



Summary

Sugars are carbohydrates in nature. They are typically named in relation to their size and chemical structure. They have been classified into monosaccharides, *disaccharides*, *oligosaccharides* and *polysaccharides*. Raw sugar is the name applied to sugar crystals obtained from the juice of sugar cane or sugar beet. Apart from sucrose, raw sugar contains reducing sugars (glucose and fructose), inorganic ash (mainly calcium and potassium salts) and other organic matter which includes gums, amino acids and colour components, essentially from the cane. These impurities must be removed from the sucrose during refining as follows: a) *affination* - dissolving off some surface impurities, b) *carbonation* - removing further impurities that precipitate from solution with calcium carbonate, c) *char filtration* - removing further impurities with activated carbon, and d) *crystallisation* - using a vacuum process. Sugars play an important role in different foodstuffs and bring sweetness. They also have important biological, sensory, physical and chemical properties. Sugars help provide the taste, texture and colour of foods, extend their shelf-life, which preserves the safety and quality of the food. Recent evaluations commissioned by the WHO have concluded that limiting the amount of sugar added to foods and decreasing the intake of sugar sweetened beverages would be beneficial in promoting public health, particularly with regard to reducing the risk of dental caries, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.