

Activity 1. Sugar Shocker (5 mins)

Key Messages

- Knowing what is in drinks helps us to make healthy choices.

Objectives

- To engage the students in thinking about sugary drinks.

Preparation

You need:

- *optional*: 1.2 kg sugar package
- 250 mL cup/glass

Activity

Level 1 and Level 2

1) Show students 1.2 kg of real sugar (*optional*).

Q1. How many cans of pop do you have to drink to add up to 1.2 kg of sugar? (Let them guess)

A1. 30 cans

2) Show students 1 regular size can of pop (355 mL).

Q2. What if you drink 1 can of pop each day? (Work with the students on the calculation)

A2. 1 can of pop = 10 cubes of sugar

1 can/day x 1 month = 300 cubes of sugar

1 sugar cube = 4 g

300 cubes of sugar x 4 grams = 1.2 kg real sugar

3) Show students an empty cup or glass (250 mL).

Q3. How many cups of fluid should we drink each day to stay healthy? (Let them guess)

A3. About 8 cups of fluid

4) Show students a sugar cube and/or teaspoon of sugar.

Q4. What is the maximum amount of sugar, added and naturally present in fruit juice, a student your age should eat or drink in a day? (including drinks and food)? (Let them guess)

A4. No more than 13 sugar cubes and/or teaspoons of sugar. This is about 50 grams of sugar.

5) Introduce the **Sip Smart! BC™** program:

Sip Smart! BC™ is a program that teaches you about healthy drink choices!

The program will help you to “sip smart”.

Activity Tips

Sugary drinks are beverages with high amounts of sugar.

The maximum amount of added sugar a student should have in a day is a tricky topic. Please read the Backgrounder: *Sugar* (page 112).

The Punchline!

People can do different things to help keep their bodies and minds healthy. Choosing healthy drinks can be one of those things.

Sugar

A. What are sugary drinks?

Sugary drinks are beverages with high amounts of sugar.

- Iced tea
- Fruit juice
- Soft drinks
- Sports drinks
- Energy drinks
- Fruit-flavoured drinks and punches
- Sweetened plant-based beverages
- Flavoured waters with added sugars
- Sweetened milks like chocolate milk
- Sweetened hot or cold tea, coffee, hot chocolate & other specialty drinks

Free sugars are monosaccharides and disaccharides added to foods and beverages by the manufacturer, cook, or consumer, and sugars naturally present in honey, syrups, fruit juices and fruit juice concentrates. Sugary drinks often have little to no nutritional value. These drinks “bump out” the nutritious drinks and foods our bodies need to be healthy. For example, children and adolescents who drink pop are more likely to have lower intakes of calcium and other nutrients.

Naturally occurring sugars are no different from free sugars in terms of their effects on the body. Health professionals have determined that the benefit of consuming plain milk as a source of vitamin D and calcium outweighs the naturally occurring lactose it contains. They have also determined that the nutrients like vitamins A and C are best obtained from intact or cut fruit and vegetables, and not fruit juice.

Hidden sugars are other names for added sugars that might not sound or look like sugar. These include: sucrose, dextrose, dextrin, maltose, galactose, liquid glucose-fructose, invert sugar, raw cane sugar, brown sugar, corn sweetener, high-fructose corn syrup, rice syrup, concentrates of fruit puree or fruit juice, honey, malt syrup, and molasses.

What about **artificial sweeteners**?

In keeping with the *Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in B.C. Schools*, drinks sweetened with artificial sweeteners such as aspartame, acesulfame potassium and sucralose are not allowed in elementary and middle schools (but allowed in secondary schools as *Sell Sometimes* items). Just like sugary drinks, artificially sweetened drinks get children used to sweet-tasting, non-nutritious items. They provide none of the nutrients that a child’s growing body needs to be healthy and strong, and can bump healthy foods and drinks out of the child’s diet. These drinks may also contain artificial sweeteners in amounts that exceed the acceptable daily intake (ADI) for children.

References

HealthyFamilies BC, *Facts About Sugary Drinks*, August 2013

BC Ministry of Education and BC Ministry of Health, *Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in B.C. Schools*, 2013

HealthyFamilies BC, *Your Guide to Sugar Part 1 and Part 2*, January 2015