WEEK 4 : Reduce Sugar & Track your sleep

**WEEKLY CHALLENGE**: Reduce the amount of refined Sugar you eat daily.

* Track and Reduce the amount of Refined Sugar you eat daily.
* Ideally we would completely eliminate this from our diet, but that is not realistic for most of us in our everyday lives. But it will be very informative to track the amount we eat each day, and see if we can reduce that amount with a little effort.
* Each day we want you to read the labels of all processed/packaged foods you eat and try to keep track of the amount of sugar in each product. If something is NOT directly from a package, it likely may still have Processed Sugar in it, but it is not easily measurable so we will not worry about it for the purposes of this challenge
* Try to make smart decisions when you look at those ingredients, if it is a packaged/processed food and has a lot of sugar in it, maybe put it back and look for a more natural alternative (fruits & Veggies anyone!?!)

**BONUS CHALLENGE**: Track your sleep for the week.

* Track the number of hours you sleep each night (within 15 min accuracy)
* There are many free apps you could use. “SLEEP CYCLE” is easy to use.
* Keep track of this every day to figure out your average for the week. We will need this number for next week's challenge!

DAILY CHECKLIST (Sunday is a day “off” of the challenge but we still recommend you stick to the plan to get the best results on your follow up scan!)

|  | MON | TUES | WED | THURS | FRI | SAT | TOTAL |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| DAILY  Amount of sugar intake  Did you Reduce?  (1pt / ✔) | \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_ | /6 |
| Hour of sleep (15 min accuracy)  (.5 pt / ✔) |  |  |  |  |  |  | /3 |
| AB  (3 ✔ = 3 pts)  (5 ✔ = 4 pts) |  |  |  |  |  |  | /4 |
| Mobility  (2 ✔ = 1 pts)  (4 ✔ = 2 pts) |  |  |  |  |  |  | /2 |
| TOTAL  WEEKLY  SCORE |  |  |  |  |  |  | /15 |

Examples of refined sugars include **white sugar, brown sugar, coconut sugar, palm sugar, and high-fructose corn syrup**. While all these sugars may come from plants, they have been processed in some way to create a simple, sweet form

## **Tips to cut back on added sugar:**

* Toss the table sugar. Cut back on the amount of sugar you add regularly to beverages and foods including cereal, pancakes, coffee or tea. Try cutting the usual amount of sugar you add by half. Continue to decrease the sugar until your taste buds adjust.
* Swap out the sugary sips. Water is best, but if you want something sweet to drink or are trying to lose weight, diet drinks, unsweetened iced tea, and other unsweetened beverages can be a better choice than sugary drinks.
* Shop wisely. Compare [Nutrition Food labels](https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/nutrition-basics/understanding-food-nutrition-labels) and choose products with the lowest amounts of added sugars. Dairy and fruit products will contain some natural sugars. Added sugars can be identified in the ingredients list.
* Go from added to natural. Instead of adding sugar to cereal or oatmeal, enjoy the sweetness from the natural sugars found in fruits. [Try all the varieties: fresh, frozen, dried or canned fruits.](https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/add-color/fresh-frozen-or-canned-fruits-and-vegetables-all-can-be-healthy-choices) Many dried fruits can be sweetened so read labels carefully and choose the unsweetened options. Buy fruit canned in water or natural juice. Avoid fruit canned in syrup, especially heavy syrup.
* Half it. When baking cookies, brownies or cakes, cut the sugar called for in your recipe by one-third to one-half. Often you won’t notice the difference.
* Use flavor extracts. Reduce some of the added sugar in recipes by using extracts, such as almond, vanilla, orange or lemon, to add some sweetness.
* Spice it up. Enhance foods with warm spices instead of all the added sugar. Try ginger, allspice, cinnamon or nutmeg.
* Get saucy. Switch out the added sugar in a recipe with an equal amount of unsweetened applesauce.
* Use [non-nutritive sweeteners](https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/sugar/nonnutritive-sweeteners-artificial-sweeteners) when necessary. Low- and no-calorie sugar substitutes mimic the sweetness of sugar, making them a good bridge if you’re trying to cut down on added sugars. These sugar substitutes can work as a short-term solution as you gradually train your palate to enjoy foods and drinks that are less sweet.