



American Heart Association®

Hard Hats with Heart™



## Toolbox Talks

# How Too Much Sugar Affects Your Health

## Where does added sugar come from?

- Almost half of the added sugar in the American diet comes from one source: sugary drinks.
- Other sources include baked goods, candy, cereals, dairy products and desserts.

## Subtract Added Sugars

Make smart choices as part of an overall healthy eating pattern:

- Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables of all colors and types.
- Cut back on the amount of sugar you add to foods and drinks.
- Choose mostly nutrient-dense foods instead of empty calories.
- Replace sugary drinks with water and sugar-free options.
- Read labels to find products with less added sugars.

## Your Health

Too much added sugar may put you at higher risk for:

- Cardiovascular disease
- Cognitive problems, including dementia and Alzheimer's
- Colon cancer
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure, cholesterol and triglyceride levels
- Kidney disease
- Liver disease
- Obesity
- Pancreatic cancer
- Retina, muscle and nerve damage

## Too Much Added Sugar May Cause

- Cavities/tooth decay
- Inflammation
- Overeating
- Increased waist size
- Weight gain
- Skin aging and wrinkles

### Frequently Asked Questions:

#### What does the AHA recommend for sugar consumption?

The AHA recommends limiting added sugar to 9 teaspoons (36 grams) per day for most men and 6 teaspoons (25 grams) per day for most women and children over 2. The average adult gets about 17 teaspoons of sugar each day -- almost double the limit for men and triple the limit for women!

### Discussion Questions:

- What are some of the top sources of added sugar that you see?