



A SUGAR AND ARTIFICIAL SWEETENER RE-EDUCATION

By now, most people recognize that consuming excess sugar is not healthy. But the journey to sugar reduction is much more nuanced than simply "eat less." Consumers are more educated than ever when it comes to understanding the role added sugar plays in their diets. The journey towards a more balanced lifestyle starts with understanding why sugar reduction is important, and eventually leads to a desire to learn more about how "sugar free," "reduced sugar" and similar products are made.

Sugar is not inherently bad. It's found naturally in fruits and vegetables, and it's a key energy source used by our bodies daily to fuel our muscles and minds. But too much sugar, especially added sugar, can be harmful to our health. To decrease added sugar in foods, food manufacturers sometimes add low-calorie artificial sweeteners, such as aspartame in diet sodas, which allows them to make "sugar free" >>



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claims on product labels. But some consumers may wish to avoid such sweeteners, even though they do not contribute nutritional value to foods. Even sugar alcohols, some of which are naturally-derived and are used as low-calorie alternative sweeteners, may have drawbacks like bloating and laxative effects at high levels of intake.

Natural product shoppers often have a deeper understanding of the differences in sugar products and types of label claims ("sugar free" vs. "no artificial sweeteners" vs. "naturally sweetened"). These consumers are generally more conscious of ingredients, including the types of sweeteners used in products. A survey from PRIMAL KITCHEN shows that these consumers generally are concerned about one or more of the following impacts of sugar and sweeteners: health consequences of excess added sugar consumption, performance concerns due to inefficient energy storage and high amounts of carbohydrates, and the potential for overconsumption of artificial sweeteners.

Labeling around sugar reduction can sometimes be confusing. And while natural products shoppers generally have a good understanding of what these labels mean and what ingredients support these claims, there is an ongoing need for awareness regarding the use of claims such as "sugar free" and "no added sugar." Indeed, nearly two-thirds of "sugar free" items launched in the last four years contained an artificial sweetener.

While the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) allows use of artificial sweeteners in products labeled as "sugar free" or containing "no added sugar," a Primal Kitchen survey shows that natural product shoppers are looking for products without artificial sweeteners:

- More than 85% of surveyed consumers agree that "sugar-free" items are assumed to be made with artificial sweeteners, which may not always be the case, as products like Primal Kitchen Mayo does not contain artificial or natural sweeteners and bears a "sugar-free" claim.
- While 36% of consumers are looking specifically for a "no artificial sweeteners" claim on the label and 31% of consumers look for a "no added sugar" label.

"Sugar-free" doesn't necessarily equate to no artificial sweeteners, so consumers who wish to limit intake of both take extra care to read ingredient labels.

Primal Kitchen understands these shoppers' desires, and is dedicated to creating many delicious food options that are sugar free or contain no added sugar without artificial sweeteners. Primal Kitchen also believes that educating consumers to be more discerning when reviewing ingredient lists and to understand how products are sweetened is a good first step towards selecting better for you food that still makes mouths water. [>>](#)



Primal Kitchen places a focus on real ingredients that provide an irresistible taste.

- FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS -

What are the most common types of artificial sweeteners?

There are a lot of artificial sweeteners and sugar alcohols in products with "sugar free" or "reduced sugar" label claims. The most common ones are aspartame, saccharin and sucralose, which are often found in soft drinks and tabletop sweeteners. Some common sugar alcohols are xylitol, erythritol, mannitol and sorbitol, which are often found in things like hard candy and gum. While sugar alcohols are naturally derived, studies suggest that some may have drawbacks, such as laxative effects.

What are the most common types of natural sweeteners?

The most common natural sweeteners are ones you have likely heard of before, like glucose, sucrose, fructose, honey, and molasses. Agave, cane sugar, and coconut sugar are other natural sweeteners that are growing in product use. Despite being natural, consumption of too much sugar of any kind can be harmful to health, and thus requires careful moderation. For low and no calorie sweeteners, monk fruit and stevia are also considered to be natural.

What ingredients does Primal Kitchen use in their sugar free and no sugar added products?

Primal Kitchen places a focus on real ingredients that provide an irresistible taste. Where sweeteners may be needed to enhance flavor, Primal Kitchen sauces use purposefully selected sources of sweeteners. For example, Primal Kitchen mayo products are sugar free and do not contain artificial sweeteners. Other ingredients in the mayo include avocado oil and organic eggs, sea salt, vinegar and rosemary extract. No sugar is needed to make these delicious condiments.

What sweeteners does Primal Kitchen use?

Primal Kitchen Hawaiian BBQ sauce and Island Teriyaki sauces are great examples where you'll find ingredients like organic fruit juice concentrate and organic date paste to deliver a sweeter, tropical flavored grilling sauce and marinade. Honey is found in Primal Kitchen's honey mustard salad dressing, and monk fruit is used to sweeten the collagen line, steering clear of artificial sweeteners often found in many collagen peptides powders.

When might sugar free claims be confusing?

For shoppers looking to avoid added sugar and artificial sweetener, a "sugar free" claim alone does not reveal which sweetener a product contains. While the FDA allows for the use of artificial sweeteners when making "sugar free" claims, many natural product shoppers prefer to avoid artificial sweeteners. Nearly two-thirds of "sugar free" items launched in the last four years still had an artificial sweetener in them. It's up to the consumer to read the ingredient list and make an informed decision.

Do consumers see a difference between "no artificial sweeteners" and "sugar free" claims?

Primal Kitchen's survey suggests they do. 56% of consumers viewed a "no artificial sweeteners" claim as suggesting the product contains "natural" sweeteners. 21% of consumers had that view regarding "sugar free" claims, while 47% of consumers viewed "sugar free" as unnatural. It's clear that more and more consumers are distinguishing between these claims and choosing natural sweeteners and moderation of sugar over artificial sweeteners often used in "sugar free" products.

