You might be surprised at the sodium & carbohydrates hiding in your daily beverages!

The information below is taken from manufacturer's websites, with a little extra math to translate carbohydrates into sugar.

Note: A large soda is usually 32 oz; extra-large is 42 oz; super or a "double gulp" is 64 oz (one 2-liter bottle).

Large Pepsi = 1/2 cup of sugar & 100 mg sodium.

Extra-large = 2/3 cup of sugar & 130 mg sodium.

Super = 1 cup of sugar & 200 mg sodium.

Large McDonald's Sweet Tea* (32 oz) = 1 cup of sugar, sodium unknown.

Large Starbucks Cappuccino = 1 Tb of sugar & 115 mg sodium.

Large Starbucks Cafe Latte = 2 Tb of sugar & 190 mg sodium.

Apple or Orange juice, small (8 oz) = 2-and-a-half Tb of sugar & 10 mg sodium.

Large juice (16 oz) = 1/3 cup of sugar & 20 mg sodium.

Pabst beer, 12-ounce bottle = 3 Tb of sugar & 9 mg sodium.

3 bottles = 1/2 cup of sugar (plus a Tb) & 27 mg sodium.

Red wine, one glass (8 oz): 2 Tb of sugar & 7 mg of sodium.

One bottle: 2/3 cup of sugar & 36 mg of sodium.

Questions

Q: What if I had a big glass of orange juice with breakfast, a large cappuccino on the way to work, some Sweet Tea with lunch, & split a bottle of wine with my friend over supper? How much hidden sugar & salt would I get?

A: Your drinks alone - not counting any food you ate during the day - would equal more than 2 cups of sugar! And you would probably think the Sweet Tea was the only thing with sugar in it. You would also get at least 225 mg sodium in your drinks that day - & none of them tasted salty, either.

Q: What's the difference between calories & carbohydrates?

A: Calories are food energy. You need a certain number of calories every day. Most of your daily calories are supposed to come from carbohydrates, which are starches, sugars, & alcohols. The rest of your calories are from protein & fat.

Q: How many calories do I need to lose weight?

A: According to the government standards, an adult male should get about 2,500 calories a day, including 375 grams of carbohydrate. An adult female should get about 2,000 calories a day, including 300 grams of carbohydrate. If you eat less than this, you will lose weight. Food labels tell you how many calories & carbohydrates are in the foods you buy.

Q: How many calories are too many?

A: According to the United Nations, the average American ate 3,770 calories a day in 2003. Most people think we eat more than that nowadays. A lot of these extra calories come from hidden sugar in extra-large beverages and alcohol.

Q: Don't potatoes make you just as fat as sugar does?

A: One tablespoon of sugar equals 15 carbohydrates. This is the same as one small baked potato (or a small apple, or one ear of sweetcorn, or one tortilla or slice of bread). In carbohydrates, 1 large Pepsi = 3 jumbo baked potatoes! Hidden sugar in drinks doesn't fill you up the way big potatoes do, so you take in a lot more than you can use.

Q: How many carbohydrates are in sugar-free soda?

A: None! But 32 oz. of Diet Coke has 32 mg of hidden sodium in it.

Q: How much sodium is too much?

A: You need about 1500 mg sodium a day, or about 2/3 of one teaspoon of table salt daily. (Sodium is just one of the ingredients in table salt.) You can get more than 1 whole day's worth of salt in only 2 Pizza Hut slices! More than that raises your blood pressure & makes you put on water weight.

Q: How many Americans have high blood pressure?

A: About one in every four adults. You can start lowering your blood pressure by lowering your sodium.

**McDonald's won't say how much sugar is in their Sweet Tea; they only list the sugar in their regular iced tea. However, most cookbooks say you make real Southern Sweet Tea with one part sugar to four parts water.*