

# Decoding the Nutrition Label

Grocery shopping can be intimidating when you're trying to eat healthy. Along with a vast array of food choices, consumers are faced with often-confusing marketing language. Knowing which foods to buy is essential in selecting nutritious items. Being able to decipher food labels will help you know what foods should be part of your diet and what foods should be left on the shelf.

## How do I read a nutrition label?

Learning how to read a nutrition label can help you navigate the choices and sometimes deceptive packaging on food. Let's start from the top of the label and work our way down.

- The serving size and servings per container provide a way to compare foods and monitor what you eat. Nutrient amounts in the lower sections of the label are based on one serving and need to be multiplied, depending on the number of servings you eat.
- Calories tell you how much energy you get from foods. Based on a daily intake of 2,000 calories, 40 kcals is considered low, 100 moderate, and 400 or more high. You also only want 35 percent or less of your calorie intake to be from fat.

### Nutrition Facts

8 servings per container

**Serving size** 2/3 cup (55g)

**Amount per serving**

**Calories** 230

- The next section is nutrients. Let's break this into two sections – nutrients you want to limit and nutrients you want to get plenty of.
  - ▶ Nutrients to limit include fat, cholesterol, sodium and carbohydrates. Large quantities of these can lead to chronic illnesses such as heart disease.
  - ▶ Nutrients you want to get plenty of include vitamins and minerals, which can help reduce risk of some diseases and conditions.

<b>% Daily Value*</b>	
<b>Total Fat</b> 8g	<b>10%</b>
Saturated Fat 1g	<b>5%</b>
<i>Trans</i> Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 160mg	<b>7%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 37g	<b>13%</b>
Dietary Fiber 4g	<b>14%</b>
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	<b>20%</b>
<b>Protein</b> 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%

\*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

- The percent daily value section shows what percentage the recommended amount of a nutrient you are consuming, based on a 2,000-calorie diet. If you eat more than or less than 2,000 calories a day, your percentage will differ.

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**More information about how to read and understand a nutrition label can be found on the Food and Drug Administration website at [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov).**

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