

The Buzz on Sweeteners Artificial Sweeteners

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The average American consumes 20 teaspoons of sugar per day. But sugar adds empty calories and little nutrition to our diet (not to mention the fact that the fructose sugars in fruit juices and some sweetened foods can increase your risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes). So it's a good idea to cut back on the sweet stuff. One alternative is to use artificial sweeteners, which also have fewer calories. Consult the chart on the next page for the latest buzz on common, FDA-approved sweeteners.

Artificial Sweetener Brand Name	Use	Chemical Name/ Safety	Calories	Grams of Carbohydrate per 1-packet serving
NutraSweet, Equal	General-purpose sweetener that degrades when heated (not for cooking or baking)	Aspartame / In 2005, an Italian study reported concerns about an increased incidence of cancer with aspartame use, but the findings in a 2006 National Cancer Institute study alleviated those fears.	3.65	1
Splenda	General-purpose sweetener	Sucralose / This is reformulated table sugar and is considered safe.	0	0

If you don't want to use artificial sweeteners, try these tips for sweetening food without them — while cutting back on calories from sugar:

- Pour about 1/4 cup of your favorite juice into a glass, then fill the rest with seltzer water.
- Add a freshly cut slice of lemon, lime or orange to a drink for some flavor.
- For baking, use half of the sugar called for in your recipe.
- Instead of maple syrup, top waffles and pancakes with a teaspoon or two (10 calories per teaspoon) of powdered sugar.
- Use honey instead of sugar. It has the same number of calories, and you can get away with using half the amount since honey tastes a bit sweeter.