



Know Your Heart Signs

Background for Facilitators

Nutrition Facts Label Information

- [FDA: New Nutrition Facts Label](#)
- [FDA: Nutrition Facts Label and Added Sugars](#)
- [FDA: Nutrition Facts Label Interactive Resource on Added Sugars](#)
- The American Heart Association's [Life's Simple 7](#)

Organizations that provide support after a heart attack

- [Mended Hearts](#)
- [Women Heart](#)

Find out if your community has a [Better Choices Better Health](#) program for people learning to live with and manage health conditions.

Note: Program coordinators may want to review this article on sugar metabolism. [Fructose and Sugar: A Major Mediator of Nonalcoholic Fatty Liver Disease](#)

Use the Nutrition Facts Label to choose foods with less saturated fat, sodium, and added sugars. Older adults often get too much of these nutrients.

Behavior Goals

Participants will:

1. Be familiar with current recommendations for behaviors that reduce their risk of having a heart attack.
2. Feel more confident in using the Nutrition Facts Label to compare and choose foods with less total and added sugars.
3. Identify at least one way to add 10 minutes of activity to their day.

! The suggested wording for the presentation is in regular font and the ***facilitator directions are in bold, dark red italic.*** It's best not to read the presentation, but to use your own words, staying close to the meaning.

Meeting Preparation

1. Review newsletter content. Send questions or concerns to your coordinator.
2. Review background resources (website links provided above).
3. Choose one of the recipe options. Make the recipe at least once before the meeting. Write down helpful tips to share with group.
4. Determine how to transport and taste featured food tasting.

Props

- Display a variety of food items with added sugars on the Nutrition Facts Labels
- Zipped plastic bags for each food item
- Table sugar and a teaspoon
- Magnifying glasses to help read labels, if needed

Conversation

Last month there was an article in the newsletter about the new nutrition label. We talked about looking at nutrition labels in your home or at the grocery store. How often did you see the new nutrition labels? What types of products did you see the newer label on?

Bigger companies were required to change labels by January of 2020. You might have noticed new labels on big name brands. Smaller companies have until January 2021 to make changes. (<https://www.cnet.com/health/how-to-read-the-new-nutrition-facts-label-for-2020/>)

We will talk more about one of the new aspects of the new nutrition label in this session. Added sugars.

Introduction

This is our 3rd meeting focused on cardiovascular health.

I'd like everyone to give me their full attention. I have a sensitive question to ask and I'm really interested in your responses. I hope you'll participate. There isn't a correct answer.

When you hear the words “heart attack,” what comes into your mind? ***Be prepared for many different types of responses such as: surprise, chest pain, fainting, shortness of breath, ambulance, oxygen mask, fear, loss of a friend or family member, their own experience with a heart attack, rehab, etc.***

Nutrition Discussion

Unfortunately, it’s obvious from your responses that many of you are familiar with heart attacks and how frightening they can be.

The article on the front page of your newsletter list common signs of a heart attack. Are they also familiar to you?

While chest pain is a common symptom for both men and women, women can experience symptoms that are less well known. What are they?

Nausea, upper back pain, or feeling extremely tired

It’s important to take action and not ignore these symptoms. The life you save may be your own.

Activity: The Nutrition Facts Label can help you make better choices.

Review information about added sugars on page 3 of the newsletter including, “Why All the Fuss About Added Sugars?”

Note to facilitator: If this is new information for you, refer to the FDA interactive resource on added sugars listed in the background resources.

How to Make Sense of Grams of Sugars

Let’s assume that a Nutrition Facts Label for your favorite fluffy blueberry muffins shows 28 grams of added sugar for one muffin. So, what does that mean?

It’s helpful to think about table sugar even though the total added sugars can come from multiple sources.

One teaspoon of granulated sugar equals 4 grams of sugar. To put it another way, **28 grams** of sugar in a product is equal to about **7 teaspoons** of granulated sugar.

Is that too much? Maybe not if it’s your only sweet treat for the day. But for an everyday breakfast food, a better choice would be oatmeal topped with blueberries and a sprinkle of sugar on top.

By the way, be sure to check the label of your favorite oatmeal. Many quick-cooking oatmeal products have added sugars.

If translating grams of added sugars to teaspoons is not “clicking” with the group, offer this tip: Compare and choose foods to get less than 100% DV of added sugars each day (***based on 50 grams of added sugars***).

- 5% DV or less of added sugars per serving is considered low
- 20% DV or more of added sugars per serving is considered high

If time allows:

- ***Pass out sample food packages. For each item, have a clear plastic bag with an amount of granulated sugar that is equivalent to the grams of added sugars on the label.***
- ***In pairs or small groups, compare information about total sugars and added sugars on the labels.***
- ***Ask groups to convert grams of added sugars on the label to teaspoons of table sugar. Use the bags of sugar to “show” the amount of added sugars.***
- ***Depending on time, address questions that come up during the exercise.***

Tasting Activity

Make and taste a fruit crisp of your choice based on what’s available and economical. The newsletter recipe uses apples and the simple video on the [Spend Smart. Eat Smart.](#) website uses peaches.

Discuss the ingredients that provide sugar. Note the information about sugar in fruit on page 3. ***Fruit would have sugar naturally. Added sugars would come from the white or brown sugar. Dried fruit would contribute natural and added sugars. It can get complicated. But now, the information about total and added sugars is on the label. You don’t have to try and figure it out!***

Note: The recipes posted on the Spend Smart. Eat Smart. website do not provide information about added sugars on their Nutrition Facts Labels. The requirement to include added sugars was only recently required by FDA.

Physical Activity

Let’s take a look at the article, Sit Less for Better Health, on page 2. Physical activity is important to keep you healthy. Physical activity is of course good for our physical health. It prevents and helps us manage a whole host of chronic diseases, helps us maintain good muscle tone, and can help relieve aches and pains.

Physical activity is also great for our mental health. Physical activity can boost your mood, sharpen your focus, reduce stress, and improve sleep. In this article I read several messages that encouraged me to be just a little more active.

Which ones encourage you?

- Sitting less and doing ANY aerobic activity has health benefits.
- Activity burns calories and provides an energy boost.
- Activity helps maintain muscle strength.
- Activity is good for mental health.
- There are immediate benefits!

It's important to break up our sedentary time and get the blood pumping through our body. Remember all movement counts!

Q: What could you do to break up your sedentary time at home?

Examples:

- Take a walk around the block
- Stand up and stretch during commercial breaks
- Incorporate light cleaning during the day like sweeping, dusting or vacuuming
- March in place for two minutes
- Set a timer for every hour or two to remind you to get up and move

Activity: Set a timer for two minutes and lead the group in a fun activity to demonstrate that even a small amount of activity can get their heart pumping!

Take Action

In addition to moving more and sitting less, will you commit to look for added sugars on food labels? To remind you to keep this commitment, think of one sweet food you enjoy regularly.

Write the name of the food on your newsletter below Eat Healthy. Take Action!

Next time you buy your sweet treat, compare labels and see if there's a healthier choice for you.

If your coordinator has provided an incentive item (such as a washable produce bag) pass it out and express appreciation for their participation.



FRESH CONVERSATIONS



What is the conversation about?

This Month's Conversations

- What are your heart's warning signs?
- The not-so-sweet side to sugar
- Sample a healthy dessert classic

When?

Where?

Contact:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Iowa Nutrition Network
Iowa Department of Public Health
(515) 281-6047

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Information & resources for seniors with home & family questions
ISU AnswerLine 1-800-262-3804