



Last month we took a look at the different types of sugar and how to identify them. This month the spotlight is on food labels and 'sugar swaps'. Learning more about this can help you to make healthier food choices, so it's really worth investigating!

If you didn't receive copy of last month's newsletter and would like one, please do get in touch.

With very best wishes,
Hannah and the Project Food team

Labels, Sugar Swaps and Tips

Check your labels

The easiest way to work out how much sugar is in a food is to look at the label. If any type of sugar is near the top of the ingredient list, then the food will be high in sugar. There may also be a colour-coded label on the packet showing sugar in red (high), amber (medium) or green (low).



Is it sugar?

Manufacturers often use different words for sugar which can make it trickier to spot on your ingredients list. Just because you don't see the word **sugar** on the label doesn't mean it isn't there! Other names commonly used by manufacturers for sugar include glucose, fructose, sucrose, maltose, honey, syrups (eg corn, maple, glucose, fructose), treacle, inverted sugar and molasses.

'Sugar Swaps' and tips

Public Health England has said '**sugary drinks have no place in a child's daily diet**' -that's a pretty clear recommendation and it's advice we could all follow, adults included. **Milk and water** are natural alternatives, and **home-made fresh fruit (and veg) smoothies** make a great weekend treat. Do be careful of shop-bought smoothies though, as they can be very high in free sugar.



The best swap you can make is to try to not buy sugary foods and drinks very often, so that they are simply not there to tempt you when you are craving sugar!

◇ Eat **fruit** and **yoghurt**, and try **fruit-based cakes** and **puddings** such as the apple and cinnamon muffins in last month's recipes, instead of chocolate cake and doughnuts as a snack or pudding.

◇ Stick to a maximum of **one portion of fruit juice a day**.

◇ For an easy ice-cream swap, look for **low-sugar frozen yoghurt** in the freezer section when you're next out shopping. Or how about making your own **fool** (recipe for a delicious seasonal rhubarb version below) at home?

◇ **Baking** doesn't have to involve lots of sugar and in most recipes you can reduce the amount of sugar used by up to half without it affecting the taste too much. **Vanilla** and **cinnamon** are natural ways to boost flavour while reducing sugar. We use this trick in our apple compote recipe.

◇ Choose **cereals with medium/low sugar** for breakfast and have plenty of **fruit** available. Or how about trying **porridge** with cinnamon and stewed fruit? **Eggs** and **toast** with **fruit** is another good option.

◇ Gradually reduce the amount of sugar you have in hot drinks and cereal until you cut it out altogether.

◇ With snacks, try to swap in as many natural alternatives as possible: carrot sticks, cheese cubes, cherry tomatoes, sliced pepper, plain rice cakes, homemade fruit cake, fruit and unsalted nuts are healthier than chocolate bars and biscuits.



Rhubarb Fool

Serves 4

Ingredients

350g/12oz rhubarb

55g/2oz caster sugar

Juice of 1 orange

2 tbsp half-fat crème fraîche

6 tbsp thick low-fat natural yoghurt



Method

1. Place the rhubarb, sugar and orange juice into a saucepan and add a splash of water.
2. Cook (with a lid) for around 10 minutes or so, stirring occasionally, until the rhubarb is completely soft.
3. Once the rhubarb is cooked, leave to cool for at least 10 minutes. If you have the time, leave to chill in the fridge for an hour.
4. Once cooled, mix the rhubarb with the crème fraîche and yoghurt together and serve or chill in the fridge for later.

Stewed rhubarb is also delicious with porridge, so why not make some extra to eat later in the week with breakfast, or to freeze for another time?