



Healthwise

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SAY IT AIN'T SO, CHEERIOS. SAY IT AIN'T SO



Once upon a time, Cheerios stood for Health, with a capital "H."

Cheerios was nutritionally correct, containing only a little over three percent sugar.

Cheerios in the bright yellow box was the starter solid food for infants. All pediatricians recommended it. It contained no excess sugar. And the little o's were shaped and sized to prevent babies from choking. One marketing director once said that half of all the Cheerios sold ended up on the kitchen floor.

But Cheerios has double-crossed all health-food-oriented people.

For Cheerios has gone over to sugar!

That's kinda like a good woman gone bad, but worse.

Yellow box Cheerios is still as healthy as ever from a sugar standpoint, but the venerable health brand has sired a bunch of no-goods.

The first sugar brat was named "Honey Nut Cheerios," which was 33 percent sugar. The name sounds very healthy, as most people believe honey and nuts are healthy. But the truth is that it is sugar, not honey, that sweetens the brand. (Excessive amounts of honey do not taste good.) Besides, sugar is sugar, no matter what the form. Ask any diabetes doctor.

Cheerios was very prolific, fathering a host of high-sugar offspring.

"Fruity Cheerios" is one-third sugar and practically amounts to eating "Fruit Loops."

"Banana Nut Cheerios" sounds healthy and even comes in a yellow box. But don't be fooled. It's also one-third sugar.

Cheerios has even invaded "Coco-Puffs" territory with a sugary



"Chocolate Cheerios" brand. This one doesn't even pretend to have healthful imagery. (Unless, like some women, you believe chocolate is good for you.)

The biggest juvenile offender on the block is "Apple Cinnamon Cheerios," which boasts 11 grams of sugar, making the food 41% sugar. Many people will fall for it, since apples and cinnamon have very healthy imagery. Remember the old expression "An apple a day keeps the doctor away"? It doesn't apply to candy apples, nor will it ever be associated with "Apple Cinnamon Cheerios."

General Mills doesn't try to hide the sugar content of Cheerios' sugary spawn. It even prints the sugar grams right on the front of most packages and on the sides of all Cheerios packages.

For example, look at the "Apple Cinnamon Cheerios" box. It says "sugar...11 grams." This doesn't exactly sound like a lot of sugar. Grams are tiny bits of weight measure. But what Cheerios does not disclose is that there are only 27 grams to the ounce.

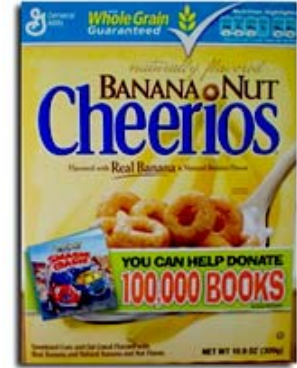
This means that if one 27-gram ounce of a food contains 11 grams of sugar, the food is 41 percent sugar. It's just simple long division – 11 ounces divided by 27 ounces. You can check all this on your calculator.

Let me add that the other cereal companies are doing the same thing.

It's just that Cheerios seemed so pure and so healthy that you could trust your baby's health to it.

Now sugary Cheerios' spinoffs must give us pause.

Especially in an era of rising child obesity and diabetes.



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