

How to read the nutrition facts label

Become an informed shopper by learning how to interpret the different components of the nutrition facts label.

1 Serving size & servings per container

Lists the size of a single serving and how many total servings are in the container. The serving size is first listed as a common household measurement (ex: cups, tablespoons, etc.) followed by a metric amount (grams).

NOTE: The serving size indicates the portion that people typically consume NOT the recommended serving size.

You may also see nutrition labels that have dual columns when there are multiple servings in a container. Dual column nutrition labels will display one column indicating nutrition information for a single serving size and a second column indicating nutrition information for the entire package.

2 Total calories

This number is the amount of calories in the declared serving size.

TIP: Take note of this number to assess how much you're eating. Ex: if you ate 3 servings, you would multiply the calories and nutrients by three to find the total amount you consumed.

3 Nutrients

a Fat

Total fat will be listed first. Directly under total fat, the break down of the amounts of each type of fat (trans, saturated, monounsaturated and polyunsaturated) will be listed. It is optional for unsaturated fat content to be listed on a label.

*If the unsaturated fat content is not listed, you can calculate the amount.

$\text{total fat} - (\text{saturated fat} + \text{trans fat}) = \text{total unsaturated fat}$

TIP:

- Limit saturated fats to 10% of total calories.
- Limit trans fats as close to zero as possible.
- Look for higher amounts of unsaturated fats (polyunsaturated and monounsaturated).

b Sodium & cholesterol amounts are required to be listed on the nutrition label.

c Carbohydrates

First, the total amount of carbohydrates will be listed. Directly under, you will find the breakdown of the amounts of: dietary fiber, total sugars and added sugars.

Total sugars= natural sugar (sugar naturally present in a food such as sugar in fruit or milk) + **added sugars** (sugar added that is not naturally present in that food).

TIP: Aim for less than 10% of your total daily calories coming from added sugar

d Protein

Total protein will be listed.

4 Nutrients Continued vitamins & minerals

Amounts of vitamins and minerals will be listed here. It is required for certain vitamins and minerals such as iron, calcium, potassium and vitamin D to be listed on the label. Others, such as vitamin A and vitamin C, are optional.

5 Daily Values (DV)

DV are levels of nutrients recommended to consume or not exceed based on an intake of 2000 calories per day. You will notice next to every nutrient is a percentage; that is the percentage of the daily value that nutrient provides in a serving.

NOTE: Remember, this is just a basepoint, every person's daily calorie and nutrient requirements are unique.

6 Ingredient list

Ingredients are listed in descending order by weight. Therefore, the ingredients that are present in the largest quantities are listed first.

7 Contains Statement

The Contains Statement is required to be listed under the ingredient list. The FDA requires that the labels identify when a product contains one of the top 9 allergens: wheat, soy, milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, fish, shellfish, and sesame. The Contains Statement is not required if allergens are listed in plain language (ie. dairy products listed as milk).

Food label claims

Food packages may display a variety of nutrition claims. Below are some common food label claims and their criteria.

Reduced: at least 25% less of a certain nutrient than in the standard version of the product

High in/excellent source of: 20% or more of the daily value (DV) of that nutrient

Light: Reduced by 50% or more of a specified nutrient when compared to the standard version of the product

Good source of: contains 10-19% of the DV

Zero calorie: has less than 5 calories per serving

Low sodium: contains less than 140 mg sodium per serving

Low saturated fat: contains less than 1 g of saturated fat per serving, with no more than 15% of calories coming from saturated fat

*The nutrition facts label on packaged foods and drinks is regulated by the FDA.

Resources: <http://www.eatright.org/> • www.fda.gov

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	2/3 cup (55g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160g	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 240mg	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.

6 INGREDIENTS: Pure milk chocolate (sugar, chocolate liquor, cocoa butter, whole milk, soy lecithin [an emulsifier], vanilla), sugar, butter, almonds, salt.

7 CONTAINS: MILK, TREE NUTS (ALMONDS), SOY.



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