

## Using the Nutrition Facts Label

The nutrition facts label is a tool to help you choose healthful foods. Explore the key parts of the nutrition label below.

### Serving Size

This is the amount of food the nutrition facts label describes. This is not always the portion size you eat. When you eat more or less than the serving size, try to figure out the nutrition for the portion you eat.

### Fats

Choose foods with less than 3g of **Saturated Fat** and 0g of **Trans Fat** per serving. The daily goal of saturated fat is less than 11-13g. Trans fat may be hidden in the ingredient list as partially hydrogenated oils. Hydrogenated oils are a saturated fat and should also be avoided. Polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats are heart healthy.

### Sodium

The daily goal of sodium is less than 1500-2000mg. Choose foods with less than 140mg **Sodium** per serving. Try to choose a meal with less than 500-600mg.

### Carbohydrate

Carbohydrates are found in fruits, starchy vegetables, beans, grains, some dairy and sweets. For a diet moderate in carbohydrates, aim for 30-60g per meal and 0-15g per snack, or 130-225g per day.

### Dietary Fiber

The daily goal of fiber is at least 25-38g. Choose foods with at least 3g **fiber** per serving.

### Added Sugars

The daily goal of added sugar is less than 25-38g. Choose foods with less than 8g **added sugar** per serving.

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
8 servings per container	
<b>Serving size</b>	<b>2/3 cup (55g)</b>
<b>Amount per serving</b>	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>230</b>
<b>% Daily Value*</b>	
<b>Total Fat</b> 8g	<b>10%</b>
Saturated Fat 1g	<b>5%</b>
<i>Trans Fat</i> 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.	

## **Make the Label Work for You**

It is okay to use just certain parts of the label. Focus on the sections that are most important to you.

### **Ingredient List**

The list on a food package lists ingredients in order by weight. The one that weighs the most is listed first, and the one that weighs the least is listed last. This list is helpful if you need to avoid certain ingredients due to an allergy. It lets you to know what type(s) of fat, sugar or sugar substitute, sodium, or grain the food has.

### **Low Fat, Light, and Cholesterol Free**

Foods often have claims that make a food item sound healthy. Some like “natural” don’t have a true meaning. Key words and health claims on labels are run by the Federal Trade Commission. Values on food labels are correct and always within 10% of the real content. Label claims include:

- Calorie free: Less than 5.
- Low calorie: 40 or less.
- Light or lite: 1/3 fewer calories or 50% less fat. If more than half the calories are from fat, fat content must be reduced 50% or more.
- Light sodium: 50% less.
- Low sodium: 140mg or less.
- Very low sodium: 35mg or less.
- Sodium free: Less than 5mg.
- Low fat: 3g or less.
- Fat free: Less than ½.
- Low cholesterol: 20mg or less and 2g or less saturated fat.
- Cholesterol free: Less than 2mg and 2g or less saturated fat.
- High fiber: 5g or more.
- Sugar free: Less than ½g.

## **Heart Disease, Cancer, Blood Pressure and Osteoporosis**

Health claims on labels must either be FDA-approved or say they are FDA-approved.

Approved health claims include:

- Heart disease: Low in saturated fat and cholesterol. High in fiber from fruits, vegetables and grains. At least 6.25g soy protein.
- Cancer: Low in fat; high in dietary fiber or vitamins A or C.
- High blood pressure: Low in sodium. Good source of potassium.
- Osteoporosis: High in calcium or high in vitamin D.

Some health claims that do not have any proof must have a disclaimer. (i.e., “This claim has not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.”)