



ABOUT SUGARS AND FATS

We all know that we should watch the amount of sugar and fats we have in our diet. This is especially important in pregnancy.

When is sugar a problem?

The amount of natural sugar contained in fresh fruit and milk, as well as the sugar added to yogurt and custard, is **not** considered a problem. These foods are nourishing and you are unlikely to get too much sugar from eating these foods in normal amounts.

Small amounts of sugar such as a teaspoon of sugar in your coffee and tea or some jam or honey on bread are also not a problem.

Sugar can be a problem when it occurs in foods or drinks that have few other nutrients. If consumed in large amounts they can take the place of healthier foods or contribute excess calories and promote weight gain.

How much sugar is in your drink?

Sugar-sweetened drinks are one of the main sources of excess sugar. Soft drinks, juices and cordial are much higher in sugar than most people realise with 4 to 10 teaspoons per drink. Even fruit juice labelled 'no added sugar' contains natural fruit sugar. Natural fruit sugar is not a problem in a piece of fruit however a large juice is equal to eating several fruits and doesn't fill you as fruit would. Limit the amount of sugar-sweetened drinks and fruit juices you drink. Sugar-sweetened drinks are best limited to occasionally.

Low joule (artificially sweetened) drinks contain no sugar and very few kilojoules. Moderate amounts of these sweeteners are safe for pregnancy.

1 teaspoon = 4g sugar

A simple way to calculate how much sugar is in drinks is to divide grams of sugar on the label by four to see how many teaspoons of sugar are in the drink.

Orange juice	Cola	Cordial (diluted 1 in 4)	Sports drink	Iced tea
				
 per 250 ml glass	 per 375 ml can	 per 250 ml glass	 per 375 ml bottle	 per 500ml bottle

When are fats and oils a problem?

Fats and oils add flavour and moistness to food. However, they are very energy dense which can be a problem if you are watching your weight.

Small amounts of oil used in cooking or the fats and oils that are naturally present in foods such as cheese, nuts or avocados are not a problem when these are eaten in moderation. These foods are also nutritious.

Problem foods are usually highly processed and have a combination of fat with sugar or salt that makes them irresistible and easy to overeat. They are also likely to contain less healthy types of fats. These foods include fast foods, chocolate, crisps, doughnuts, croissants, muffins, sweet biscuits, pies, sausage rolls, pasties and quiches and ice-cream. Serving sizes of many of these foods have increased over the years making them even easier to overeat.

If watching your weight, it helps to reduce the fat and oils in your meals as well as limiting high fat snacks and takeaways.

- Limit any food that contains breadcrumbs, pastry or batter.
- Limit take away foods to once per week at most.
- Use butter, margarine and oil sparingly.
- Choose low fat dairy foods – milk, cheese and yoghurt.
- Choose lean meats and trim visible fat from meat and skin from chicken.
- Use cooking methods such as grilling, steaming, barbequing or baking.
- Limit mayonnaise and creamy sauces.
- Limit rich desserts to special occasions.

The table below shows how much sugar and fat is in some popular snack and fast foods.

- 1 teaspoon = 4 grams sugar
- 1 cube of fat = 4 grams

50g chocolate (2 rows)	Scotch finger biscuit	Big Mac	30g potato chips	Large blueberry muffin (100g)
				
				

For more information

On the Women's website

Healthy eating in pregnancy fact sheets

- Weight gain during pregnancy
- Planning meals and snacks
- How to monitor your weight gain worksheets
- Exercise in pregnancy

Other relevant fact sheets

- Healthy eating when pregnant with twins
- Vegetarian eating in pregnancy
- Good nutrition in pregnancy
- Nausea and vomiting in pregnancy
- Food safety in pregnancy

www.thewomens.org.au/health-information/fact-sheets