



The Food Bank  
of Western Massachusetts

# From the Food Bank Kitchen

## ICE CREAM, ANYONE?

Many people crave cool, creamy ice cream, especially in the summer. There are so many types to choose from these days —full-fat ice creams like Ben & Jerry’s and Haagen-Dazs, ‘light’, fat-free, sugar free, frozen yogurts, sorbets, and ones made from soy or rice milk. Here are some tips to enjoy frozen desserts without over-doing the calories, saturated fat, and sugar.

**Think Small**— On a label, the serving size listed is a level 1/2 cup, the size of a tennis ball or 1 rounded ice cream scoop. Many people eat at least a cup, which means twice the calories, fat and sugar. A pint of Ben and Jerry’s is actually four **SERVINGS**. TIP: serve ice cream in a small ramekin or custard cup, not a larger size bowl. Try using a baby spoon. *Getting ice cream out? Stick to a small or single scoop order.*

**Aim for no more than 3 grams of saturated fat per 1/2 cup.** A half cup of Ben and Jerry’s, Haagen-Dazs, or Starbucks ice cream has 8 to 11 grams of saturated fat, which is half a day’s worth. You can find many frozen treats with 3 grams or less per half cup. See some suggestions below.

**Stop at 150 calories per 1/2 cup serving.** Some ice cream has 260-300 calories per ½ cup (500-600 in a 1 cup serving). Save premium ice creams for an occasional special treat.

**Banana ‘soft serve’ recipe:** Peel 4 ripe bananas, cut into one inch chunks, and place in a ziplock bag in freezer until firm, at least 5 hours. Put frozen bananas into a blender or food processor, cover, and mix for a couple of minutes until broken up. Add about ¼ cup milk, and blend, scraping the sides, until it forms a smooth consistency. Serve immediately. Top with fruit, peanut butter, almonds, walnuts, or granola.

Ice Cream Comparison			
Brand and Flavor per 1/2 cup serving	Calories	Saturated Fat (grams)	Added Sugars (tsp)
Dreyer’s or Edy’s Slow Churned frozen yogurt blends (avg)	110	2	3
Breyers (average)	120	2	3
Haagen Dazs sorbet (average)	130	0	7
Breyer’s Blasts (avg)	130	2	3.5
Turkey Hill Light (avg)	130	2	3.5
Ben and Jerry’s (avg)	290	10	6
Haagen Dazs (avg)	280	10	5.5

\* According to the 2010 Dietary Guidelines, the average, healthy person should consume no more than 18-24 gm of saturated fat and no more than 6 tsp(24 gm) of added sugars per day for women and no more than 9 teaspoons (36 gm) per day for men (4 gm of sugar equals 1 tsp).

## What are better choices?

**Sugar** — A typical half cup of Ben & Jerry’s or Haagen-Dazs has about 6 tsp of added sugars. (Note: sugar grams include about 1 tsp of naturally occurring sugars in milk and fruit). It’s not just the ice cream, but the cookies, chocolate chunks, and other candy that boost the sugar content. Too much added sugar in the diet can raise triglycerides and blood sugars, and supply empty calories which increase your risk of diabetes and heart disease. Choose brands with lower amounts of sugar on the label. Health experts recommend avoiding no-sugar-added desserts with the artificial sweetener acesulfame potassium.

**Protein and calcium** — Some low cal brands of frozen low-fat Greek yogurt have more protein and calcium, such as Dannon Oikos Greek (except Salted Caramel) with 7 grams of protein and Turkey Hill low-fat frozen yogurt (7 gm protein) along with 20 to 25 percent of the daily value for calcium.

**Recommended lower calorie and fat choices:** Breyer’s ½ The Fat or Fat Free, Turkey Hill Stuff’d (Double Cookies ‘n Cream or Strawberry Cheesecake), Dreyer’s or Edy’s Slow Churned Yogurt or Edy’s Slow Churned ½ The Fat ice cream (except French Silk). If you are lactose intolerant, try Ciao Bella Sorbetto various fruit flavors, or So Delicious Soymilk Vanilla.

**Try ice cream novelties** — If controlling portion size is a challenge, try a pre-portioned ice cream novelty, and stick to just ONE per serving. Recommended choices with no more than 150 calories and 3 gm of saturated fat include: Dreyer’s or Edy’s Fruit Bars No Sugar Added, Outshine Fruit and Veggie Bars, Healthy Choice Premium Fudge Bars, Skinny Cow sandwich or Chocolate Truffle bar, Weight Watchers Giant Ice Cream Sandwich, or Creamsicle Orange and Raspberry Bars.

Source: Nutrition Action Healthletter, Center for Science in the Public Interest, July/August 2015