

Tiny Drinks, Big Sugar

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Many parents are drawn to the convenience of the small, 6.75 ounce drinks complete with a straw for their children. These boxes are colorful and advertize the juice and vitamin content which makes them appear to be very healthy choices for their children. But a closer look at the sugar content of these drinks tells a different story... these drinks can contribute to tooth decay and obesity.

Everyone shopping for their family should be able to calculate the sugar content of foods and beverages to be an informed consumer. The most important fact to know is: 4 grams of sugar (carbohydrate) = 1 teaspoon of sugar.

A recent shopping trip to a Wichita area store provided the following samples of pouch or boxed fruit flavored drinks for the purposes of this article.

Sugar Content of 6.75 ounce Flavored Drinks

Item	Total Grams	=	# Teaspoons of Sugar
Market Pantry 100% Berry Juice	27	=	6.75
Nestle Orange Tangerine 100% Juicy Juice	26	=	6.50
Hi-C Fruit Punch	25	=	6.25
Kool-Aid Burst (Tropical Punch, Grape or Berry Blue)	24	=	6.00
Capri Sun Grape Tide 100% Juice	23	=	5.75
Nestle Grape Juicy Juice	23	=	5.75
Minute Maid 100% Apple Juice	22	=	5.50

Sugar turns to acid in the presence of acid forming bacteria in our mouth within seconds of ingestion. The good news in all of this is that companies are now offering lower sugar content children's drinks. Some samples listed below have up to 25 percent less sugar than the original drinks.

Sugar Content of 6.75 ounce NEW Flavored Drinks

Item	Total Grams	=	# Teaspoons of Sugar
Market Pantry Cooler	18	=	4.50
Capri Sun 25% less sugar	18	=	4.50
Harvest Kids Berry Berry Good Lemonade & Goodness Grapeness	10	=	2.50

It is comforting to dental professionals and parents that the food and beverage industry is responding to the fact that too much sugar in our diet is unhealthy. Lower sugar content drinks will help everyone as we work together on behalf of healthy, cavity-free kids!

For more information, please contact Oral Health Kansas at 785-356-6039.