



# Is the Sugar in Fruit Healthy or Unhealthy?

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*The following is an excerpt from [The Forks Over Knives Plan](#).*

We are bombarded by stories in the media about how sugar is bad for our health and sweets of all kind should be avoided. However, the desire for sweet-tasting foods is perfectly normal and natural! Indeed, our tongue contains an abundance of sweet receptors for a good reason. Fresh fruit, the source of natural sweetness, is health promoting and an excellent source of calories for the human body. This is why we recommend you include generous amounts of fresh fruit in your diet, and know that it's even okay to make a meal out of nature's candy. If you have never tried this, you may be surprised by just how satisfying it is.

## Food Companies and Refined Sugar

In drawing us to fruit, our sweet tooth was designed to support our long-term health; however, food companies, in an effort to make their products more desirable, use this natural affinity for sweets in a way that brings harm to us. While the simple sugars from whole fruit support human health, the *refined*, or extracted, sugars do not. The refining process removes the water, fiber, and virtually every other nutrient and element of the food. What's left behind is sugar and only sugar—not the package it belongs in. This extraction is more **calorie dense** and thus overstimulating to our pleasure senses. Even worse, food manufacturers add these highly concentrated, palate-pleasing sugars to already stimulating and disease-causing high-fat foods.

## Embrace Sugar in Fruit and Whole Foods

There's a point in all this that's not frequently made **in the media** or by health professionals: Sugar as it occurs in whole foods is not an issue; in fact, it is necessary and should be embraced. It's a problem only when it is extracted from its natural package and used to excess. Also, the foods highest in added sugars frequently are higher in added fats, sodium, refined flours, and animal products, making them unhealthy for a variety of reasons

and not just because of the added sugars.



## Desserts and Added Sugar

We hasten to add that even small amounts of added sugars, especially in food made at home, can be enjoyed without posing any significant health risk. That said, dessert and other foods that contain added sugar should be eaten only occasionally and should not be a significant part of your diet. When used on occasion, a small amount of added sugars will contribute only minimal calories to the overall calorie intake in a day, and thus you should not worry about it.