

Sugar Shock: American Heart Association Recommends Dramatically Reducing “Added Sugar” Intake

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The [American Heart Association](#) recommends dramatically reducing “added sugar” intake among children ages 2 to 18 to promote heart health.

- Sugar continues to trend as a perennial hot topic in the food industry. For example, earlier this year, the World Health Organization (WHO) issued a [report](#) urging the food industry and global governments to take active steps to slow sugar’s contribution to childhood obesity. And just this past Spring, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) published a [final nutrition facts rule](#) mandating the declaration of “added sugars” on the nutrition facts panel of packaged foods and beverages.
- Following on the WHO report and FDA’s final nutrition facts rule, a recent American Heart Association [Scientific Statement](#) recommends that:
 - Children consume less than six teaspoons of added sugars per day;
 - Children and teens should limit their intake of sugar-sweetened drinks to no more than eight ounces weekly; and
 - Children under the age of 2 should not consume foods or beverages with added sugars, including sugar-sweetened drinks
- Although the [American Heart Association](#) is certainly viewed as a respected public health body, decisions about appropriate regulatory responses to sugar consumption and childhood obesity ultimately remain in the hands of the federal government. In this regard, FDA’s recently published [final nutrition facts rule](#) requiring a mandatory declaration and a daily value (DV) for added sugar as part of its comprehensive nutrition labeling revisions appears to complement the efforts of the American Heart Association to help consumers make informed decisions about the foods and beverages they purchase. The full impact and response to the American Heart Association’s recent recommendations remains to be seen, but we anticipate that “added sugars” will continue to make headlines in the public health sphere for years to come.

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