

LEVELED BOOK • M

# Sugar, Sugar, Everywhere

**Multi  
level  
J•M•P**

Written by Susan Lennox

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## Focus Question

What happens to our bodies  
when we eat sugar?





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## Introduction

Do you have a sweet tooth? Do you like sugary treats? If you do, you are not alone.

Most people love sweets. The average American eats just over 150 pounds (68 kg) of sugar a year. Yet people don't always know when they are eating sugar. That's because sugar can be found in foods they wouldn't expect.



Sugar makes food taste sweet.



## What Is Sugar?

Sugar is a natural **ingredient** in plant foods and milk. Apples, pears, and grapes contain sugar. Vegetables such as potatoes and yams have sugar, too.

The white crystals in your sugar bowl are table sugar. Table sugar comes from a tall grass called *sugar cane*. It also comes from sugar beets.



A worker cuts sugar cane (left). A farmer holds a sugar beet (right).

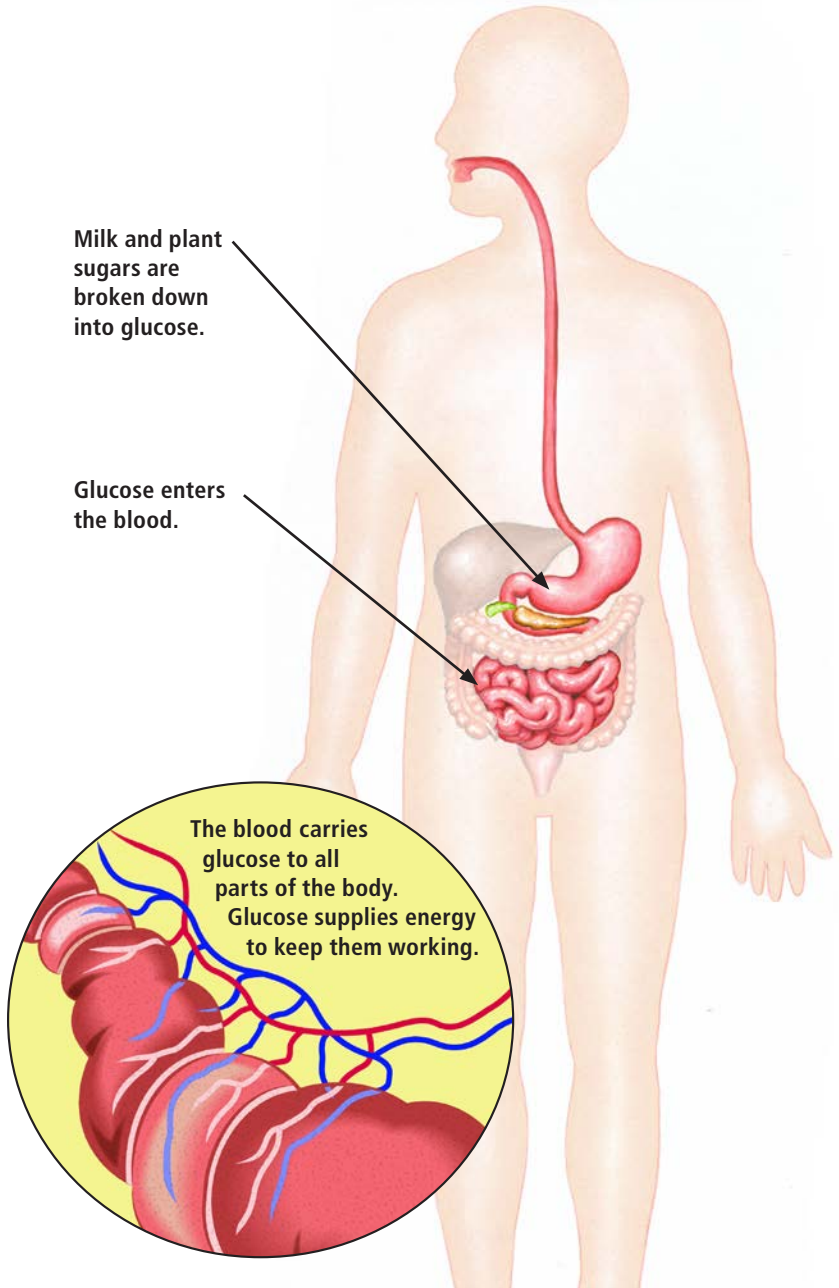


Natural plant sugar makes corn taste sweet.

When we eat milk and plant sugars, our body breaks them down. They are changed into a simple sugar called **glucose**. Glucose is carried by the blood to all parts of the body. It provides energy to keep body parts working.



# What Happens to Sugar We Eat?





Sugar can be found in foods you might not expect.

## Hiding in Plain Sight

The body can get all the sugar it needs from naturally sweet and starchy foods. Many **prepared** foods, though, are packed with extra sugar. It's no surprise that cakes, cookies, ice cream, and candy have added sugar. Sugar is also added to foods you might not expect.

Red pasta sauces and ketchup often have added sugar. Tomatoes can taste bitter when they are cooked. Sugar is added to get rid of the bad taste.

Many low-fat sauces and salad dressings have sugar, too. Oils and fats give food flavor. When they are removed, the food doesn't taste as good. To give these foods flavor, sugar is added.





Many cereals have lots of added sugar.

Breakfast cereal is another source of sugar. Many cereals have colorful sugary treats added to them. Even cereals with plain flakes may have a dusting of sugar to make them taste sweeter.

How much sugar is in your breakfast cereal?	
1 cup	Grams of sugar
Shredded Wheat	0g
Toasted Oats	1g
Corn Flakes	2g
Crisp Rice	3g
Raisin Bran	18g



Eating too much sugar can cause problems.

## **Too Much Can Be Too Bad**

If sugar is such a great source of energy, how can too much of it be bad?

The body cannot just get rid of sugar it does not use. Instead, it changes the sugar to fat and stores it for later. The more sugar that is not used, the more fat the body makes.

A body that has too much fat can have problems. Extra pounds **strain** bones and muscles. More fat forces the heart to work harder to push blood through the body. Too much glucose in the blood can be bad, too. It can make it hard for some parts of the body to work as they should.

## Do You Know?

Sweetened drinks are the biggest source of added sugar. Fizzy soda pop and flavored juices make up almost half of the added sugar in people's diets.







It's easy to make healthy meals at home.

## Searching Out the Sweet Stuff

So how can people keep from eating too much sugar?

One way is to eat more natural food. Naturally sweet fruits have no added sugars. It's also better to eat **homemade** meals instead of prepared food. Cooking at home lets people control what goes into their meals.

Another way to limit sugar is to carefully read food labels. Most food labels have a list of ingredients. The ingredients are listed in order by the amount present in the food. If sugar is near the top of the list, the product probably has a lot of it.

Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

**INGREDIENTS:** WHOLE GRAIN WHEAT, SUGAR, RICE FLOUR, PARTIALLY HYDROGENATED SOYBEAN OIL, FRUCTOSE, MALTODEXTRIN, DEXTROSE, SALT, TRICALCIUM PHOSPHATE, CINNAMON, SOY LECITHIN, TRISODIUM PHOSPHATE, ANNATTO (FOR COLOR), CARAMEL COLOR, NATURAL FLAVOR, VITAMIN C (SODIUM ASCORBATE), NIACIN (NIACINAMIDE), REDUCED IRON, ZINC (ZINC OXIDE), VITAMIN A PALMITATE, VITAMIN B6 (PYRIDOXINE HYDROCHLORIDE), VITAMIN B2 (RIBOFLAVIN), VITAMIN D, VITAMIN B1 (THIAMIN MONONITRATE), VITAMIN B12, FOLATE (FOLIC ACID), NONFAT MILK. BHT (TO PRESERVE FRESHNESS).

**CONTAINS: WHEAT, MILK AND SOYBEAN INGREDIENTS.**

This food has sugar as one of its main ingredients.



A little bit of sugar goes a long way!

Sugar makes food taste better.  
It's what **fuels** our bodies and keeps  
us going. Too much sugar can also  
slow us down if we're not careful.  
That's why it's important to pay  
attention to what we eat. Sugar  
can be almost anywhere!

## Glossary

<b>fuels</b> ( <i>v.</i> )	supplies power, energy, or strength (p. 15)
<b>glucose</b> ( <i>n.</i> )	a simple sugar that is a major energy source for the body (p. 6)
<b>homemade</b> ( <i>adj.</i> )	made at home instead of in a store or factory (p. 13)
<b>ingredient</b> ( <i>n.</i> )	a food item that goes into a dish or recipe (p. 5)
<b>prepared</b> ( <i>adj.</i> )	made ready for use; completed earlier (p. 8)
<b>strain</b> ( <i>v.</i> )	to force to make a greater effort than usual, often resulting in damage (p. 12)

## Words to Know

fuels

glucose

homemade

ingredient

prepared

strain

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Level M Leveled Book  
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# Sugar, Sugar, Everywhere

*A Reading A-Z Level M Leveled Book*  
*Word Count: 565*

## Connections

### Writing

Plan a meal with healthy food. Write a paragraph describing what food you will serve and why it is healthy.

### Math

What kinds of healthy snacks do your classmates like? Make a list. Then organize the data in a bar graph.



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