

Empty Calories

Many of the foods and beverages Americans eat and drink contain empty calories – calories from solid fats and/or added sugars. Solid fats and added sugars add calories to the food but few or no nutrients.

Food with some empty calories	Food with few or no empty calories
Sweetened applesauce (added sugars)	Unsweetened applesauce
Regular ground beef (75% lean) (solid fats)	Extra lean ground beef (90% or more lean)
Fried chicken (solid fats from frying and skin)	Baked chicken breast without skin
Sugar-sweetened cereals (added sugars)	Unsweetened cereals
Whole milk (solid fats)	Fat-Free milk

- Before you eat, think about what goes on your plate or in your cup or bowl. Foods like vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, and lean protein foods contain the nutrients you need without too many calories.
- Solid fats are fats that are solid at room temperature, like butter. Added sugars are sugars and syrups that are added when foods or beverages are processed or prepared.

Food I should avoid	Food I would eat
Cakes, cookies pastries and donuts	
Sodas, energy drinks, sports drinks, and fruit drinks	
Pizza (solid fat)	
Ice cream (both solid fat and added sugars)	
Sausages, hotdogs, bacon and ribs (contain solid fat)	