

How to Read a Food Label

Reading the label will help you make smart food choices and get the most nutrition out of calories in order to reach your goals!

| Nutrition Facts | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Serving Size 1 cup (228g) | |
| Servings Per Container 2 | |
| Amount Per Serving | |
| Calories 260 Calories from Fat 120 | |
| % Daily Value | |
| Total Fat 13g | 20% |
| Saturated Fat 5g | 25% |
| <i>Trans Fat</i> 0g | |
| Cholesterol 30mg | 10% |
| Sodium 660mg | 28% |
| Total Carbohydrate 31g | 10% |
| Dietary Fiber 1g | 4% |
| Sugars 5g | |
| Protein 5g | |
| Vitamin A 4% | Vitamin C 2% |
| Calcium 15% | 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: 2000 2500 | |
| 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 Carbohydrates | 300g 375g |
| Dietary Fiber | 25g 25g |
| Calories per gram: Fat 9 · Carbohydrate 4 · Protein 4 | |

Serving Size

We are used to saying “portion” or “helping” when we talk about how much we eat. “Serving size” is a more official or standard amount used for food labels. The nutrition facts given on a food label are based on the serving size.

Servings Per Container

Be sure to look at the number of servings in the package. Small packages may appear to be one serving. Often, they contain more. Snack food items are a good example. If you eat the whole package, then you must multiply the nutrition values by the number of servings in the package.

Nutrition Numbers

Compare the number for Calories from Fat to Total Calories. You want your total fat calories to be no more than 1/3 of your total calories for the day.

If the number of the grams (g) of Saturated Fat is close to the number given for Total Fat, that food or beverage may not be the best choice. Look for choices low in *Trans Fat*.

Look for choices that have at least 1 gram of fiber. Aim for 20-35 grams of fiber per day.

Compare the number of grams (g) of Sugars to the number given for Total Carbohydrate. Unless this food has natural sugar, like that in fruit or milk, these sugars are added sugars. You want to limit added sugars.

Percent Daily Values (DV)

The Percent Daily Value gives a marker for the recommended nutrition needs based on a 2,000 Calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie/nutrient needs. Tip - 5% DV or less is low, 20% or more is high. You will not find a % DV for *Trans fat*, Sugars, or Protein.

- Limit these nutrients
- Get enough of these nutrients

