

Nutrition Labels

Resource Sheet



Nutrition labels provide basic information about the foods you eat, allowing a person to determine the amount of energy, fat & specific nutrients that are in a food. Important data includes:

Serving Size: The amount of a food that an average person might eat.

Serving per Container: The number of servings that are in the package.

Calories: The amount of energy per serving.

Calories from Fat: The number of calories that come just from fat. To figure out the percent of calories from fat, divide the calories from fat by the total number of calories per serving. Example: calories from fat (30) divided by calories per serving (90) = 33%.

% Daily Value: The numbers down the right side of the Nutrition Facts panel are the percentage of the recommended amount of energy and nutrients that are provided per serving. Values of 5% or less are considered low, from 5-19% are medium and 20% or higher are considered high.

Cholesterol: A fat-like substance found only in animal products. Eating too much cholesterol can raise our risk of developing heart disease. Try to consume no more than 300 milligrams per day.

Sodium: Often called salt. For some people, eating large amounts of sodium may lead to high blood pressure. Canned and processed foods often have higher amounts of sodium than unprocessed foods. Try to limit the amount of sodium in your diet to 2,400 milligrams per day. This is equal to about two teaspoons of salt daily.

Total Carbohydrate: Carbohydrates are found in foods like bread, pasta, potatoes, fruits and vegetables. Total carbohydrates include dietary fiber, starches and sugars. Carbohydrates provide your body with the energy you need to move and be active. They also help keep your lungs, heart and brain working.

Dietary Fiber: Is also called roughage and is found in the skins of fruits, vegetables, beans and whole grains. Fiber is part of the plants your body cannot digest. Choosing foods high in fiber can help lower your risk for heart disease and cancer. To figure out how much fiber you need, add five to your age (for children and teenagers). For adults, aim for at least 25 grams of fiber daily.

Sugars: Includes natural sugars, such as those found in fruits, juices and milk products, and added sugars, which are often found in candy and soda.

Protein: Our bodies need this nutrient for growth, repair of body tissues and for general maintenance. Animal products like meat, milk and eggs, and vegetable products like beans, nuts and nut butters are rich sources.

Vitamin A: Helps us see at night, is needed for bone and skin growth and helps our bodies fight disease. Dark orange and dark green fruits and vegetables are rich sources.

Vitamin C: Helps the body fight infections and heal wounds. May help prevent some diseases like cancer and heart disease. Oranges, kiwi fruit, tomatoes, broccoli, spinach and peppers are rich sources.

Calcium: Promotes development of strong bones and teeth.

Iron: Helps carry oxygen throughout the body.

Source

Junior Master Gardener, Golden Ray Series- Level 1, Nutrition Fun with Brocc & Roll-Connie Liakos Evers, MS, RD

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