

# Eat Right

Food, Nutrition and Health Tips from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

## Shop Smart— Get the Facts on the New Food Labels

Become a smart shopper by reading food labels to find out more about the foods you eat. The Nutrition Facts panel found on most food labels will be changing in the near future, and the updates will help you:

- Find out which foods are good sources of dietary fiber, vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium
- Compare similar foods to find out which one is lower in calories
- Look for foods that are lower in saturated fat, *trans* fat, sodium, and added sugars

### Start with the Servings Per Container and Serving Size

- Look here for both the number of servings in the package and the serving size (the amount for one serving).
- Remember to check your portion size to the serving size listed on the label. If the label serving size is one cup, and you eat two cups, you are getting twice the calories, fat and other nutrients listed on the label.

### Check Out the Total Calories

- Find out how many calories are in a single serving

### Let the Percent Daily Values Be Your Guide

Use percent Daily Values (DV) to help you evaluate how a particular food fits into your daily eating plan:

- Daily Values are average levels of nutrients for a person eating 2,000 calories a day.
- Remember: percent DV are for the entire day—not just for one meal or snack.
- You may need more or less than 2,000 calories per day. For some nutrients you may need more or less than 100% DV.
- 5 percent or less is low — try to aim low in saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, and sodium
- 20 percent or more is high— try to aim high in vitamins, minerals and dietary fiber

Current Label:	New Label:																																																																																																		
<p><b>Nutrition Facts</b> Serving Size 2/3 cup (55g) Servings Per Container About 8</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Amount Per Serving</th> <th></th> <th>% Daily Value*</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><b>Calories</b> 230</td> <td>Calories from Fat 72</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total Fat</b> 8g</td> <td></td> <td><b>12%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>  Saturated Fat 1g</td> <td></td> <td><b>5%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>  <i>Trans</i> Fat 0g</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg</td> <td></td> <td><b>0%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Sodium</b> 160mg</td> <td></td> <td><b>7%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 37g</td> <td></td> <td><b>12%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>  Dietary Fiber 4g</td> <td></td> <td><b>16%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>  Sugars 12g</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Protein</b> 3g</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vitamin A</td> <td></td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vitamin C</td> <td></td> <td>8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Calcium</td> <td></td> <td>20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Iron</td> <td></td> <td>45%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><small>* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily value may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.</small></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Calories:</th> <th>2,000</th> <th>2,500</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Total Fat</td> <td>Less than 65g</td> <td>80g</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sat Fat</td> <td>Less than 20g</td> <td>25g</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cholesterol</td> <td>Less than 300mg</td> <td>300mg</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sodium</td> <td>Less than 2,400mg</td> <td>2,400mg</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Carbohydrate</td> <td>300g</td> <td>375g</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dietary Fiber</td> <td>25g</td> <td>30g</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Amount Per Serving		% Daily Value*	<b>Calories</b> 230	Calories from Fat 72		<b>Total Fat</b> 8g		<b>12%</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>12%</b>	Dietary Fiber 4g		<b>16%</b>	Sugars 12g			<b>Protein</b> 3g			Vitamin A		10%	Vitamin C		8%	Calcium		20%	Iron		45%	Calories:	2,000	2,500	Total Fat	Less than 65g	80g	Sat Fat	Less than 20g	25g	Cholesterol	Less than 300mg	300mg	Sodium	Less than 2,400mg	2,400mg	Total Carbohydrate	300g	375g	Dietary Fiber	25g	30g	<p><b>Nutrition Facts</b> 8 servings per container <b>Serving size 2/3 cup (55g)</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Amount per serving</th> <th>% Daily Value*</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><b>Calories</b> <b>230</b></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total Fat</b> 8g</td> <td><b>10%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>  Saturated Fat 1g</td> <td><b>5%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>  <i>Trans</i> Fat 0g</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg</td> <td><b>0%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Sodium</b> 160mg</td> <td><b>7%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 37g</td> <td><b>13%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>  Dietary Fiber 4g</td> <td><b>14%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>  Total Sugars 12g</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>    Includes 10g Added Sugars</td> <td><b>20%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Protein</b> 3g</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vitamin D 2mcg</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Calcium 260mg</td> <td>20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Iron 8mg</td> <td>45%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Potassium 235mg</td> <td>6%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><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></p>	Amount per serving	% Daily Value*	<b>Calories</b> <b>230</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%
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*Source: FDA.gov, FOR REFERENCE ONLY*

For more food label information, visit the U.S. Food and Drug Administration at [www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers](http://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers)

## Limit Saturated Fat, Trans Fat, Sodium, and Added Sugars

Eating less of these may help reduce your risk for heart disease, high blood pressure and cancer:

- Limit saturated fats to less than 10% of total calories daily by replacing them with unsaturated fats
- Limit *trans* fats to as low as possible.
- Limit sodium to less than 2,300 mg daily (for adults and children 14 years and older).
- Limit added sugars to less than 10% of total calories daily

## Get Enough Vitamins, Minerals and Fiber

- Eat more dietary fiber, vitamin D, calcium, and potassium to maintain good health and help reduce your risk of certain health problems such as osteoporosis.
- Remember to aim high for % DV of these nutrients.

## Additional Nutrients

- Carbohydrates — There are three types of carbohydrates: sugars, starches and fiber. Select whole-grain breads, cereals, rice and pasta plus fruits, vegetables, and low-fat milk and yogurt.
- Proteins — Aim for a variety, including seafood, poultry, lean meats, eggs, beans and peas, nuts, seeds, and soy products.

## Check the Ingredient List

Foods with more than one ingredient must have an ingredient list on the label. Ingredients are listed in descending order by weight. Those in the largest amounts are listed first. Food manufacturers are required to state if food products contain any ingredients that are derived from the eight major allergenic foods: milk, eggs, fish, crustacean shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, wheat and soybeans.

## What Health Claims on Food Labels Really Mean

FDA has strict guidelines on how certain food label terms can be used. FDA also sets standards for health-related claims on food labels to help consumers identify foods that are rich in nutrients and may help to reduce the risk for certain diseases. For example, health claims may highlight the link

between calcium and osteoporosis, dietary fiber and some cancers, saturated fat and heart disease or high blood pressure and sodium.

Some of the most common claims seen on food packages:

- **Low calorie** — Less than 40 calories per serving.
- **Low cholesterol** — 20 mg or less of cholesterol and 2 gm or less of saturated fat per serving.
- **Reduced** — 25% less of the specified nutrient or calories than the usual product.
- **Good source of** — Provides at least 10% of the DV of a particular nutrient per serving.
- **Calorie free** — Less than 5 calories per serving.
- **Fat free / sugar free** — Less than ½ gram of fat or sugar per serving.
- **Low sodium** — 140 mg or less of sodium per serving.
- **High in (or Excellent source of)** — Provides 20% or more of the DV of a specified nutrient per serving.

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**For a referral to a registered dietitian nutritionist and for additional food and nutrition information visit [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org).**



The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is the world's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals. The Academy is committed to improving health and advancing the profession of dietetics through research, education and advocacy.

This tip sheet is provided by:

*Authored by Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics staff registered dietitian nutritionists.*

*Sources: US Food and Drug Administration, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Complete Food & Nutrition Guide, 5th edition*