

## What's In Your Cup, Sugar?

If you have had me as your teacher for wellness or if you have sat with me at lunch, you know there is one thing I say over and over - DRINK WATER! Many of you have likely been stopped by me questioning what's in your cup, or have had me ask why are you drinking that pop at 9 a.m. - yes, I said pop!

So, since I don't have the chance to see you in the dining hall these days, and I have your undivided attention, I thought why not talk a little (sweet) tea!

Let's back it up first and talk about enemy number 1 - sugar. Sugar is a type of carbohydrate. Carbohydrates are starches and sugars found in foods, which provides your body's main source of energy. There are three types of carbohydrates - simple, complex and fiber.

Simple carbohydrates, or simple sugars, contain one or two sugar molecules - or a mono- or disaccharide.

Monosaccharides are the simplest carbs. Your body cannot break these down any further. The three types are:

- Glucose: Naturally found in fruits and vegetables,
- Fructose: Naturally found in fruits, and
- Galactose: Is the sugar in natural milk products such as milk, cheese and butter.

Then there are disaccharides, which consist of two sugar molecules bonded together. These make your body work a little harder on absorption.

Three types are:

- Sucrose (glucose + fructose): or table sugar — is a natural sweetener -- it's added to foods during processing,
- Lactose (glucose + galactose): also known as milk sugar and is found in milk and milk products, and
- Maltose (glucose + glucose): Maltose is found in malt beverages, such as beer and malt liquors - End of our discussion on this one!

Complex carbohydrates, or starches, are long chains of sugars linked together.

Common sources include grains, grain products such as bread and pasta, beans and root vegetables such as potatoes.

Fiber is a tough complex carbohydrate that the body cannot digest. Fiber moves waste through your digestive system.

Now what does this mean?

It is much easier for your body to use simple, natural sugars like those found in fruit. These are going to be slow releases of energy for your body and thanks to your liver, it will keep what it needs and give the body the rest to be used for energy.

The sugar or sucrose which is found in much of what we are drinking, is really not doing much for our body other than a quick hit of energy.

Here is a quick illustration from the documentary FedUp (I highly suggest watching if you haven't already) to demonstrate what is going on.

[Fed Up](#) - Why is a calorie not a calorie

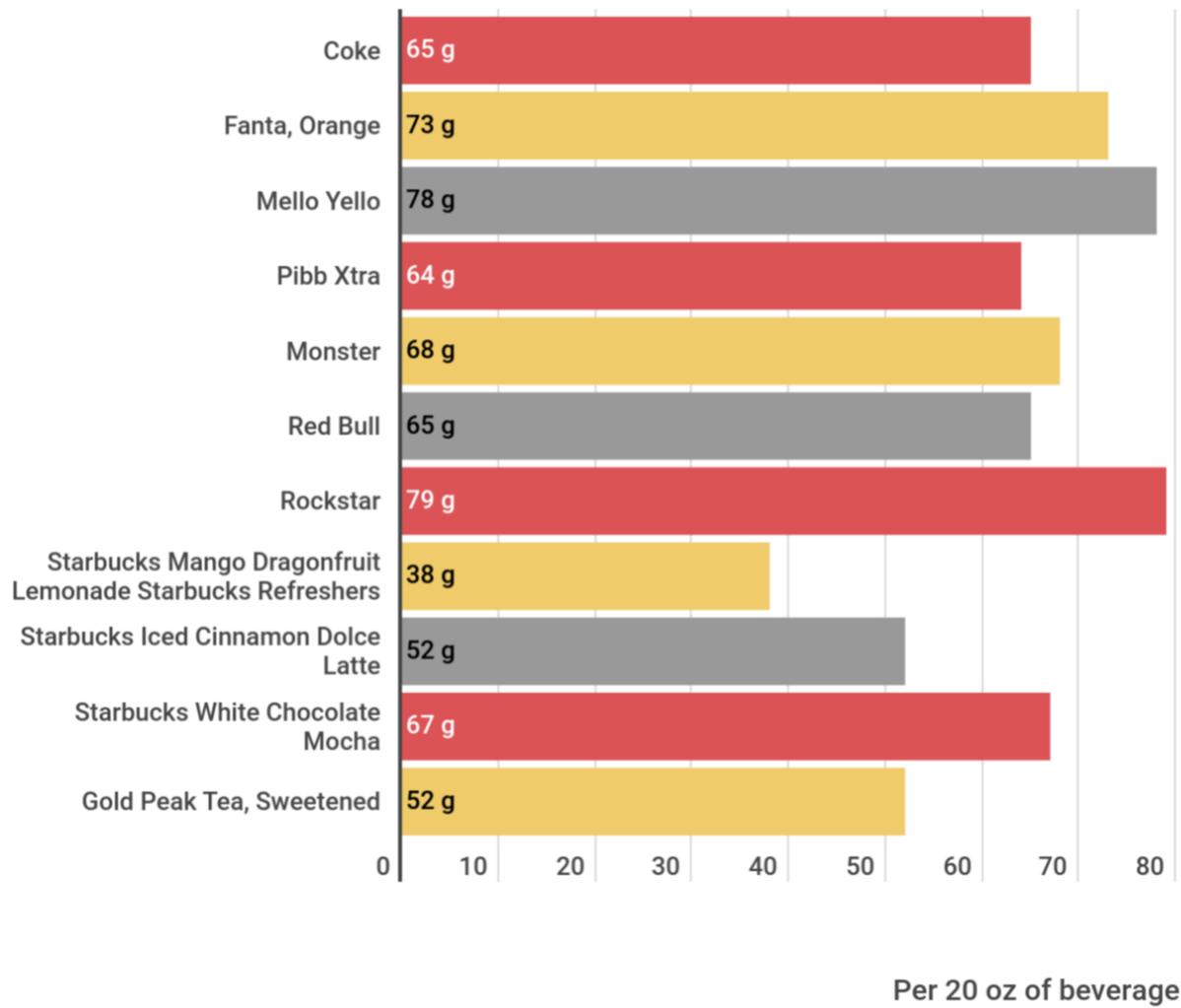
OK - I know enough of the lecture. Let's get to the good stuff.

According to The American Heart Association's, it is suggested no more than 36 grams a day for an adult male and no more than 25 for an adult female and children up to 18 years old.

What does that look like in your cup - well I am glad you asked!

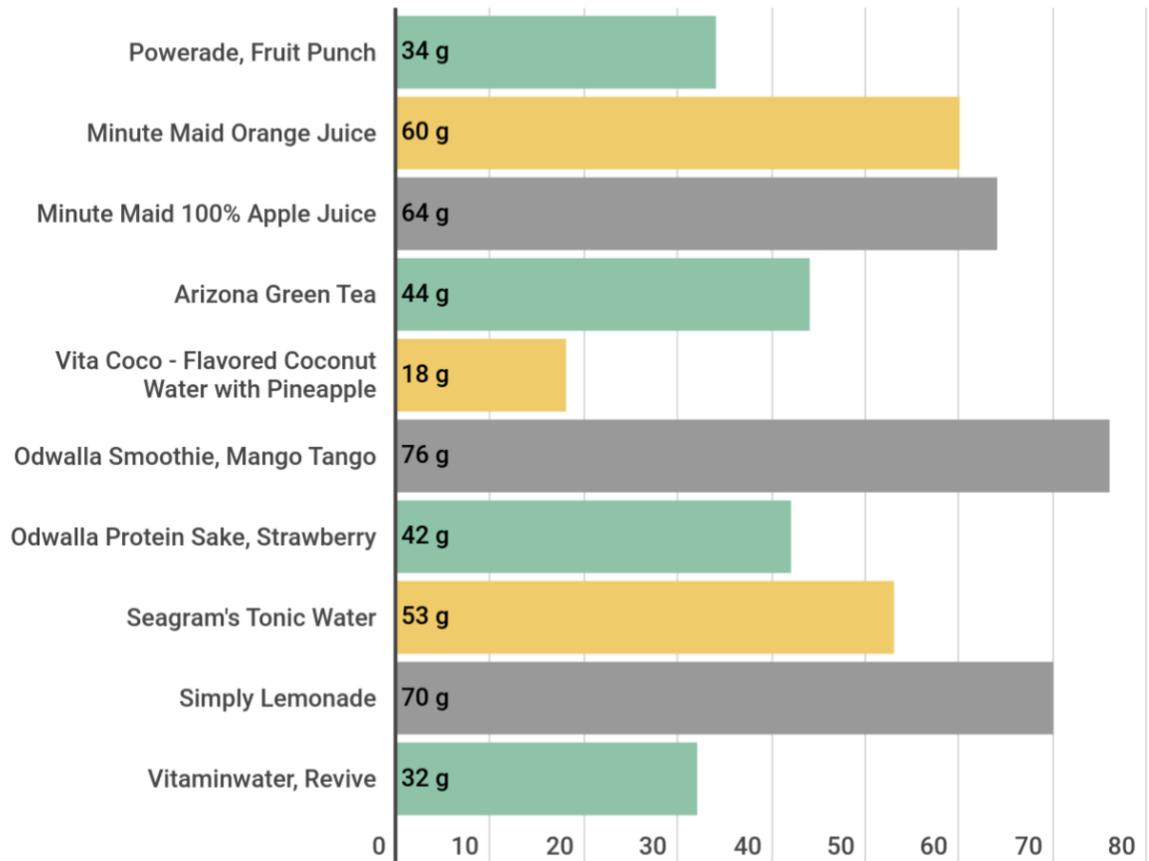
Below are two charts. Both show you just how much sugar is in what you are drinking (per 20 oz.). The first chart shows those drinks which we all should know are not exactly the best choice but many of us will consume at least one a day.

# How Much Sugar is in That?



This second chart however shows you just how much sugar is in those drinks many would consider a more “healthy” choice.

# Drinks You Think Are Better

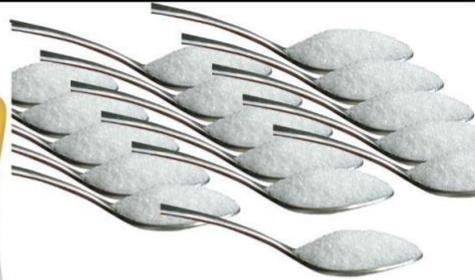


Just to give you one last illustration on how much sugar this is take a quick look...

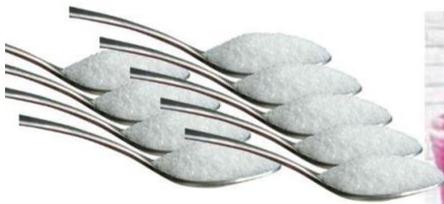
# Someone 18 and under should intake 25 grams or 6 teaspoons of sugar a day



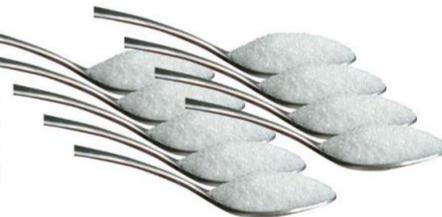
**Coke**  
**65 g = 16 tsp**



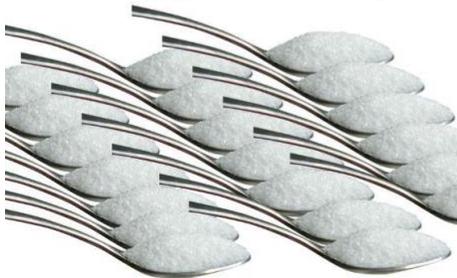
**Apple Juice**  
**64 g = 16 tsp**



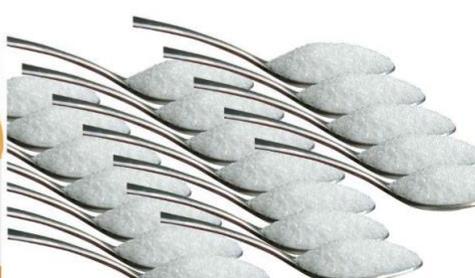
**Starbucks  
Refresher**  
**38 g = 9 tsp**



**Vitamin Water**  
**32 g = 9 tsp**



**Rockstar**  
**79 g = 20 tsp**



**Fruit Smoothie**  
**76 g = 19 tsp**

So as always, I do not share any of this to scare you or to make you feel bad about what you are consuming but more just to make you aware. I share this with you so you can know what you are fueling your body with! And as always - DRINK WATER!