



For more information,
use the following online resources:

United States Department
of Agriculture (USDA)
choosemyplate.gov

My Plates, My Wins
[choosemyplate-prod.azureedge.net/
sites/default/files/printablematerials/
DGTipsheet13CutBackOnSweetTreats_0.pdf](http://choosemyplate-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/printablematerials/DGTipsheet13CutBackOnSweetTreats_0.pdf)

*Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama
cares about your health and wellness.*

*This is an informational series designed to provide
specific ideas for a healthy and safe lifestyle.*

AlabamaBlue.com/myBlueWellness



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Sugar: Measure It Wisely

*What's the scoop on sugar?
Today's parents worry about
their children eating too much
sugar. An increase in sugar
consumption can negatively
affect a child's health and lead
to weight gain.*



myBlueWellness

*A wellness program for you
from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama*

Since 1980, the number of overweight children in the United States has tripled. According to the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), 16.9% of children and adolescents are overweight (BMI at or above the 95th percentile). This increase is attributed in part to an American diet with too much processed sugar.

Sugar is known as the “empty calorie food.” It gives children a short boost of energy, but not enough vitamins and minerals. “Sugar highs” often result in “behavior lows.” After the initial burst of energy, kids who’ve consumed too much sugar may become hungry again or tired and irritable.

Nutritionists recommend that if little ones are asking for something sweet, offer them fruit or a granola bar; something that tastes good, but is full of nutrients. Offer children beverages that are not sweetened with added sugars, such as water or low-fat milk.



If you are facing a battle with a child who won't eat healthy foods such as oatmeal or carrots, take Mary Poppins' advice: “A spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down.” Eating lightly sweetened healthy foods is better than eating no healthy foods at all. Consider this sugar consumption in your child's overall daily intake of processed sugar.

Teach your child to enjoy naturally sweetened flavors such as those in fruits. If you start when your children are just beginning to eat solid foods, you can teach them to appreciate and enjoy the natural sweetness found in many vegetables, fruits and grains.

