

### Sugar: Not So Sweet After All



A healthy lifestyle requires people to make sure they're not eating too much sugar. Sugar can cause tooth decay, but an even bigger problem is that sugary foods are "empty calories." When you fill up on these foods, you miss out on the opportunity to eat healthy foods. For example, if you eat a 2-ounce candy bar instead of a healthy snack like an apple, you'll have consumed about 250 calories, but you won't have gotten

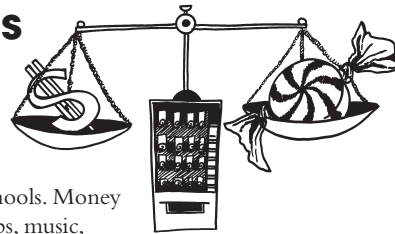
any of the vitamins, minerals, and fiber that the apple brings you in just 120 calories. When you drink soda pop instead of milk, you miss the opportunity to consume calcium, needed for healthy bones and teeth. And did you know that a typical serving of soda, a 12-ounce can, has – yikes! – 10 teaspoons of sugar?

Here are some tips to cut down your sugar intake:

- \*Look at product labels to determine how much sugar is in the foods you eat. Some products, such as fruit snacks, juice, and yogurt may surprise you with the amount of sugar they contain.
- \*Drink water instead of fruit drinks or soda pop.
- \*When you eat in restaurants, order milk, water, or unsweetened tea. If you do order soda pop, choose a small size.
- \*Eat fruit for dessert instead of cakes or cookies – at least sometimes.
- \*Choose low-sugar cereals. If you do eat a high-sugar cereal, mix in some low-sugar cereal to cut down on the sugar in your bowl. Some sweetened cereals have up to one-third of your recommended daily allowance of sugar.

### Debate: Junk Food in Schools

Many schools have vending machines that contain unhealthy foods such as soda pop, cookies, and candy. Is this a good thing or a bad thing? Which side are you on? Can you think of a way for the two sides to compromise?



**FOR:** Vending machines in schools help to raise money for the schools. Money from the vending machines may be used for programs like field trips, music, sports, or computers. Companies will often pay the school to put a vending machine in a hallway or cafeteria, and will sometimes provide other incentives. For example, some companies will pay for schools to put up sports scoreboards that advertise their products.

**AGAINST:** Vending machines in schools encourage unhealthy eating habits among students. Some students may choose unhealthy snacks from the vending machines instead of bringing healthy snacks from home. Other students may even use their lunch money for candy or cookies instead of buying healthy lunches in the school cafeteria. Schools should promote healthy diets by not providing junk food.

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