

## Estimation of “free” sugar intake in Germany based on the data of the German National Nutrition Survey II

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### Background

The sugar intake from sugar containing foods contributes additionally to the daily energy intake. In Europe, scientific and political discussions of the last years focused on actions to reduce the high sugar intake in the general population. The aim of this analysis was to estimate the sugar intake of the German population considering the recommendation of the WHO (2015) to consume less than 10 % of total energy intake by “free” sugars.

### Methods

Data from the German National Nutrition Survey II (2005-2007) were used based on two 24h-recalls from 13,753 participants (15-80 years). For the calculation of “free” sugar intake according to the definition of WHO (2015), all mono- and disaccharides from the food groups confectionery (sweet spreads, sweets, dessert, and sweetener), soft drinks, pastries, milk and dairy products (without lactose), cereal products, sauces, fruit juices, and nectars were considered. Intakes of mono- and disaccharides were calculated using the German Nutrient Database (BLS) 3.01.

### Results

Mean intake of total sugars (mono- and disaccharides) was 107 g/d for women and 120 g/d for men. Total sugar contributed to 24 % of daily energy intake for women and 20 % for men. The estimation of “free” sugars resulted in intakes of 61 g/d for women and 78 g/d for men on average with higher intakes in younger people. This corresponds to 14 % of the daily energy intake for women and 13 % for men exceeding the threshold of 10 % for “free” sugars recommended by the WHO. Important contributors to “free” sugar intake were confectionery (36 %), fruit juices and nectars (26 %), pastries (14 %) and soft drinks (12 %).

### Conclusion

According to the data of the NVS II, the sugar intake of German adults is too high corresponding to the estimated “free” sugar intake defined by WHO. This estimation of “free” sugar intake is based on the calculation of mono- and disaccharides from selected food groups. To provide more detailed information about sugar intake of the German population with the upcoming national nutrition survey, the German Nutrient Database will be extended to allow distinction between naturally occurring sugars and sugars added to foods by the manufacturer, cook or consumer.

### Reference

WHO (2015) Guideline: Sugars intake for adults and children. World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland, pp. 1-49.