



How do I know I'm buying and preparing nutritious foods? What should I look for when shopping?

Each food item has a health message on it. Just look at the food label and get the facts!

"Nutrition Facts" food labels are required on almost all food in the grocery store. These labels can help make wise food choices.

The label contains useful information. Use the label as a guide to planning healthier meals and snacks. Most foods can fit into any diet at least occasionally. Read the Nutrition Facts Panel to find out more about what is in the foods you buy and eat.

The Nutrition Facts Label is divided into 5 categories:

1. Servings Size and Servings per Container: This part of the label states the size of the serving either in cup, tablespoon, teaspoon or individual piece measurements. The number of servings per container is also listed. The remaining information on the label is based on an individual serving.

2. Calorie Content: The second part of the food label states the total calorie count per serving and the number of calories per serving obtained from fat.

3. Nutrients: Nutrients found in the labeled food item are listed on this part of the label. The column on the right lists percentages which refer to how much or how little of the key nutrients are in the identified food. The percent of the daily values that individuals need is based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

To the left of the percentages is a listing of the fats. Note that these are identified as saturated, unsaturated or Trans fat. The total amount of cholesterol per serving is listed along with the sodium content and the total carbohydrates. ***The goal for fat consumption is to aim for low percentages.*** Remember that 5% or less is **low** and 20% or more is **high**.

Under the carbohydrates section, look for the amount of dietary fiber and sugars the food contains. ***The goal for dietary fiber intake is to aim for high percentages in the daily diet.*** Remember that 5% is **low** and 20% or more is **high**.

The last listing in this category is the protein content.

4. Vitamins and Minerals: The fourth part of the "Nutrition Facts" label consists of a listing of the vitamins and minerals found in one serving of the food. ***The goal for vitamin consumption is to aim for high percentages.*** Remember that 5% or less is **low** and 20% or more is **high**.

5. The Footnote: The final segment of the "Nutrition Facts" label is *The Footnote*. Below the asterisk sign (*) at the bottom of the label is a listing of the key nutrients and how much of each should be consumed depending on the recommended calorie intake.

Use the Nutrition Facts label to check calories, fat or sodium content. Use it daily to insure that the meals prepared or purchased are healthy and your diet is a balanced one. The label makes it easy to determine the amounts of nutrients available. Use the label to

compare one product to another. Strive for a diet with ample whole grains, fruits and vegetables. Include fat free or low-fat milk and lean meats, poultry fish, beans and nuts. Select foods low in sodium, added sugar, cholesterol, saturated fats and no trans fats. Using the Nutrition Facts label is the first step to a healthier lifestyle.

By reviewing the Food Label one can make smart choices while shopping.

The Nutrition Facts Label identifies how healthy the food actually is and allows the shopper to select foods high in vitamins, proteins, and nutrients and low in fats.

Purchase fresh foods when possible. Read the label on all frozen and canned foods and avoid any products high in fats and sodium.

Choose foods with labels that note:

- Sodium free
- Very low sodium
- Low sodium
- Reduced (or less) sodium
- Light in sodium
- Unsalted.
- Low fat
- Fat free
- Lower fat
- Reduced fat

Always remember to add fruits and vegetables to the grocery list!



| Nutrition Facts | | | |
|--|-----------|----------------------|---------|
| Serving Size 2 cup (228g) | | | |
| Servings Per Container 2 | | | |
| Amount Per Serving | | | |
| Calories 250 | | Calories for Fat 110 | |
| % Daily Value* | | | |
| Total Fat 12g | | | 18% |
| Saturated Fat 3g | | | 15% |
| Trans Fat 0g | | | 0% |
| Unsaturated Fat 0g | | | 0% |
| Cholesterol 30 mg | | | 10% |
| Sodium 470g | | | 20% |
| Total Carbohydrate 31g | | | 10% |
| Dietary Fiber 0g | | | 0% |
| Sugars 5g | | | |
| Protein 5g | | | |
| Vitamin A 4% | | Vitamin C 2% | |
| Calcium 20% | | Iron 4% | |
| *Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs: | | | |
| | Calories: | 2,000 | 2,500 |
| Total Fat | Less than | 65g | 80g |
| Sat Fat | Less than | 20g | 25g |
| Cholesterol | Less than | 300mg | 300mg |
| Sodium | Less than | 2,400mg | 2,400mg |
| Total Carbohydrate | | 300g | 375g |
| Dietary Fiber | | 25g | 30g |

References:

[Eating healthier and feeling better using the Nutrition Facts Label](#)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
 U.S. Department of Agriculture
www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines

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