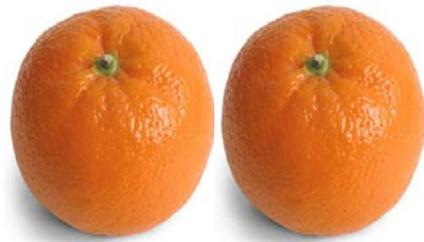


How to Read Nutrition Labels

Nutrition labels are important not only for understanding what you are eating but for you to learn just how much vitamins and minerals any type of food includes at the same time. For example, one type of food could be tuna fish. You are picking up a can of tuna because you think it is good for you. But if you are not careful, you could be picking up a can of tuna fish that is high in sodium (which is salt) or a can of tuna that is high in cholesterol (which is the fats) and this is all because you didn't read the label first.



Read a nutrition label on the can or jar

Every jar or can, even a box of something you are purchasing at the store is going to have a label on it. On this label you will find information about what is in the food you are eating, and information about how much vitamins and minerals are contained in the foods you are eating. Another important reason to read the label on the foods you are eating is because you might be surprised in just how many servings are in the foods you are eating. For example, you are eating a can of soup, thinking it has vegetables and all types of good stuff for you, but the can actually has two and a half servings in it and you were planning on eating the entire can!

1-first look at serving size

2-look at calorie count

3-pick foods low in saturated fats - Unsaturated fats are better as they are the healthier fats.

4-look at TOTAL carbs (1 serving = 15 gms) **The fiber and sugar counts are included in the total carb COUNT so

5-***GO TO THE **INGREDIENT** LIST AND SEE WHAT KIND OF FOODS MAKE UP THE CARBS!!! It doesn't matter if the carb count is low if they are all refined carbs.

Chili with Beans

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size: 1 cup (253 g) Servings per container: 2	
Amount per Serving:	
Calories 260	Calories from Fat 72
	% Daily Value
Total Fat 8g	13%
Saturated Fat 3g	17%
Cholesterol 130mg	44%
Sodium 1010mg	42%
Total Carbohydrate 22g	7%
Dietary Fiber 9g	36%
Sugars 4g	
Protein 25g	

The label on every box or can you purchase for eating is going to tell you all about how many servings are in the containers you purchase. If you are on a calorie diet, or if you want to start eating less for better nutrition, you have to learn about how many servings you should be eating. Think about this: often times you will get a bowl of chips and munch while you watch a movie but this bowl of chips could be four or ten times how much you are supposed to be eating for one serving.

A nutrition label is going to give you the calories, vitamins, fats, and minerals for each serving. If you are limiting your fat intake, but you are not watching your serving sizes, you could be increasing your fats instead of cutting fats. For example, while turkey dogs have less cholesterol and fats, you decide you are going to eat two. But for some of these turkey dogs a serving size may be one half a hot dog, so you are not going to be cutting your fats and cholesterol as much you thought before.

Read labels, and learn to tell the difference about what you are eating compared to how much is recommended for a serving size. If you are eating more than one serving size you need to adjust your calorie intake accordingly for a healthy and nutritious overall diet.

The ingredient list can help you identify 'hidden' ingredients, like added sugars (bad), whole grains (good), and trans fats (bad).

Added Sugars

Foods with added sugars will list corn syrup, fruit juice concentrates, honey, molasses, etc. on their ingredient list. Other names for added sugars can include:

- brown sugar
- corn sweetener
- dextrose
- fructose
- glucose

- high-fructose corn syrup
- invert sugar
- lactose
- maltose
- malt syrup
- raw sugar
- sucrose
- sugar
- molasses

Whole Grains

The ingredient list can also help you find foods made with whole grains, which are healthier and are preferred to refined grains. Whole grain foods should have one of the following whole grain ingredients listed as their first ingredient:

- whole wheat
- whole oats
- brown rice
- bulgar
- graham flour
- oatmeal
- whole grain corn
- whole rye
- wild rice

On the other hand, a food is not made with whole grains if it is labeled with the words multi-grain, 100% wheat, seven-grain, stone-ground, bran, or cracked wheat.

Trans Fats

Although the amount of trans fats isn't yet listed on most food labels, making them hard to avoid, you can often identify that they are in a food if it lists 'partially hydrogenated vegetable oil' on the ingredient list.