



# ASK A NUTRITIONIST

by Tara Postnikoff

**Q. I'm concerned about too much sugar leading to weight gain. How much fruit is too much if I'm trying to lose weight?**

**A.** Fresh fruit is a natural source of vitamins, minerals, fibre, bioflavonoids, phytonutrients and water. Fruit is low in fat and relatively low in calories and sodium. However, fruit is high in natural sugars, which makes it appealing to our taste buds—but not to our waistlines, if over-consumed.

Health Canada recommends that adults consume 7 to 10 servings of fruit and vegetables daily (more active individuals should aim for 12). However, the guidelines do not specify how many of those servings should be fruit and how many should be vegetables. In terms of serving size, one serving is a medium piece of fruit or half a cup of fresh or frozen fruit (for a visual measurement, think of half a tennis ball).

While body size, age and activity levels affect total daily needs, I recommend 3 or 4 servings of fruit per day if you are trying to reduce sugar, stay lean and lose weight. These servings of fruit should be in their natural form, which means fresh or frozen fruit. Avoid fruit juice (which has as much sugar per cup as a soft drink) and dried fruit (which is a concentrated source of sugar). Also try to limit items that seem like fruit, but aren't—such as jam, fruit yogurts, sweetened fruit puree, and fruit smoothies.

The World Health Organization is reviewing cause to put a daily intake limit on “added” sugar to 5% of total calories consumed. For the average adult consuming 2000 calories per day, that's 100 calories from sugar, which can also be expressed as 25 grams or 6 to 7 teaspoons of added sugar. While fruit (and vegetables) are excluded from this calculation, one should be mindful of consuming too much sugar, even in fruit form, if you are looking to stay lean and reduce your risk of heart disease and diabetes. **RR**

*Tara Postnikoff is a Registered Nutritional Consultant, certified Personal Trainer and Triathlon/Running Coach in Toronto and is the founder of Healthy Eating Active Living™. Tara is an avid distance runner and triathlete, and a regular guest speaker for the Running Room training programs. She can be reached at tara@heal-nutrition.com or www.heal-nutrition.com.*



## CHOOSE WISELY

Here is a breakdown of the sugar content for one serving of some popular fruit choices, as well as products made from fruit.

Food or drink choice	grams per ½ cup serving	
	Sugar content	Carb content
Apple	6.5	8.5
Blueberries	7.5	10
Grapefruit	8	12.5
Cherries	10	12
Orange juice	11	13
Banana	14	26
Cranberry juice cocktail	15	18
Arthur's® bottled fruit smoothie	15	17
Applesauce	18	25
Strawberry yogurt	20	21
Raisins	49	65
Dates	64	72