

MALT BEVERAGES



Malt-based drinks set for healthy growth – Really?



India, the world's largest malt-based drinks market, accounts for 22% of the world's retail volume sales. The malted health beverage market has fared well as far as beverages for kids are concerned. **Malt** is germinated cereal grains and generally made from barley. The cereal grains are dried in a process called “malting.” These are first kept in water till it sprouts or germinate, then dried, boiled and processed for dry powder. The malt is loaded with B-vitamins, lots of minerals and some fiber and protein. Malt has around half sweet as normal sugar and

generally used as a healthier alternative sweetener.

Nine major selling brands were tested on the various product attributes mentioned. The brands included in the test were: **Horlicks Chocolate, Bournvita, Bournvita 5 star Magic, Boost 3X Stamina, Complan Chocolate, Amul Pro, Boost choco Eclairs, Horlicks Original** and **Complan Natural**. These malted health beverage have seen tremendous popularity in last few years. But how much convincing are their health claims? To know what is real and what is just over-the-top advertising, nine brands were tested for their sugar content and also analysed the preference of the brand.

Parameters Tested

All nine brands were tested for sugar. Taste test was also done on various criteria like appearance, flavor, aroma, and after taste.

How these tested

The reference methods used in for testing were:

- Manual of Methods of Analysis of Foods (Beverages), Sugar and Sugar Products and Confectionery Products by Directorate General of Health Services, GoI, New Delhi and
- Manual of Methods of Analysis of Foods (Cereals and Cereal Products) by Directorate General of Health Services, GoI, New Delhi

Key Findings

The brand Bournvita had the highest sugar content overall- the original Bournvita has 38.7g per 100g and Bournvita 5-Star Magic has 34.6g per 100g.

Both Bournvita and Bournvita 5 star Magic scored high on taste with 75% and 73% respectively.

Horlicks Original had the lowest sugar with 13.3g per 100g. However, it fared dismally in the taste test with a score of 42%.

How these brands fared on sugar and taste

Horlicks Chocolate



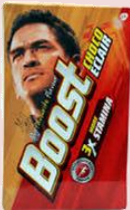
Its sugar content is on higher side and liked by panelists for its chocolaty smell. Its 'tempting, dark chocolate colour' was also cherished by panelists but found it to be a bit malty to taste.

Boost 3X Stamina



The sugar content is lower than average but sufficiently sweet. It was said to have a 'milky chocolaty' or a 'dark coffee' colour. The flavor was chocolaty and malty but aroma was rated average. It had a somewhat uniform consistency and a good aftertaste.

Boost Choco Eclairs



It has also same amount of sugar as Boost 3X Stamina but less than average. Its pleasant chocolaty aroma and dark chocolate colour were ok for panelists. It had an intense chocolate flavor and 'rich and deep' body. Some liked it as balanced sweetness while others as bit bitter.

Bournvita



It contains highest amount of sugar per 100g among all other brands tested. Testers rated it high for taste and enjoyed its flavour for its pleasant blend of malt and chocolate. The consistency was found to be rich and deep and balanced overall. Its rich chocolate appearance was found to be very appealing.

Complan Chocolate



It has slightly less sugar per 100g than Boost 3X Stamina. With nice 'biscuity brown' colour and a malty chocolaty aroma it was liked by tasters. The drink had a rich and creamy consistency. The taste was moderately sweet and like 'milk chocolate'.

Horlicks Original



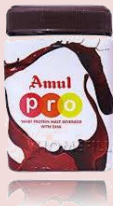
With lowest sugar content per 100g, it did not score high on taste. It had a pronounced malty flavour, which did not go down too well with the panelists, either. It had a 'proper consistency' and was not 'very thin or weak'. However, it was found to lack sweetness and have a disappointing aftertaste.

Bournvita 5-Star Magic



Tasters found the chocolate flavour appealing but the drink itself is very sweet. It contains 34.6g/100g of sugar. The general consensus was that the smell was appetising.

Amul Pro



The sugar content 32.3g per 100g was quite high but the taste as per panelists was found to be just sufficiently sweet. Said to have a very dark brown colour, the panelists differed in their opinion about the flavour. Some found it was like chocolate, and others, caramel, coffee or malt- but it was found to be nice nonetheless.

Complan Natural



It fared the worst in taste test and sugar content is slightly lower than average. It was not considered appetizing because of its look like plain milk. The body was thick and uniformly rich. Taste was like plain sugared milk so panelist felt it left an unpleasant milky aftertaste in the mouth.

Sugar content across brands at a glance

	Package (g)	Price (Rs.)	Sugar (g/100g) Test Results	Recommended Serving Size (g)	Sugar per serving size (g)	Sugar per serving with one glass(200ml) of full fat milk (g)
Horlicks Chocolate	500	178	28.9	27	7.8	17.8
Bournvita	500	178	38.7	20	7.7	17.7
Bournvita 5-Star Magic	500	178	34.6	20	6.9	16.9
Boost 3X Stamina	450	179	23.7	20	4.7	14.7
Complan Chocolate	500	218	23.1	33	7.6	17.6
Amul Pro	500	140	32.3	25	8.1	18.1
Boost Choco Eclairs	450	210	23.6	20	4.7	14.7
Horlicks Original	500	180	13.3	27	3.6	13.6
Complan Natural	500	182	25.8	33	8.5	18.5

Recommendations for Healthy Eating

Malt extract has been used as a nutritional supplement and are popularly known as health drinks. These are widely consumed as taste enhancers to encourage drinking of milk among growing children. Health drinks are often high in sugar so nutritionists generally discourage malted drinks. Consultant nutritionist of Cumballa Hill Hospital Ms. Niti Desai says, "Even if these drinks have protein or vitamins and minerals, the content is very low and is hardly significant. The nutritional values given on the packaging are for 100g servings, whereas the actual quantity mixed with milk is much less. These drinks basically just provide flavour and sugar. Docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) helps in brain development and the urban Indian diet usually lacks sufficient levels of this acid. So although the quantity of DHA in these malt-based drinks may be low, any amount is welcome. However, even if these health drinks are making a contribution towards your health, the negative aspect (which is the high quantity of sugar) nullifies the benefit."

There are many companies of these health drinks claim in their advertisements that it could add two inches to children's height or provides over 30% of key brain nutrients required by children daily. Nutritionist says, 'The amount of protein in these drinks is insufficient to boost growth significantly. Such health claims should be questioned; have they been published in peer reviewed journals? 'Also, other factors have to be taken in to consideration in these brands' scientific studies. If, for example, they have compared children from lower socio-economic strata and higher socio-economic strata, then of course there will be a difference in growth rates due to quality of overall nutrition. Therefore, it is not advisable to go by these claims.'

Horlicks Original is recommended for healthiest choice because it has the least sugar content of all the brands. Others brands have around the same amount of sugar. The intake of sugar also depends on the serving size or how much actually added.

Taste test rating and scores

	Appearance	Aroma	Flavour	Body	Taste	Aftertaste	Overall	Score (%)
Horlicks Chocolate	4 Star	4 Star	4 Star	4 Star	4 Star	3 Star	4 Star	77
Bournvita	4 Star	4 Star	4 Star	4 Star	4 Star	3 Star	4 Star	75
Bournvita 5-Star Magic	4 Star	4 Star	4 Star	4 Star	4 Star	4 Star	4 Star	73
Boost 3X Stamina	4 Star	3 Star	4 Star	4 Star	4 Star	4 Star	4 Star	72
Complan Chocolate	4 Star	3 Star	4 Star	4 Star	4 Star	3 Star	4 Star	72
Amul Pro	4 Star	4 Star	4 Star	3 Star	4 Star	3 Star	4 Star	71
Boost Choco Eclairs	3 Star	4 Star	4 Star	4 Star	3 Star	3 Star	4 Star	71
Horlicks Original	2 Star	2 Star	2 Star	3 Star	2 Star	2 Star	2 Star	42
Complan Natural	1 Star	1 Star	1 Star	3 Star	2 Star	2 Star	1 Star	36

Source: Right Choice, February 2014