**How to Read between the Lines** Anything that comes with fine print is worth investigating. Especially if it’s something you’re going to eat or drink. Here’s how.

* + **Scan the ingredients.** Ingredients are listed from “most” to “least.” Look to see where sugar falls on the list. And when we say sugar, we mean corn syrup, golden syrup, refiner’s syrup, sorghum syrup, malt syrup, barley malt, maltodextrin, maltose, beet sugar, brown sugar, cane sugar, date sugar, golden sugar, grape sugar, invert sugar, raw sugar, turbinado sugar, yellow sugar, buttered syrup, cane-juice crystals, caramel, carob syrup, dextran, dextrose, diatas, diastatic malt, ethyl maltol, fructose, fruit juice, fruit juice concentrate, glucose, honey, lactose, mannitol, molasses, sorbitol, sucrose, and – oh yes – sugar. If one or more of those ingredients is in the top two or three, that’s not a good sign.
	+ **Look at the “Nutrition Facts.”** Luckily, by law, beverage manufacturers must list a product's total amount of sugar per serving on the Nutrition Facts Panel. But they don’t have to tell you how much of that sugar is added sugar. Don’t fall for the serving size trick. Your food or drink may represent several “serving sizes” according to the manufacturer. Do the math: Multiply the amount of sugar by the number of servings. This is what you’re really getting when you finish the bottle (which almost all of us do).
	+ **How much is too much?** The American Heart Association (AHA) recommends that we drastically cut back on added sugar, to help slow the obesity and heart disease epidemics. Most women should have no more than 20 grams of sugar (or about 5 teaspoons) a day; most men should have no more than about 36 grams (or about 9 teaspoons) a day; kids should have no more than 12 grams (or 3 teaspoons) a day. A good rule of thumb for drinks is this: One glass of 100% juice a day. Avoid drinking soda, sports drinks or other sugary drinks regularly or at all. You’ll be fitter if you do.
	+ **Where’s The Sugar?** Sugar lurks in lots of places, but the worst offender is the beverage aisle, since many drinks lack nutrients (no fiber, protein, etc.). Plus research shows our bodies do not recognize sugar in a liquid as we do a food. So when we eat, we don’t compensate for the added calories. As a result, nothing can make you fatter quicker than sugary drinks.
	+ **Rule of Thumb.** Skip drinks that have added sugar at or near the top of the list, or have several sources of added sugar sprinkled throughout the list. Instead use the [Better Beverage Finder](http://www.betterbeveragefinder.org/) to get a healthier choice for your family.