

THE KITCHEN TIMES

ARTICLES FOR THE YOUNG CHEF



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DID YOU KNOW?

The nutrition label we see today has been around for 20 years and the FDA is currently proposing a label update.

MAKE IT COUNT

You can't always believe what you see on the front of the packaging. Always check the nutrition label to know what you are buying.

GET COOKING

See a simple list of ingredients? Chances are you could easily make that food at home!

It's What's Inside that Counts

Similar to a book, nutrition labels are like the table of contents for the food we eat. Nutrition labels are found on every packaged food and are available for many non-packaged foods (ex. Fruits, vegetables, bulk items).

Serving Size

The first thing to read is the serving size and number of servings per container.

When looking at the nutrition label, pay attention to the serving size and decide if this is about the amount you'd eat in one serving. If you'd usually eat double the serving size, then you'd want to

multiply everything on the nutrition label by two. Right under serving size, you will see the calories in that food. Calories are units of energy that are either used by the body or turn to fat when not used.

Nutrients to Limit

The next information on the label shows the amount of fat, sodium, cholesterol and sugar. This information is generally in grams (g), about the weight of two regular sized paper clips or the weight of a pen cap. Remember, unsaturated

fats are the good kind, and saturated and trans fats are not healthy for us! Sodium is salt and can lead to high blood pressure and inflammation if not consumed in moderation.

Nutrition Facts

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

Amount Per Serving

Calories 230 Calories from Fat 40

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 8g	12%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Sugars 1g	

Vocabulary

Calories: the units of energy that a food contains, one calorie is the energy equivalent of raising one gram of water one degree Celsius

Sodium: salt in our food that preserves and gives flavor

Fiber: a nutrient that cannot be broken down by digestion and therefore aids in digestion

List of Ingredients: the list found on the nutrition label that lists all the ingredients in the food from greatest to least

Daily Value: how much of each nutrient an adult eating 2,000 calories should consume

Low Source: any nutrient that is less than 5% of the daily value

Good Source: any nutrient that is between 5-20% of the daily value

High Source: any nutrient that is greater than 20% of the daily value

Nutrients to Focus On

Most Americans don't get enough dietary fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, and iron in their diets so that is why these specific nutrients appear

Dietary Fiber 4g	16%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin A	10%
Vitamin C	8%
Calcium	20%
Iron	45%

on the nutrition label. Fiber is a nutrient that humans cannot digest, but it facilitates digestion of other foods because it prevents foods from lumping up in our stomach during digestion. Eating enough of these nutrients help to keep your body healthy, reduce the risk of health problems, and are necessary for growing kids!

List of Ingredients

The list of ingredients tells you everything that is in the food. The ingredients are listed from greatest to least by weight, so try to

INGREDIENTS: WHOLE GRAIN WHEAT FLOUR, SOYBEAN OIL, SUGAR, CORNSTARCH, MALT SYRUP

choose foods with recognizable ingredients! Some ingredients are listed by the scientific names, but a little research will reveal what this ingredient is and if it is something worth eating. With grains, like cereal and bread, choose foods that list whole grain first.

A Note on Daily Values

The percent values on a nutrition label are based on an adult's needs and a 2,000 calorie diet. Children have different nutritional needs and need less than 2,000 calories per day so the daily value listed is higher, but they are still very useful for children to use to compare foods. Food labels are also important for anyone with food allergies, because the nutrition label lists all the ingredients, and will let them know if there are any allergens in the food or drink.

The daily values refer to the daily recommend amount of each nutrient that is in one serving; so if a food has 10% Vitamin C, then it gives you 10% of the daily recommend amount of Vitamin C. 5% or less of daily value is low, 5-20% is considered a good source, and 20% or more is considered a high source. These values are for an adult, so a kid's percentage will be even higher!

Be a Nutrition Detective!

CURRENT

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 2/3 cup (55g) Servings Per Container About 8	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 230	Calories from Fat 40
% 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 1g	
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

PROPOSED

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size 2/3 cup (55g)	
Calories 230	
Amount per 2/3 cup	
% DV*	
12% Total Fat 8g	
5% Saturated Fat 1g	
Trans Fat 0g	
0% Cholesterol 0mg	
7% Sodium 160mg	
12% Total Carbs 37g	
14% Dietary Fiber 4g	
Sugars 1g	
Added Sugars 0g	
Protein 3g	
10% Vitamin D 2mcg	
20% Calcium 260mg	
45% Iron 8mg	
5% Potassium 235mg	
* Footnote on Daily Values (DV) and calories reference to be inserted here.	

Start reading the nutrition labels when you are at the store. Be wary of products with a long list of ingredients you don't understand or where sugar is a primary ingredient. Do you think the label is still hard to understand? Check out the FDA's proposed new label to the left. Which do you prefer?