

## Using the Nutrition Facts Label

The nutrition label is a helpful tool for choosing the most healthful foods for you. Explore the key parts of the nutrition label below.

### Serving Size

This is the amount of food that the nutrition facts describe. This is not always the best portion size. The “Servings per Container” is often more than a single serving. When you eat more or less than the serving size, be sure to figure out the nutrition for your portion.

### Fats

Foods that have less than 3g of **Saturated Fat** and less than 1g of **Trans Fat** per serving are heart healthy. You can find hidden sources of trans fat in the ingredient list. These include hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils.

### Sodium

Choose foods with less than 140mg **Sodium** per serving. If it has more than 300mg sodium per serving, choose another brand or product.

### Carbohydrate

Carbohydrates are found in fruits, vegetables, beans, grains, and some dairy. Choose these foods with more than 3g **Dietary Fiber** per serving to meet daily fiber goals of 25-38g.

### Sugars

Choose foods with less than 8g **Added Sugar** per serving. Women should have less than 25g of added sugar per day and men should have less than 38g per day.

### 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.

<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>
Trans 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%
<small>* 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.</small>	

### 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 1/2.
- 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 1/2g.

### **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.”)

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person’s health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 8/2020 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Clinical Nutrition Services Department and the Department of Nursing. HF#302