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**Topic:** Law and regulation in public health nutrition

**Title:** Free sugar labelling is better than total sugar labelling to identify high-sugar “foods to limit” in the Canadian prepackaged food supply

**Presentation Type:** Oral

**Introduction:** The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends limiting free sugar intake to a maximum 10% of calories (kcal). In 2015, Health Canada proposed including a benchmark (DV) for total, not free sugar, on the nutrition label. This study assessed the usefulness of free versus total sugar labelling for identifying sugar-dense “foods to limit”.

**Methods:** Cross-sectional analysis of Food Label Information Program 2013 database (n=15,401). Free sugar content was estimated with a stepwise algorithm using total sugars, presence of sugar-ingredients and substitute values from other databases. Proportion of categories with “a little” or “a lot” of sugar ( $\leq 5\%$  or  $\geq 15\%$  of DV, respectively) was evaluated based on a DV of 50g/day (10% of 2000kcal) for free sugar and the proposed 100g/day for total sugar.

**Results:** Compared to total sugar, free sugar labelling identified categories of sugar-dense “foods to limit” where  $>20\%$  more products had “a lot” of sugar; including: baked desserts (84% vs. 43%); granola bars (65% vs. 5%); cookies (69% vs. 10%); frozen desserts (84% vs. 52%); and sweet condiments (79% vs. 25%). On average 60% of total sugar contents were attributed to free sugar.

**Conclusion:** Findings suggest consuming the proposed 100g DV for total sugar from prepackaged foods may result in free sugar intakes 20% higher than recommended. Additionally, free sugar labelling identifies more sugar-dense “foods to limit” as containing “a lot” of sugar. Thus, free sugar labelling may better assist consumers in adhering to WHO recommendations. Study results can inform Nutrition label regulation in Canada and internationally.