

The Ingredient Gap — Sources

Last updated: August 2026

🥤 Sugar

- Health Canada / Heart & Stroke recommend no more than 10% of daily calories from added sugar — about 48g (12 tsp) on a 2,000-calorie diet. Ideally under 5% (6 tsp).

🔗 <https://www.heartandstroke.ca/healthy-living/healthy-eating/reduce-sugar>

- Canadians currently average about 72g (18 tsp) of added sugar a day — well above the 12 tsp recommendation.



<https://amp.cbc.ca/news/health/sugar-intake-should-be-slashed-says-heart-and-stroke-1.2760515>

- Diabetes Canada supports the WHO recommendation of under 10% (ideally under 5%) of daily calories from free sugars.

🔗 <https://www.diabetes.ca/advocacy---policies/our-policy-positions/sugar---diabetes>

- A medium McDonald's Sprite (Canada, 440ml) contains 36g of sugar — about 8.2g per 100ml.

🔗 Check current McDonald's Canada nutrition info page

- Sprite (UK) contains about 4.4g of sugar per 100ml — roughly half the Canadian concentration.

🔗 Check current Coca-Cola GB product page

- The UK's Soft Drinks Industry Levy (sugar tax) started in 2018 and pushed companies to reformulate drinks to fall under the tax threshold.

- Fanta Orange (UK) was reformulated to about 4.5g per 100ml specifically to land under that tax threshold.

- Coca-Cola Original was NOT reformulated in the UK — instead the company shrank bottle sizes and raised prices.

🎨 Artificial Dyes

- Most artificial dyes (Allura Red, Sunset Yellow, Tartrazine, etc.) are fully legal in Canada — Health Canada only requires them listed by name on the label.

- Since 2010, EU foods containing certain synthetic dyes must carry a warning label about possible effects on children's activity and attention.

- Canadian Doritos Nacho Cheese ingredient list includes Sunset Yellow FCF, Tartrazine, and Allura Red.

🔗 Check current product label (Frito-Lay Canada)

- Kellogg's sells a dye-free Froot Loops (fruit/vegetable extract colouring) in Canada while selling an artificially dyed version elsewhere — a company choice, not a Canadian law.

🔗 <https://www.goodrx.com/well-being/diet-nutrition/american-foods-banned>

🕒 Titanium Dioxide (E171)

- Used since the mid-1900s as a whitening/colour agent in candy, gum, frosting, baked goods, and supplements.
- EFSA concluded in 2021 titanium dioxide's safety as a food additive could no longer be confirmed (genotoxicity concerns); the EU banned it in food in 2022.

🔗 <https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/sante/items/732079/en>

- Health Canada, along with the US, UK, Australia/NZ, and Japan, still permits its use.

🔗 <https://www.nsf.org/knowledge-library/understanding-titanium-dioxide-regulations>

🕒 BHA / BHT (preservatives)

- Synthetic preservatives used to stop fats/oils from going rancid — found in cereal, chips, gum, and vegetable oils.
- IARC classifies BHA as a possible human carcinogen based on animal studies.
- Health Canada reviewed the science in 2010 and concluded BHA is not harmful at current exposure levels; use of BHA/BHT is restricted in Europe.



<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/health-and-fitness/article-which-harmful-additives-are-in-my-food-and-how-do-i-avoid-them/>



<https://davidsuzuki.org/living-green/dirty-dozen-bha-bht/>

🕒 Potassium Bromate

- A flour treatment agent used to strengthen dough and improve bread rise/texture.
- IARC classified it in 1999 as possibly carcinogenic to humans.
- Banned in Europe since 1990, and in Canada since 1994.



<https://usrtk.org/chemicals/potassium-bromate/>

The one-line explanation for "why the gap exists"

- EU approach: if an additive's safety can't be confirmed, that's enough reason to ban it (precautionary principle).
- Most other regulators, including Health Canada, generally allow an ingredient until it's proven harmful.