

Creating Health & Nutrition

The 2010 United States Dietary Guidelines emphasize "choose and prepare foods and beverages with little added sugars or caloric sweeteners." One way to meet this goal for those who want to control weight gain or diabetes

Sugar Substitutes

is to use artificial sweeteners. All have 0 calories per serving, except sugar alcohols (2.4 calories per gram). The following table reviews the most commonly used artificial sweeteners.

Does the Use of Sugar Substitutes Mean a Food Is Low Calorie?

Labels of foods that contain artificial sweeteners may say "sugar free," "calorie free," or "reduced calories." These statements on the front of the package are the first

Artificial sweetener	Safety	ADI*	Sugar equivalent (a) 2 tsp; (b) 1 cup	Cook or bake
Saccharin	Not for pregnant women	Children: 500 mg/day or 13 packets Adults: 100 mg/day or 25 packets	(a) 1/5 tsp (b) 12 packets	Cook Bake
Aspartame (trade names: NutraSweet, Equal)	Not for people with phenylketonuria	50-lb child: 32 packets or 7 12-oz cans of diet soda 150-lb adult: 97 packets or 20 12-oz cans of diet soda	(a) 1 packet (b) 24 packets	Add only after cooking; not for baking
Acesulfame-K (trade names: Sweet One, Sunette)	Safe for all	50-lb child: 7 packets 150-lb adult: 20 packets	(a) 1 packet (b) 12 packets	Cook Bake
Sugar alcohols (sorbitol, mannitol, xylitol, maltitol, lactitol, isomalt)	Can cause gas or diarrhea	None	Varies	Cook; not for baking

table continues . . .

Tip
Using sugar substitutes may help reduce your intake of sugar and calories.

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Artificial sweetener	Safety	ADI ¹	Sugar equivalent (a) 2 tsp; (b) 1 cup	Cook or bake
Sucralose (trade name: Splenda)	Safe for all	150-lb adult: 29 packets	(a) 1 packet (b) 1 cup	Cook Bake
Neotame	Safe for all	Established; not listed	Not listed	Both
Stevia	— ²	4 mg/kg body weight/day	Varies by preparation	Both

¹ADI is the acceptable daily intake set by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

²Set by Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives; only approved as dietary supplement in the United States per FDA.

sign of a low-calorie food and are regulated by the FDA.

- A sugar-free food has less than ½ gram of sugar per serving.
- A calorie-free food has less than 5 calories per serving.
- A reduced calorie food has at least one-quarter fewer calories than the original food.

Not all "sugar-free" or "reduced-calorie" foods are low in calories. The food may contain extra fat, which provides 9 calories per gram. A sugar-free food doesn't always save all that many calories compared to the food it is replacing. Examine the Nutrition Facts labels on all low-calorie foods to know what you're really eating. Use of artificially sweetened foods in moderation can be a part of a healthy diet.

Apple-Strawberry Crisp

Serving Size: Makes 4 servings

Ingredients

Nonstick vegetable spray
1 large tart cooking apple, peeled and cut into slices
¼ cup margarine
2 tsp lemon juice
¼ cup quick-cooking oats
½ tsp cinnamon
¼ cup flour
½ tsp lemon peel, grated
¼ tsp brown sugar substitute
½ tsp vanilla
½ pint strawberries

Directions

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Spray 8-inch baking dish with vegetable spray. Combine margarine, oats, flour, and brown sugar substitute in small bowl until crumbly. Combine remaining ingredients to coat fruit. Pour into baking dish, top with oat mixture. Bake 15 to 20 minutes or until slightly browned. To microwave, prepare as above, cook on high 6 to 8 minutes, rotating dish after 3 minutes. Let stand 4 to 5 minutes before serving.

Nutrient Content

191 kcal, 20 carbohydrate, 2 g protein, 12 g fat, 135 mg sodium, 0 mg cholesterol, 2 g fiber

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Sources: J. L. Brown. *Your Wellness Roadmap*, 2. "The Hidden Risk: Diabetes." University Park: Penn State Extension, 1999.
UC Berkeley *Wellness Letter*, 9/00, eFOOD RAP 12:16, August 1, 2002, www.neotame.com/faq

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