



UNDERSTANDING FOOD LABELS

Most packaged foods have a Nutrition Facts label. Use it to make smart food choices.

Serving Size

The nutrient information is based on ONE serving. Know the size of a serving, how many servings are in a package and think about the number of servings you usually consume.

Calories

The energy or calories in one serving is listed, along with calories from fat. Fat-free and low-fat foods may have as many calories as the full-fat version of the same product.

% Daily Value

% Daily Value (%DV) tells you how the food fits into a daily diet. The %DV is based on nutrient recommendations for a 2,000 calorie diet. Think of 5% or less as “low” and 20% or more as “high.”

Fat, Saturated Fat, Trans Fat, Cholesterol, Sodium

Avoid eating too much fat, saturated and trans fats, cholesterol and sodium. Look for lower %DV numbers. Trans fat doesn’t have a %DV, but consume as little as possible.

Carbohydrate, Fiber, Sugars

Reach for healthy carbohydrate, fiber and sugar sources, such as whole grains, fruits, vegetables and beans. There’s not a %DV for sugar, but use the gram amount to compare sugar content among products.

Protein

Most Americans get plenty of protein so a %DV is not usually listed. Look for lean, low-fat sources of meat, poultry, dry beans, milk and milk products.

Potassium, Vitamins A and C, Calcium and Iron

Get plenty of fiber, Vitamins A and C, calcium and iron. Look for higher %DV numbers; 10% is considered a good source.

Percent DV footnote, Daily Values for fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium, carbohydrate and fiber

These footnoted Daily Value numbers are experts’ nutrient recommendations for a 2,000 calorie and a 2,500 calorie diet. These numbers don’t change from package to package.

Ingredients list

Ingredients are listed in order by amount - from most to least. For example, if the bread you’re buying is mainly whole grain, the first ingredient will be “whole grain” wheat, oats, corn, rye or other grain. Also, check here for ingredients you want to either avoid or increase in your diet.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 3 oz (85g)	
Servings Per Container 1	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 180	Calories from Fat 90
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 10g	15%
Saturated Fat 40g	20%
Trans Fat 0.5g	
Cholesterol 70mg	23%
Sodium 60mg	3%
Total Carbohydrate 0g	0%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 0g	
Protein 22g	
Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 2%	Iron 15%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your caloric needs:	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Saturated 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
Calories per gram:	
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4	

Visit www.cfsan.fda.gov/label.html for more label reading tips.

Food Check-Out Week is February 21-27, 2010 and is sponsored by the American Farm Bureau® Women’s Leadership Committee.