NUTRIGRAM

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Tips for Reading the New Nutrition Facts Label

Old Label

New Label





The Nutrition Facts Label should be used to help you make more informed and healthier decisions when shopping. If you are not already in the habit of reviewing the label on items you buy at the store, it is not too late to start!

Start with 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).
- Serving sizes on the new label reflect the portions most people are eating or drinking, not what they should be consuming.
- Remember to compare the portion you take 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.
- For packages that contain more than one serving but could reasonably be eaten in one sitting, like a small bag of chips, a second column will be listed to show the nutrition information for the whole package.

Let the Percent Daily Values Be Your Guide

- 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.
- Everyone is unique. You may need more or less than 2,000 calories per day. For some nutrients, you may also need more or less than 100% DV.
- 5 percent or less is low try to aim low in saturated fat, *trans* fat, sodium and added sugars.
- 20 percent or more is high try to aim high in vitamins, minerals and dietary fiber.

What Claims on Food Labels Really Mean

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has strict guidelines on how certain food label terms can be used. The FDA also sets standards for health-related claims and nutrient content claims to help consumers identify foods that are rich in nutrients and those that may help to reduce the risk for certain diseases based on the available research.

For example, health claims may highlight the link between calcium, vitamin D and osteoporosis or sodium and high blood pressure (hypertension).

These are some of the claims that are seen on food packaging, as defined by the FDA:

- **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.

• **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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