

BACKGROUND INFORMATION



Nutrition Primer: What's on the Label?

Serving Size

Serving Size is based on the amount of food that is customarily eaten at one time. All of the nutrition information listed on a food's Nutrition Facts label is based on one serving of that food, except as otherwise indicated on a dual column label.

The serving size is shown as a common household measure that is appropriate to the food (such as cup, tablespoon, piece, slice, or jar), followed by the metric amount in grams (g).

When you compare calories and nutrients between different foods, don't forget to check the serving size in order to make an accurate comparison.


Servings Per Container

Servings Per Container shows the total number of servings in the entire food package or container. Often, one package of food may contain more than one serving!

The information listed on the Nutrition Facts label is based on **one** serving. So, if a package contains **two servings** and you eat the entire package, you have consumed **twice** the amount of *calories* and *nutrients* listed on the label.

DID YOU KNOW?

The serving sizes listed on the Nutrition Facts label are not recommended serving sizes. By law, serving sizes must be based on how much food people actually consume, and not on what they should eat.

 With the new Nutrition Facts label, serving sizes have been updated to reflect what people actually eat and drink today. In some cases, the new serving sizes are smaller. For example, today's individually packaged yogurts more often come in 6-ounce containers, versus the previous 8-ounce ones. For other products, the serving size is now larger. For example, the serving size for ice cream was previously 1/2 cup and now is 2/3 cup.


Calories

Calories refers to the total number of calories or "energy" supplied from all sources (fat, carbohydrate, and protein) in one serving of the food.

Calories from Fat

These are not additional calories; rather, they are the calories in each serving that come from fat.

Remember that fat-free doesn't mean calorie-free. Lower fat items may have as many calories as full-fat versions due to their sugar content.

 "Calories from Fat" was removed from the new Nutrition Facts label.

Nutrients

The Nutrition Facts label can help you learn about the nutrient content of many foods in your diet. It also enables you to compare foods to make healthy choices.

Percent Daily Value (%DV)

The **Percent Daily Value (%DV)** tells you how much of a nutrient is in one serving of that food. The %DVs are based on the Daily Values which are the amounts of key nutrients generally recommended (to either consume or not exceed) per day for people 4 years of age and older.

You can use the %DV to compare food products and to choose products that are higher in nutrients you want to get more of (like dietary fiber and calcium) and lower in nutrients you want to get less of (like saturated fat and sodium). The %DV column doesn't add up vertically to 100%; instead, the % Daily Value represents the percentage of the Daily Value for each nutrient in one serving of the food. As a general rule:

- **5% DV** or less of a nutrient per serving is **low**.
- **20% DV** or more of a nutrient per serving is **high**.



Note: For the new Nutrition Facts label, the daily values for some nutrients have been updated based on new scientific evidence.

Nutrients to get less of (get less than 100% DV each day):

- saturated fat
- *trans* fat
- sodium
- added sugars

(Note: *trans* fat has no %DV, so use the grams to compare)

Nutrients to get more of (get 100% DV on most days):

- dietary fiber
- vitamin A
- vitamin C
- vitamin D
- calcium
- potassium
- iron

The * [asterisk] at the bottom of the label is a reminder that the %DVs are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. You may need more or fewer calories, but the %DV is still a helpful gauge.

Ingredient List

The **Ingredient List** shows each ingredient in a food by its common or usual name in descending order by weight. The Ingredient List is usually located near the name of the food's manufacturer and often below the Nutrition Facts label.

Turn the page for
Nutrition Facts label handouts!



A TIME OF TWO LABELS

WHAT'S ON THE ORIGINAL LABEL?



Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 2/3 cup (55g)
Servings Per Container About 8

Amount Per Serving

Calories 230 **Calories from Fat** 72

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 8g	12%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	12%
Dietary Fiber 4g	16%
Sugars 12g	
Protein 3g	
Vitamin A	10%
Vitamin C	8%
Calcium	20%
Iron	45%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily value may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	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

A Note About Label Formats

Most packages use the general format of the Nutrition Facts label, as shown on pages 8 and 9 of this Guide. This is considered the **Standard** label.

Nutrition Facts labels on some small packages (e.g., nut bars) without enough space for a full label may use a **Linear** format. A food having insignificant amounts of most nutrients may use a **Simplified** format which only lists five "core" nutrients: calories, total fat, sodium, total carbohydrate, and protein.

Some packages will have a **Dual Column** label that shows calories and nutrients on both a "per serving" and "per package" basis to help people understand how much they consume.

Serving Size

Serving size is based on the amount of food that is customarily eaten at one time. All of the nutrition information on the label is based on one serving of that food.

Check to see if the serving size is the same when comparing calories and nutrients in different foods.

Servings Per Container

Servings Per Container shows the total number of servings in the entire food package or container. Often, one package of food may contain more than one serving!

The information listed on the Nutrition Facts label is based on **one** serving. So, if a package contains **two servings** and you eat the entire package, you have consumed **twice** the amount of *calories* and *nutrients* listed on the label.

Calories

Balance the number of calories you consume with the number of calories your body uses to achieve or maintain a healthy weight.

The amount of calories in each serving is listed on the left side.

When comparing foods, remember:

- 100 calories per serving is MODERATE
- 400 calories per serving is HIGH

Calories from Fat

These are not additional calories; rather, they are the calories in each serving that come from fat.

Remember that fat-free doesn't mean calorie-free. Lower fat items may have as many calories as full-fat versions due to their sugar content.

Nutrients To Get Less Of

Saturated fat, *trans* fat, sodium, and sugars are nutrients to get less of.

Aim for less than 100% DV of these nutrients each day (Note: *trans* fat and sugars have no %DV, so use grams to compare).

Nutrients To Get More Of

Americans often don't get enough dietary fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, and iron in their diets.

Aim for 100% DV of these nutrients on most days.

Percent Daily Value (%DV)

The Percent Daily Value (% Daily Value) tells you how much of a nutrient is in one serving of a food. The %DVs are based on the Daily Values which are the amounts of key nutrients generally recommended per day for people 4 years of age and older.

When comparing nutrients in foods, remember:

- 5% Daily Value or less of a nutrient per serving is low
- 20% Daily Value or more of a nutrient per serving is high.

Footnote with Daily Values

The %DVs are based on a 2,000-calorie diet. However, your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs, which vary according to age, gender, height, weight, and physical activity level.

Check your calorie needs at www.choosemyplate.gov

A TIME OF TWO LABELS

WHAT'S ON THE NEW LABEL?



Nutrition Facts	
1	8 servings per container Serving size 2/3 cup (55g)
2	Amount per serving Calories 230
	% Daily Value*
3	Total Fat 8g 10% Saturated Fat 1g 5% <i>Trans Fat</i> 0g
	Cholesterol 0mg 0% Sodium 160mg 7% Total Carbohydrate 37g 13% Dietary Fiber 4g 14% Total Sugars 12g
4	Includes 10g Added Sugars 20% Protein 3g
5	Vitamin D 2mcg 10% Calcium 200mg 15% Iron 8mg 45% Potassium 235mg 6%
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.

Key Changes

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has finalized a new Nutrition Facts label for packaged foods that will make it easier for you to make informed food choices that support a healthy diet. The updated label has a fresh new design and reflects current scientific information, including the link between diet and chronic diseases.

1. Servings

The number of "servings per container" and the "Serving size" declaration are now in larger and/or bolder type. Serving sizes have been updated to reflect what people actually eat and drink today. For example, the serving size for ice cream was previously 1/2 cup and now is 2/3 cup.

There are also new labeling requirements for certain size packages, such as those that are between one and two servings or are larger than a single serving but could be consumed in one or multiple sittings. Some larger products will require a "dual column" label that shows calories and nutrients on both a "per serving" and "per package" basis to show people the amounts they are getting.

2. Calories

"Calories" is now larger and bolder.

3. Fats

"Calories from Fat" has been removed because research shows the type of fat consumed is more important than the amount.

4. Added Sugars

"Added Sugars" includes sugars that are either added during the processing of foods, or are packaged as such (e.g., a bag of table sugar), and include sugars from syrups and honey, and sugars from concentrated fruit or vegetable juices.

5. Nutrients

The lists of nutrients that are required or permitted on the label have been updated. Vitamin D and potassium are now required on the label because Americans do not always get the recommended amounts. Vitamins A and C are no longer required since deficiencies of these vitamins are rare today. The actual amount (in milligrams or micrograms) in addition to the %DV must be listed for vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium on the standard label.

The daily values for nutrients have also been updated based on newer scientific evidence. The daily values are reference amounts of nutrients to consume or not to exceed and are used to calculate the %DV.

6. Footnote

The footnote at the bottom of the label has changed to better explain the meaning of %DV. The %DV helps you understand the nutrition information in the context of a total daily diet.

Remember: During this transition time, you will see the original Nutrition Facts label or the new label on products.

For more information about the new Nutrition Facts label, visit:
www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/GuidanceDocumentsRegulatoryInformation/LabelingNutrition/ucm385663.htm