



How to Read Food Labels



The fuel we put into our body has direct bearing on our feeling of well-being. So, how can we make healthy choices? The food label is a great place to start!

What is on the Label?

Serving Size

Start with the serving size and pay close attention to the number of servings in the package. Ask yourself, "How many servings do I consume?"

Calories

Move down the food label and read the calories. Many Americans consume more calories than needed for a healthy diet. Pay attention to how many calories are in each serving.

General Guide to Calories

- 40 Calories is low
- 100 Calories is moderate
- 400 Calories or more is high

Nutrients

Limit the following nutrients: Total Fat, Saturated Fat, Trans Fat, Cholesterol and Sodium.

Get enough of the following nutrients: Dietary Fiber, Vitamin A, Vitamin C, Calcium and Iron.

Percent Daily Value (%DV)

The %DV helps you determine if a serving of food is high or low in a nutrient, and it is based on a 2,000 calorie daily diet. 5%DV or less is low and 20%DV or more is high.



Additional Terms

- *Low cholesterol* – Less than 20 mg of cholesterol and 2 gm or less of saturated fat per serving.
- *Reduced* – 25% less of the specified nutrient or calories than the usual product.
- *Good source of* – Provides at least 10% of the daily value of a particular vitamin or nutrient per serving.
- *Fat free / sugar free* – Less than 1/2 gram of fat or sugar per serving.
- *Low sodium* – Less than 140 mg of sodium per serving.
- *High in* – Provides 20% or more of the Daily Value of a specified nutrient per serving.
- *Light* – 1/3 fewer calories or 1/2 the fat of the usual food.
- *Healthy* – Decreased fat, saturated fat, sodium, and cholesterol and at least 10% of the DV of vitamins A, C, iron, protein, calcium, and fiber.

Shop Smart

Become a smart shopper by reading food labels to find out more about the foods you eat! Here's why it's smart to check out the Nutrition Facts found on most food labels:

- Find out which foods are good sources of fiber, calcium, iron, and vitamin C
- Compare similar foods to find out which one is lower in fat and calories
- Search for low-sodium foods
- Look for foods that are low in saturated fat and trans fats

Use these tips to help you make healthy food choices that meet your nutritional goals (www.eatright.org).

Want to Learn More?

For more information on food labels, please visit the following websites:

www.mypyramid.gov
www.eatright.org
www.cfsan.fda.gov

Master's Level Clinicians are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to speak with you about any issues you may be experiencing. Call us today!