

Label Reading

Purpose

To learn about food labels and the role they play in helping people to make healthy food choices

Intended Audience

All employees

Suggested Activities

- Make overheads or photocopies of the *Look at the Label* fact sheet and conduct an education session for employees
- Place table tents on tables in kitchens, break rooms, worksite cafeterias, boardrooms, photocopier rooms, and other key areas.
- Hand out and/or post fact sheets by elevators, on bulletin boards, in stairwells, and in other key areas.
- Arrange educational sessions or a grocery store tour to be led by a dietitian.
- Provide information on label reading on the intranet and/or in newsletters.

Materials

- Diversity Checklist
- Table tents
(See the attached CD and inserts at the back of this binder:)
- Fact sheets: *Look at the Label*, *All about Nutrients*, *Take 5 to Read the Facts*, *Using Percent Daily Value (percent Daily Value)*, *Serving Up Nutrition Facts*, and *All about Carbohydrates* by Dietitians of Canada (See pp. 57-62)
- Fact sheet: *Make Wise Food Choices Wherever You Go! LSI: Label Scene Investigator* (Dietitians of Canada) (See p. 63)
- How to Access a Dietitian in Nova Scotia
(See Additional Resources, p. 244)
- Intranet/newsletter messages
(See Communication Materials, p. 205)
- *Healthy Eating in the Workplace Action Plan Worksheet*
(See Additional Resources, p. 221)
- *Healthy Eating in the Workplace Participant Evaluation Form*
(See Additional Resources, p. 225)

Look at the label

Nutrition information on food labels...

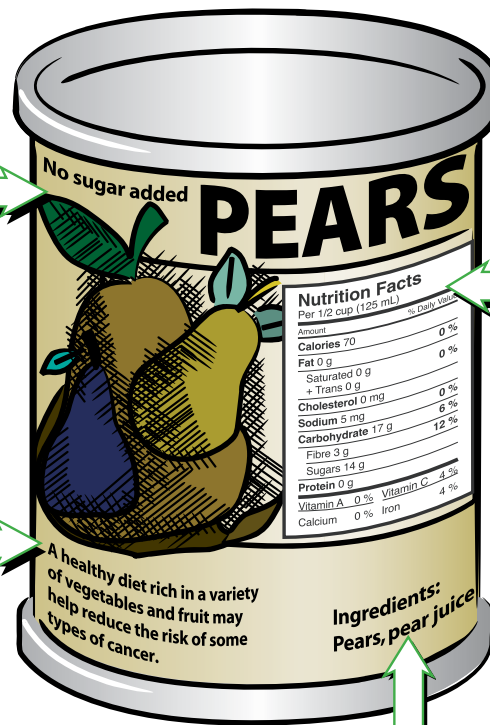
- Helps you make informed food choices
- Helps you follow Canada's Food Guide
- Is required on most packaged foods
- Is based on Health Canada's regulations



Nutrition claims

There are two types of nutrition claims:

- 1) **Nutrient content claims** tell you about one nutrient such as sodium, fat or sugar.
- 2) **Health claims** tell you how your diet can affect your health.



Nutrition Facts table

The Nutrition Facts table provides you with information on the Calories and 13 nutrients for the serving size shown.

Nutrition Facts	
Per 1/2 cup (125 mL)	
Amount	% Daily Value
Calories 70	
Fat 0 g	0 %
Saturated 0 g	0 %
+ Trans 0 g	
Cholesterol 0 mg	
Sodium 5 mg	0 %
Carbohydrate 17 g	6 %
Fibre 3 g	12 %
Sugars 14 g	
Protein 0 g	
Vitamin A 0 %	Vitamin C 4 %
Calcium 0 %	Iron 4 %

Ingredient list

The ingredient list tells you what ingredients are in a packaged food.



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Fact Sheet #1

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All about nutrients

Why are the nutrients on the Nutrition Facts table important for your health?

Fat

Fat provides energy and nutrients for your body. However, if you eat *too much* fat or *too much of certain kinds* of fat, such as saturated fat and trans fat, you could develop heart disease or type 2 diabetes.

Cholesterol

Your body makes *most* of its own cholesterol, but also gets *some* cholesterol from foods that you eat. Cholesterol builds the cells and hormones in your body. Too much cholesterol in your blood can lead to heart attacks or strokes.

Sodium

Sodium is another name for salt. Salt helps to balance the fluids in your body, but for some people, eating *too much* salt may be harmful.

Carbohydrate

Carbohydrate provides energy for your muscles and your brain. Sugar and fibre are two types of carbohydrate shown on the Nutrition Facts table.

If you have diabetes, you can help control your blood glucose by:

- Dividing carbohydrate evenly into meals and snacks throughout the day
- Eating foods high in fibre

Protein

Protein builds your muscles, bones and teeth.

Vitamins

Vitamin A keeps your skin and eyesight healthy. Vitamin C helps your body fight infections.

Minerals

Calcium gives you strong bones and teeth and may prevent osteoporosis. Iron helps your red blood cells carry oxygen throughout your body.

Eat a variety of foods to get the nutrients your body needs.



Nutrition Facts	
Per 1 tablespoon (15 g)	
Amount	% Daily Value
Calories 100	
Fat 8 g	12 %
Saturated 1 g + Trans 1 g	10 %
Cholesterol 0 mg	
Sodium 76 mg	3 %
Carbohydrate 3 g	1 %
Fibre 2 g	8 %
Sugars 0 g	
Protein 4 g	
Vitamin A 0 %	Vitamin C 0 %
Calcium 1 %	Iron 0 %



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Dietitians of Canada
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Fact Sheet #2

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Take 5 to read the facts

Got 5 minutes? Follow these 5 easy steps to read the Nutrition Facts table.

1 Serving size

If you eat the serving size shown on the Nutrition Facts table, you will get the amount of Calories and nutrients that are listed. Always compare the serving size on the package to the amount that you eat.

2 Calories

Calories tell you how much energy you get from one serving of a packaged food.

3 Percent Daily Value (% Daily Value)

% Daily Value puts nutrients on a scale from 0% to 100%. This scale tells you if there is a *little* or a *lot* of a nutrient in one serving of a packaged food.

4 Get less of these nutrients:

- Fat, saturated fat and trans fat
- Cholesterol
- Sodium

Choose packaged foods with a *low* % Daily Value of fat and sodium, especially if you are at risk for heart disease or diabetes.

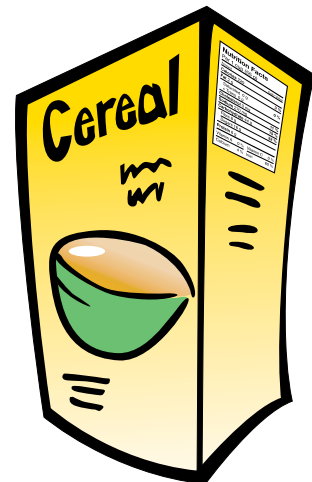


5 Get more of these nutrients:

- Fibre
- Vitamin A and Vitamin C
- Calcium
- Iron

Choose packaged foods with a *high* % Daily Value of these nutrients. If you have diabetes, watch how much carbohydrate you eat as this will affect your blood glucose levels.

Nutrition Facts	
Per 1 cup (55 g)	
Amount	% Daily Value
Calories 220	
Fat 2 g	3 %
Saturated 0 g	0 %
+ Trans 0 g	
Cholesterol 0 mg	
Sodium 270 mg	11 %
Carbohydrate 44 g	15 %
Fibre 8 g	32 %
Sugars 16 g	
Protein 6 g	
Vitamin A 0 %	Vitamin C 0 %
Calcium 4 %	Iron 40 %



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Fact Sheet #3

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Using percent Daily Value (% Daily Value)

Use % Daily Value to find out if there is a little or a lot of a nutrient in one serving of a packaged food.

What is % Daily Value?

% Daily Value puts nutrients on a scale from 0% to 100%. This scale tells you if there is a *little* or a *lot* of a nutrient in one serving of a packaged food.

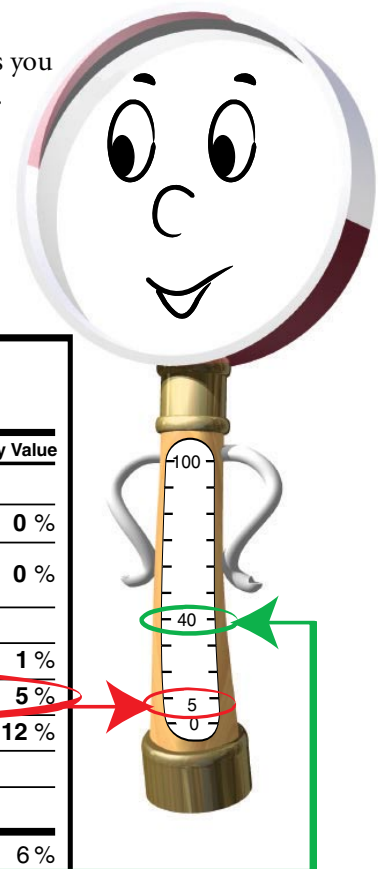


What is a *little* and what is a *lot*?

Let's look at the % Daily Value on the Nutrition Facts table for this package of vegetables:

- One serving has 5% Daily Value for carbohydrate. This is a *little* because it is *low* on the scale.
- One serving has 40% Daily Value for Vitamin A. This is a *lot* because it is *high* on the scale.

Nutrition Facts	
Per 1/2 cup (85 g)	
Amount	% Daily Value
Calories 60	
Fat 0 g	0 %
Saturated 0 g	
+ Trans 0 g	0 %
Cholesterol 0 mg	
Sodium 35 mg	1 %
Carbohydrate 14 g	5 %
Fibre 3 g	12 %
Sugars 0 g	
Protein 3 g	
Vitamin A 40 %	Vitamin C 6 %
Calcium 2 %	Iron 8 %



Make healthy food choices by using % Daily Value.



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Serving up nutrition facts

Why is the serving size on packaged foods important?

The serving size tells you how much food you need to eat to get the amount of Calories and nutrients shown on the Nutrition Facts table.

How is the serving size shown on the Nutrition Facts table?

There are two types of information that tell you about the serving size:

- **Household measurements**
Look for familiar words like *cup* and *pieces*.
- **Metric measurements**
Look for metric measurements like *mL (millilitres)* and *g (grams)*.

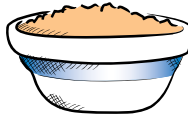
What if you eat less? What if you eat more?

If you eat *less* than the serving size shown on the Nutrition Facts table you will get *less* of the Calories and nutrients listed. If you eat *more* than the serving size shown, you will get *more* of the Calories and nutrients listed.

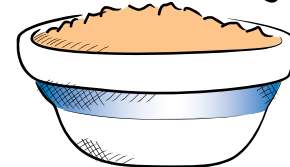
In this example, if you eat a double serving of this cereal, you will get double the Calories and double of all the nutrients, such as fibre.



Single serving



Double serving



Nutrition Facts	
Per 1 cup (55 g)	
Amount	% Daily Value
Calories 220	
Fat 2 g	3 %
Saturated 0 g	0 %
+ Trans 0 g	
Cholesterol 0 mg	
Sodium 270 mg	11 %
Carbohydrate 44 g	15 %
Fibre 8 g	32 %
Sugars 16 g	
Protein 6 g	
Vitamin A 0 %	Vitamin C 0 %
Calcium 4 %	Iron 40 %

Nutrition Facts	
Per 2 cups (110 g)	
Amount	% Daily Value
Calories 440	
Fat 4 g	6 %
Saturated 0 g	0 %
+ Trans 0 g	
Cholesterol 0 mg	
Sodium 540 mg	22 %
Carbohydrate 88 g	30 %
Fibre 16 g	64 %
Sugars 32 g	
Protein 12 g	
Vitamin A 0 %	Vitamin C 0 %
Calcium 8 %	Iron 80 %



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All about carbohydrate

For people with diabetes, carbohydrate is one of the most important nutrients on the Nutrition Facts table.

How does carbohydrate affect your body?

The carbohydrate you eat changes to glucose (sugar) in your body to provide you with energy. If you are affected by diabetes, you need to watch how much carbohydrate you eat in order to control the amount of glucose in your blood.

What foods supply you with carbohydrate?

Carbohydrate comes from cereals, breads, rice, pasta, other grain products, legumes, some vegetables, fruit, some dairy products and refined sugars.

What are the different types of carbohydrate?

- Starches (bread, pasta, potatoes)
- Sugars (naturally occurring in fruit, vegetables and milk as well as refined sugars like white sugar, brown sugar, honey or molasses)
- Fibre (whole grain foods, vegetables and fruit)

Does the type of carbohydrate you eat affect your blood glucose levels?

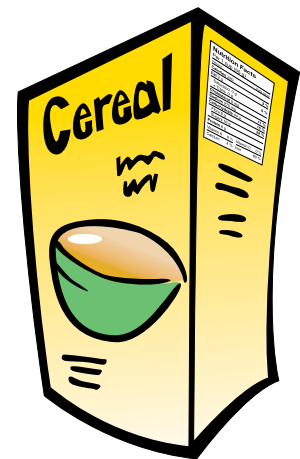
Yes! For people with diabetes, the type of carbohydrate is one factor in controlling blood glucose. Except for fibre, the different types of carbohydrate you eat turn into glucose in the blood. Eating high fibre foods may lower your blood glucose and will help you feel full.

Also important in controlling blood glucose is the total amount of carbohydrate eaten at one sitting. Talk with a registered dietitian about the amount of carbohydrate that is right for you.

Is it important to spread the carbohydrate that you eat evenly throughout the day?

Dividing your carbohydrate evenly into meals and snacks throughout the day will help your body have better control over your blood glucose levels. Your blood glucose level will also rise more slowly when you eat carbohydrate as part of a complete meal.

Nutrition Facts	
Per 1 cup (55 g)	
Amount	% Daily Value
Calories 220	
Fat 2 g	3 %
Saturated 0 g	0 %
+ Trans 0 g	
Cholesterol 0 mg	
Sodium 270 mg	11 %
Carbohydrate 44 g	15 %
Fibre 8 g	32 %
Sugars 16 g	
Protein 6 g	
Vitamin A 0 %	Vitamin C 0 %
Calcium 4 %	Iron 40 %



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If you're getting ready to make a meal or go grocery shopping, become a

LSI: LABEL SCENE INVESTIGATOR

Use some simple detective skills and let the Nutrition Facts table help you **MAKE WISE FOOD CHOICES – Wherever You Go!**

The Nutrition Facts table is your trusted source of nutrition labelling information.



Visit our web site at www.dietitians.ca/eatwell for healthy eating info. For nutrition labelling info, visit www.healthyeatingstore.ca

NUTRITION FACTS

– easy to find, easy to read and on more foods!

- All of the information is based on a specific amount of food or serving size, as stated on the label.
- Calories and 13 core nutrients are always listed in the same order.
- The 'number' (e.g. 2 g or 13 g) is the actual amount of the nutrient in the food serving size.
- The '% Daily Value' shows at a glance if there is a lot or a little of a nutrient in the specified amount of food.
- The following foods are exempt from having the Nutrition Facts table, although some packages carry this information voluntarily:
 - Fresh fruits and vegetables; raw meat and poultry (except when ground) and raw fish and seafood.
 - Items with tiny amounts of the 13 core nutrients, such as coffee, tea, herbs and spices.
 - Alcoholic beverages
 - Foods sold in restaurants, food courts, cafeterias, road-side stands, craft shows, flea markets, in-store bakeries/delis, etc.

Nutrition Facts

Per 125 mL (87 g)

Amount	% Daily Value
Calories 80	
Fat 0.5 g	1 %
Saturated 0 g + Trans 0 g	0 %
Cholesterol 0 mg	
Sodium 0 mg	0 %
Carbohydrate 18 g	6 %
Fibre 2 g	8 %
Sugars 2 g	
Protein 3 g	
Vitamin A 2 %	Vitamin C 10 %
Calcium 0 %	Iron 2 %

With the nutrition information on food labels, you are able to:

- Compare products more easily
- Find the nutritional value of foods
- Better manage special diets
- Increase or decrease your intake of a particular nutrient



Use food labelling **CLUES** to find the answers to healthy eating.

Use the Nutrition Facts table, the list of ingredients and nutrition claims to make informed choices.

1. What is a serving size?

All information on the Nutrition Facts table is presented 'per serving'. Compare this amount to the amount you eat. If you eat twice the portion size, you'll get twice the calories and nutrients!

2. How do I know if the crackers I've chosen contain *trans* fats?

The amount in grams (g) of *trans* fats will be listed with saturated fat under "Fat" in the Nutrition Facts table.

3. How can I tell if my grain product like cereal or pasta has a lot of fibre?

The amount of fibre in the product is listed in grams (g) and under Carbohydrate in the Nutrition Facts table. A nutrient claim on fibre may also be made by the manufacturer –

- 'source' of fibre if it contains at least 2 g of fibre per serving;
- a 'high source' of fibre if it contains 4 g per serving; and
- 'very high source' if it contains at least 6 g per serving.

For more information on nutrition labelling, visit www.healthyeatinginstore.ca

HAVE NUTRITION QUESTIONS?

Dietitians provide food and nutrition information you can trust. To find a Registered Dietitian, visit the Dietitians of Canada website www.dietitians.ca or call the Consulting Dietitians of Canada at 1-888-901-7776.

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Fill in the blanks below to find what other clues are on the label to help you **MAKE WISE FOOD CHOICES!**

1. An _____ must appear on all prepackaged foods. The ingredients, or 'what's in the food', must be listed by weight, from most to least (those with the most weight are listed first).
2. Nutrient Content Claims appear on the front of the package. They highlight if a food is high or low in a certain _____.
3. When choosing a cereal or bread, choose one with _____ grain as the first ingredient in the ingredient list to get the most nutrition from the grain.
4. If a label says the word 'free', it means the amount of the nutrient is so _____ that is has no nutritional significance.
5. If a label claims the food is a 'source' of a nutrient, it means that nutrient is present in a _____ amount.



(Answers: 1. ingredient list; 2. nutrient; 3. whole; 4. small; 5. significant)

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