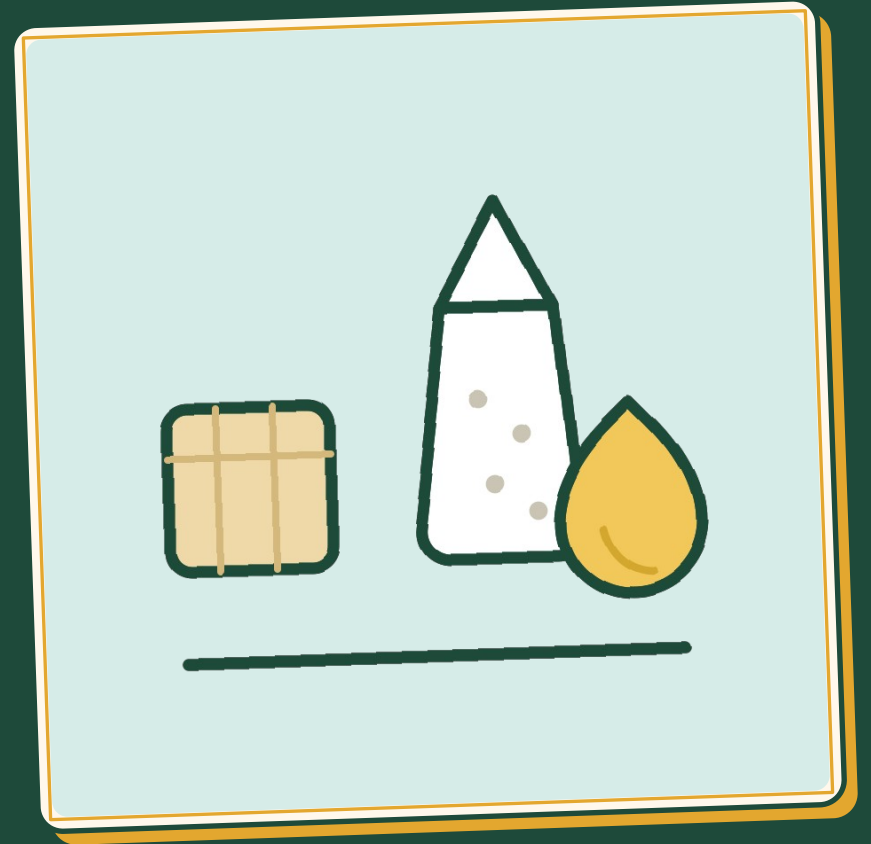


The Problem

Three

Sugar, salt, and fat — and why they're everywhere

9:16 – 11:03 · Evans High School, Culinary Arts Level 3



HOW TODAY WORKS

Two halves.



69 min

9:16 - 10:25

Read labels, argue, and follow the money



38 min

10:25 - 11:03

Blend Workshop — you build the jerk blend

You'll leave with a jar you made and a label you can read.

How much added sugar was in something you ate today?

Pull up a label on your phone if you have to. Name the food and name the number.

Nobody is in trouble. We're finding out where it actually hides — and most of the time it's not in the obvious place.

Why is the cheap food the unhealthy food?

THE QUESTION

Who decided that?

Why are these foods cheaper and easier to find in some neighborhoods than in others?

THE SECOND HALF

Who benefits from it?

Somebody is making money on the arrangement. Follow that and the picture changes.

KEY CONCEPT

Sugar. Salt. Fat.

Three things your body needs in small amounts, and almost nobody gets in small amounts. Keep it that simple.



ADDED SUGAR

The hidden spike

Not the sugar in an apple. The sugar somebody put in on purpose.



SODIUM

The pressure builder

Salt, but mostly the salt that was already in the food before you got it.



SATURATED FAT

The inflammation driver

The fat that's solid at room temperature. Butter, fatty meat, palm oil.

WHY THIS IS A PROBLEM NOW

None of this was a problem before we started building food in factories.

Sugar, salt and fat have always been in food. What changed is how much of our food is made somewhere else, by somebody else, with all three already in it.

Before the industrial revolution you mostly ate food someone you knew had cooked. Now the default is a package.

62%

of everything American kids and teens eat is ultra-processed food.

Adults: 53%

PROBLEM ONE

Added sugar — the hidden spike

It hits your blood fast, your body stores what it can't use, and twenty minutes later you're hungry again.



*Refined starch does the same thing.
White flour, white rice, white bread — your
body treats them like sugar.*

The trick isn't cutting dessert. It's noticing the sugar in things that don't taste sweet — sauce, bread, dressing, marinade.

THE LIMIT

10g

of added sugar in any one meal —
the current federal guideline.

One regular soda clears it on its own.

PROBLEM TWO

Sodium — the pressure builder

Salt pulls water into your blood. More water in the pipe means more pressure on the pipe, every hour of every day.

75%

of the sodium you eat was already in the food when you bought it.

3,400mg

What the average American gets in a day.

2,300mg

The daily limit. About one teaspoon of salt.

Only about 11% comes from the shaker on the table. You cannot fix this by not salting your food — you fix it by cooking your own.

PROBLEM THREE

Saturated fat — the inflammation driver

Fat is not the enemy — we covered that. This is one kind of fat, and the issue is how much, not whether.

WHAT IT DOES

Raises your LDL cholesterol.

LDL is what builds up on the inside of your arteries. Enough of it, over enough years, and the pipe narrows.

HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH

About 22 grams a day.

That's under 10% of your calories. A fast-food burger and fries can put you most of the way there in one sitting.

Solid at room temperature is the quick test — butter, fatty meat, palm oil, the white edge on a steak.

WHERE IT ENDS UP

Each one has its own set of diseases.



ADDED SUGAR

- Type 2 diabetes
- Fatty liver disease
- Weight gain
- Tooth decay



SODIUM

- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Kidney damage



SATURATED FAT

- High LDL cholesterol
- Plaque in the arteries
- Heart disease

WHY THIS ONE MATTERS FOR US

58% of Black adults have high blood pressure — among the highest rates anywhere in the world.

It also shows up earlier and hits harder. The American Heart Association names higher sodium intake alongside access to care and access to food.

Sodium is the one on that list you can put your hands on today.

Not the whole answer. But it's the part that's sitting on your bench in about an hour.

FOLLOW THE MONEY

Why these three are so hard to avoid



CHEAP TO MAKE

Sugar, salt and refined oil are the three cheapest things a factory can add.



THEY KEEP

All three extend shelf life. A package that lasts is a package that ships.



ENGINEERED TO WORK

The combination is tested and tuned until it's hard to stop eating.



NOT EVERYWHERE EQUALLY

Where there are fewer grocery stores, these are most of what's for sale.

This is a system, not a personal failure. You can still beat it — but you have to see it first.

READ THE LABEL

The obvious ones aren't the problem.

Everybody knows candy has sugar. These are the ones that get past you.

Bread

sugar · sodium

Pasta sauce

sugar · sodium

Salad dressing

sugar · sodium

Deli meat

sodium

Flavored yogurt

sugar

Marinades & rubs

sugar · sodium

Canned soup

sodium

Breakfast cereal

sugar

Seasoning packets

sodium

Sports drinks

sugar

Rotisserie chicken

sodium

Condiments

sugar · sodium

If somebody else cooked it, assume all three are in there until the label says otherwise.

THE WAY OUT

You don't need them to make food taste good.



SPICE

Allspice, thyme, cayenne, nutmeg. Flavor with no sodium at all.



ACID

Lime, vinegar, citrus at the end. Sour makes salt go further.



HEAT

Roast it, char it, sear it. Browning makes its own flavor.

A store-bought seasoning packet runs 350 to 500 mg of sodium per teaspoon. Yours will run whatever you decide.

38 MINUTES · TWO THINGS

Blend Workshop

FIRST · 10 MINUTES

The Hidden Sugar Hunt

Five packages on the bench — juice, flavored yogurt, cereal, a condiment, a snack. Find the added sugar on each label. Add up a day's worth and hold it against the limit. Then do it again for sodium.

THEN · REST OF THE PERIOD

Build the jerk blend

Twelve ingredients, one bowl, one jar each. You decide the salt. You decide the heat. Label it and take it home — it keeps six months.

Taste it before you jar it. If it needs more, add more — that's the whole point of making it yourself.

BEFORE YOU GO

Name one label you're going to **actually read**.

Something you buy every week. Look at the added sugar and the sodium once, then decide what you want to do about it.

You can't avoid all three. You can stop being surprised by them.

Scratch Nutrition Lab × Evans High School

THIS WEEK'S RECIPE

Jerk Chicken Satay

With the blend you just made