# SICKLY SWEET

## Are "added" sugars sabotaging your health? It's time to put your diet to the test, writes nutritionist Michele Chevalley Hedge

It's not just what you sprinkle over your food or pour into your coffee that impacts on your health. It's the "added" sugars that lurk in processed foods – everything from soups and sauces to crisps and bacon.

Any sugar in excess, whether it's processed or natural, isn't good for the body, so it's important that people are aware of any hidden sugars in their daily diet.

While the Australian Government doesn't provide a recommended daily intake of sugar, the Dietary Association of Australia (DAA) advises people to limit daily added sugars and instead get 50 per cent of calories from complex carbohydrates. The World Health Organization recognises refined, added sugar as a major source of overeating and obesity, and recommends limiting it to less than 10 per cent of your daily calories.

To put that in perspective, the American Heart Association suggests a daily intake of no more than six teaspoons for women and nine for men. However, US figures put the daily average at more like 22-30 teaspoons.

How does your diet compare when it comes to added sugar? Take this quiz to find out where you sit on the sugar scale.

**EXERCISE FOR THOUGHT**

Think you can eat whatever you want as long as you chase your weight with exercise? Well, you'd better get moving because an intake of 22 tsp of sugar a day turns into 330 calories – which takes walking at 6.43kph for an hour to burn off.

**THE ADDED SUGAR IN YOUR DIET**

ONE TEASPOON = 4 GRAMS OF SUGAR OR 16 CALORIES*

TOTAL T

### LIQUID SUGAR

1 packet chai latte = 3 tsp sugar
375ml can soft drink = 10 tsp sugar
250ml bottle processed fruit juice = 6 tsp sugar
250ml glass of wine = 2 tsp sugar
275ml bottle alcoholic drink (alcopop) = 5 tsp sugar
650ml flavoured smoothie or frappe = 20 tsp sugar

Total number of teaspoons of liquid sugar per day

### SNEAKY SNACKS

1 muesli/energy bar = 5 tsp sugar
1 small tub yoghurt with added dried fruit = 7 tsp sugar
53g bar chocolate = 9.5 tsp sugar
200g block milk chocolate = 19 tsp sugar
1 chocolate biscuit = 2 tsp sugar

Total number of teaspoons of sneaky snacks sugar per day

### CONFUSING CARBS (ALL CARBS BREAK DOWN TO SUGAR)

1 slice plain bread = 2 tsp sugar
1 slice raisin toast = 4 tsp sugar
1 berry muffin = 6 tsp sugar
1 cup pasta with sauce from a jar = 4 tsp sugar
1 cup white rice with teriyaki sauce = 4 tsp sugar
50g breakfast cereal = 5 tsp sugar

Total number of teaspoons of carb sugar per day

**GRAND TOTAL TEASPOONS OF ADDED SUGAR PER DAY**

*The recommended calorie intake for a woman age 31-50 is between 1800 and 2200; for men it's between 2200 and 3000. The amount of teaspoons per item is based upon size and manufacturer. We've provided estimates.