

FOOD LABELS

Sugar and monosodium glutamate have one thing in common. People are more likely to buy products containing them if they are called something else. Consumers trying to avoid sugar have started reading food labels. Many have begun to think that sugar by another name is not really sugar. Manufacturers know that calling sugar evaporated cane juice for instance, fools people into thinking there is less sugar in the product. Many label readers have caught on to the fact that ingredients have to be listed in order, from the largest amount contained down to the smallest. By using different names for [sugar](#), manufacturers can split the content among the different names, putting the idea of sugar further down on the label without actually reducing the amount of sugar in the product. But aside from a few minor differences, sugar by any other name is still sugar. **Sugary products in "health food" stores are a recent phenomenon** Once upon a time [health food stores](#) did not carry products containing sugar. Today what we think of as a "health food store" is often a type of hybrid resulting from the cross breeding of true health [food stores](#) with traditional grocery retailers. These new stores are trying to capitalize on having a healthy image, while their shelves are stocked with products containing processed sugar, often listed by one of its other names. Evaporated cane juice is one of the other names showing up in many products on the shelves of both hybrid and conventional grocers. It is available in a variety of forms that vary in texture and flavor. Because it has not undergone the final processing step that removes the last bit of [molasses](#), it is slightly darker in color than [white sugar](#). However, both evaporated cane juice and white sugar are both [sucrose](#), and both contain 400 calories in 100 grams. **Sugar by any other name is still processed** Both evaporated cane juice and white cane sugar have been heavily processed to remove the molasses content. During this processing the vitamins, minerals, fiber, amino acids, and trace elements that make molasses nutritious have been striped away, leaving one of the purest [chemicals](#) ever manufactured. Only tiny amounts of vitamin A and calcium remain in evaporated cane juice. Following processing, evaporated cane juice is 99.5 percent sucrose, and white sugar is 99.9 percent sucrose. Turbinado sugar, considered the least processed of any of the forms of sugar, is 99 percent sucrose. Whether sugar is eaten in the form of white sugar, evaporated cane juice, turbinado, or any of the other names for it, its effect on the body is the same. When eaten in large amounts, or eaten without fat or protein, each of them will produce the same sort of insulin spike, weight gain, immune system suppression, and increased chance for diabetes. The terms *raw sugar* and *natural sugar* are more words used by the manufacturers of today, but the terms are misnomers. True raw sugar is processed from [sugar cane](#) at a sugar mill and then shipped to a refinery for processing. In this stage, it is about 98% sucrose. Truly raw sugar that has not been processed is unfit for consumption and is not sold. The FDA notes that raw sugar is "unfit for direct use as food or as a food ingredient because of the impurities it ordinarily contains." These impurities include plant residues, bacteria, mold, and dirt. They make up the 1 percent difference between true raw sugar and turbinado. All sugar is processed from the sugar cane or sugar beet plant, and the two types of plants are used interchangeably. High quality brown sugar is made by cutting short the refinement process and leaving a bit of molasses in the sugar for taste and color. Lower quality brown sugar sold in conventional grocery stores is usually made from processed white

sugar with the addition of caramel for coloring. Some brown sugar is even made by processing white sugar through animal bone charcoal to add color. The big difference between evaporated cane juice and granulated sugar is the price, which runs about 8 to 10 dollars a pound for evaporated cane juice compared to about 1 to 3 dollars a pound for white sugar. If manufacturers are willing to spend the extra money to put the words *evaporated cane juice* on their labels, it means they know the public is seriously trying to avoid eating sugar and needs to be tricked into eating it anyway. **Why eating sugar is so compelling** Our collective sweet tooth goes back to the days when we lived in caves and life was a physical event rather than a mental one, as it is now. We needed to eat [foods](#) high in nutrients in order to have energy to get through the physical challenges of the typical day. Sweets eaten back then were primarily berries and other [fruits](#) that contained beneficial nutrients, enzymes and many phytochemicals to keep us going strong. Back then, a sweet tooth was not a bad thing. Today, sugar craving is not often answered by a piece of nutritious fruit, but instead by a processed concoction that tastes sweet but from which most nutrients have been removed. But sugar craving still exists for the purpose of compelling people to seek high energy [nutrition](#). Until that nutrition is obtained, sugar craving continues, leaving today's people in that vicious circle where more nutrient depleted sweets are eaten, and more sugar craving signals are sent. For many people, sugar has almost completely replaced nutrient dense foods, with obesity and health issues as the results. Buying products made with forms of sugar that sound like they offer significant nutrition and less processing is a way of eating sugar while sugarcoating the conscience. It is an excuse to eat sweets, made even better if the product is *organic*. But the best sounding form of sugar in an organic product is still just the sucrose that results from processing out all other compounds. It is not a whole food. The real difference between organic and non-organic sugar is the lack of pesticide in the one labeled *organic*, and a reduction in the possibility of eating sugar that has come from genetically modified plants. Also in the minds of manufacturers is the realization that in addition to giving the product a more "healthy" connotation, the other names for sugar have appeal to green-minded customers because sugar that does not go through that final processing may require less fossil fuel to produce. **For genuine good health, give your sweet tooth some fruit** The bottom line is that we have been hardwired to have a sweet tooth. Nature has provided the means for satisfying our cravings through an abundance of fruits. Eating fruit breaks the vicious circle of consuming processed sugar and failing to provide the nutrients needed to quiet sugar craving. Fruit provides those necessary nutrients to energize the body and to keep it healthy and well. Fruit is a whole food, and as such has complete integrity. It is backed by [nature](#). People who engage in heavy consumption of processed sugar can break the habit by substituting [fruits and vegetables](#). Once the body realizes it is getting all of its nutritional needs easily met, it will slowly turn down the volume on the signal to eat sugar. After a period of maximum nutrition with fruits and [vegetables](#), processed sugar will taste abhorrently sweet. When you make the decision to give up processed sugar in favor of full nutrition and good health, you break free of the manipulations and trickery used by manufacturers to get you to spend your hard earned money on products that are harmful to your health. Breaking away from such a situation is a personally empowering event that can highlight your inner strength and place you in control. For additional

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