



HOW TO READ A NUTRITION LABEL

Food is the fuel that keeps your body running smoothly. Ideally, the food you eat provides great energy (calories), protein, dietary fiber, healthy fats, vitamins, and minerals - without bringing along too much sugar or salt, unhealthy fats, or unsafe food additives. Packaged foods are required to have a Nutrition Facts label, which should help you figure out how nutritious a food is. Let's look at yogurt.

Calories tell you how much energy is contained in a serving of food. The calories themselves aren't bad or good; what's most important is whether they come from nutrient-dense ingredients.

Total Fat is tricky. Some, like olive oil, or the kinds in nuts or fish, are good for you, while others are not. "Saturated Fat" is less healthy, and "Trans Fat" is the worst. The words "partially hydrogenated" in the ingredients list let you know that trans fat is in there.

Dietary Fiber is good for you and keeps your digestion healthy. Fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains tend to have lots of it. Look for products that have 3 grams or more of fiber.

Vitamins and Minerals are some of the most valuable parts of foods. The more the merrier - but don't be fooled by products that advertise *added* vitamins, minerals, and fiber, but are high in sugar. Look for products that provide at least some of your daily intake of vitamins and minerals.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 3/4 cup (6 fl oz)	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 135	Calories from Fat 5
% Daily Values*	
Total Fat 1.5g	1%
Saturated Fat 0.5g	1%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 5mg	2%
Sodium 190mg	8%
Potassium 625mg	
Total Carbohydrate 19g	6%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 19g	
Protein 14g	
Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 5%
Calcium 50%	Iron 1%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending in your calorie needs.

Serving Sizes are standardized portions that allow you to compare the nutrient amounts in similar food. Check the serving size. Sometimes, manufacturers list smaller serving sizes to make their products appeal to the calorie-conscious consumer. Compare it to your actual serving.

Trans Fat AVOID!

Sodium comes mostly from salt. Many processed foods have more salt than is healthy, as too much sodium can raise blood pressure. Avoid high sodium content. Look for items with less than 20%.

Sugar is fine when it occurs naturally (such as in fresh fruit), but eating too much sugar or corn syrup is not healthy. Look for processed foods that have less than 10 grams (two teaspoons) of sugar per serving, unless you are eating dessert.

Protein is your body's building block. Foods with a lot of protein give you energy for a long time.

Percent Daily Value is based on a diet of 2000 calories. If you are consuming much less, then you will need to adjust the numbers accordingly.