

How Much Sugar is in Your Favorite Drink?

Overview: This lesson demonstrates the sugar content of common beverages.

Subject area: Nutrition

Grade level: K-5th

Objectives: Children will learn to read the nutrition facts label to determine the sugar content of common beverages and explore healthier beverage choices.

Prep time: 5 minutes

Lesson time: 20 minutes

Materials needed:

- 2 measuring teaspoons
- 1 pound bag of sugar
- 1 plastic cup per child
- 5-10 empty containers of beverages including 100% fruit juice, juice cocktails, sports drinks, milk, soda, water

Space needed: Any

Staff needed: 1-2

Preparation steps:

1. Ask children ahead of time to bring in an empty container of his or her favorite beverage
2. Set out sugar and cups onto table

Presentation steps:

1. Ask each child to have their empty beverage containers ready (hand out extras to children who have forgotten to bring a container).
2. Ask children to locate the nutrition facts label on their container.
3. Explain the nutrition facts label. See the handout below:
<http://lpi.oregonstate.edu/sites/lpi.oregonstate.edu/files/pdf/hyp/how-to-read-food-labels.pdf>
4. Ask children how many grams of sugar are in a serving of their beverage.
5. Next, you will demonstrate the amount of sugar each beverage contains. One teaspoon of sugar weighs 4 grams. Therefore, measure one teaspoon of sugar for every four grams of sugar listed on the nutrition facts label and pour into each child's plastic cup.
6. Discuss with children why eating too much sugar is harmful to your body (e.g. tooth decay, empty calories, possible weight gain). Explain to children that, ideally, they should not eat more than 16-20 grams of added sugar per day (point out that sugar is added to many different foods,

like ketchup, barbecue sauce, some salad dressings, etc.). The sugar in fruit does not count as added sugar, so eat as much fruit as you want!

7. Have children discuss which beverages had the most sugar and what would be a better drink instead.