

LABELS ARE US...

A Guide to Reading Nutrition Labels

What's on a label?

- ▣ Serving Size
- ▣ Calories and Fat
- ▣ Nutrient Information
- ▣ Footnote for Daily Values

		Nutrition Facts	
① Start Here →	Serving Size 1 cup (228g) Servings Per Container 2		
② Check Calories	Amount Per Serving Calories 250 Calories from Fat 110		
		% Daily Value*	
③ Limit these Nutrients	Total Fat 12g		18%
	Saturated Fat 3g		15%
	<i>Trans</i> Fat 3g		
	Cholesterol 30mg		10%
	Sodium 470mg		20%
	Total Carbohydrate 31g		10%
	Dietary Fiber 0g		0%
	Sugars 5g		
	Protein 5g		
④ Get Enough of these Nutrients	Vitamin A		4%
	Vitamin C		2%
	Calcium		20%
	Iron		4%
⑤ Footnote	* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values 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

Serving Size

Do not always assume that what you are about to consume is only one serving size.

The label will tell you what the serving size is and how many servings are in that package.



Calories

A calorie is a measurement of energy. It is how much energy you get from a given serving of food.

- ❑ The number of calories in a single serving of the food is listed on the left of the label.
- ❑ The calories in a food can come from fat, protein, or carbohydrate.
- ❑ Another important part of the label is the number of calories that come from fat. People check this because it's good to limit fat intake to about 30% of the calories they eat.

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 250	Calories from Fat 110

Calories

General Guide to Calories:

- ▣ 40 Calories is low
- ▣ 100 Calories is moderate
- ▣ 400 Calories or more is high

The **General Guide to Calories** provides a general reference for calories when you look at a Nutrition Facts label. This guide is based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

The Nutrients

The nutrients that are listed are the key ones that impact your health. They are divided into two categories:

- The nutrients listed first are the ones Americans generally eat in adequate amounts or even too much.

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
Trans Fat 3g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%

- The nutrients listed second are the ones Americans generally don't get enough of.

Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	20%
Iron	4%

The first set of nutrients

Try to limit the first set of nutrients. These include:

- Fat
- Saturated fat
- *Trans* fat
- Cholesterol
- Sodium

These nutrients may increase your risk of certain chronic diseases, like heart disease, some cancers, or high blood pressure

The first set of nutrients

- ▣ Fat: Fat is an important nutrient that your body uses for growth and development, but you don't want to eat too much. The different kinds of fat, such as saturated, unsaturated, and trans fat, will be listed separately on the label.
- ▣ Cholesterol and Sodium: These numbers tell you how much cholesterol and sodium (salt) are in a single serving of the food. They are included on the label because some people should limit the amount of cholesterol and salt in their diets.
- ▣ Total Carbohydrate: This number tells you how many carbohydrate grams are in one serving of food. Carbohydrates are your body's primary source of energy. This total is broken down into grams of sugar and grams of dietary fiber.

The second set of nutrients

These are the nutrients most Americans don't get enough of:

- Dietary fiber
- Vitamin A
- Vitamin C
- Calcium
- Iron

Eating enough of these nutrients can improve your health and help reduce the risk of some diseases and conditions.

The second set of nutrients

- ❑ Protein: This number tells you how much protein you get from a single serving of the food. Your body needs protein to build and repair essential parts of the body, such as muscles, blood, and organs.
- ❑ Vitamin A and Vitamin C: These list the amounts of vitamin A and vitamin C, two especially important vitamins, in a serving of the food. Each amount is given as a percent daily value. Other vitamins may be listed on some labels.
- ❑ Calcium and Iron: These list the percentages of calcium and iron, two important minerals, that are in a serving of the food. Again, each amount is given as a percent daily value and other minerals may be listed on the label.

The Footnote

- Note the * used after the heading "%Daily Value" on the Nutrition Facts label. It refers to the Footnote in the lower part of the nutrition label, which tells you "%DVs are based on a 2,000 calorie diet". This statement must be on all food labels.

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values 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

The Footnote

- The remaining information in the full footnote may not be on the package if the size of the label is too small. When the full footnote does appear, it will always be the same. It doesn't change from product to product, because it shows recommended dietary advice for all Americans--it is not about a specific food product.

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values 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

- Look at the amounts circled in red in the footnote--these are the Daily Values (DV) for each nutrient listed and are based on public health experts' advice. DVs are recommended levels of intakes. DVs in the footnote are based on a 2,000 or 2,500 calorie diet. Note how the DVs for some nutrients change, while others (for cholesterol and sodium) remain the same for both calorie amounts.

Daily Values

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

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
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Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Look at the third column. This is the recommended daily intake of that nutrient based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Notice that the first four nutrients are noted with a “less than” qualification before the third column. This notes that you should intake less than the grams that are listed in the third column.

% Daily Values

- ▣ The % Daily Values (%DVs) are based on the Daily Value recommendations for key nutrients but only for a 2,000 calorie daily diet--not 2,500 calories.

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
<i>Trans</i> Fat 3g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
<hr/>	
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	20%
Iron	4%

% Daily Values

- ▣ The %DV helps you determine if a serving of food is high or low in a nutrient.
- ▣ 5% or less is low. 20% or more is high.
- ▣ The label (the %DV) does the math for you. It helps you interpret the numbers (grams and milligrams) by putting them all on the same scale for the day (0-100%DV). The %DV column doesn't add up vertically to 100%. Instead each nutrient is based on 100% of the daily requirements for that nutrient (for a 2,000 calorie diet). This way you can tell high from low and know which nutrients contribute a lot, or a little, to your **daily** recommended allowance (upper or lower).

% Daily Values

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
<i>Trans</i> Fat 3g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamins and Minerals	
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	20%
Iron	4%

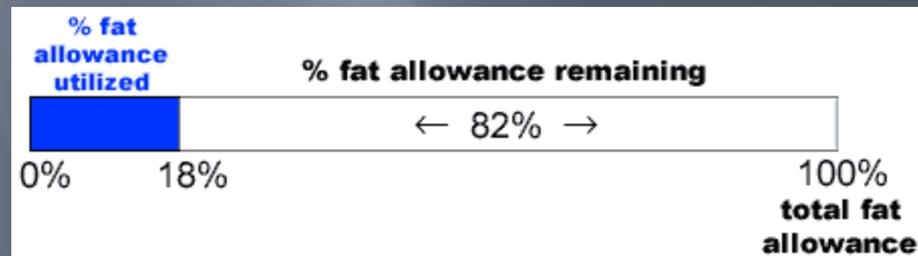
Look at the amount of Total Fat in one serving listed on the sample nutrition label. Is 18% DV contributing a lot or a little to your fat limit of 100% DV?

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
Trans Fat 3g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
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Vitamin A	4%
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Calcium	20%
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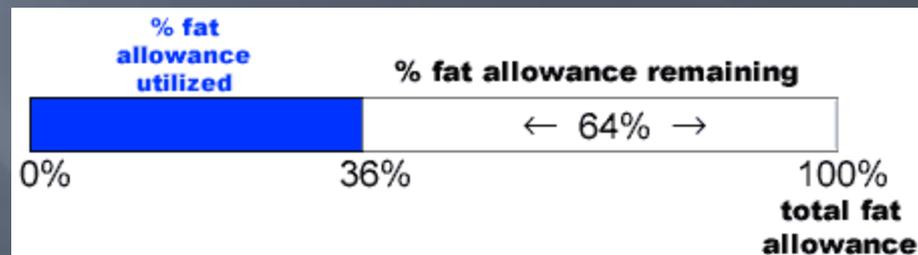
% Daily Values

- 18% DV, which is below 20% DV, is not yet high, but what if you ate the whole package (two servings)?
- You would double that amount, eating 36% of your daily allowance for Total Fat. Coming from just one food, that amount leaves you with 64% of your fat allowance ($100\% - 36\% = 64\%$) for *all* of the other foods you eat that day, snacks and drinks included.

1 Serving:



2 Servings:



Use the %DV to compare

You can compare one product or brand to a similar product. Just make sure the serving sizes are similar, especially the weight (e.g. gram, milligram, ounces) of each product.

Nutrient Content Claims: Use the %DV to help you quickly distinguish one claim from another, such as "reduced fat" vs. "light" or "nonfat." Just compare the %DVs for Total Fat in each food product to see which one is higher or lower in that nutrient--**there is no need to memorize definitions**. This works when comparing all nutrient content claims, e.g., less, light, low, free, more, high, etc.

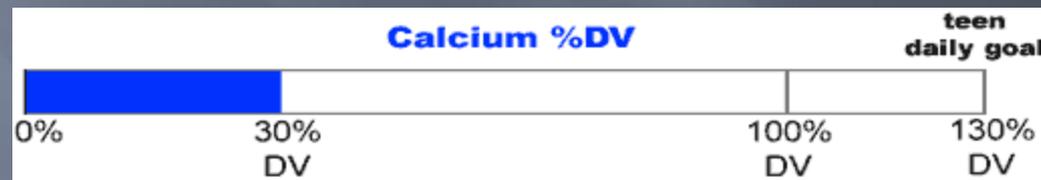
Dietary Trade-Offs: You can **use the %DV to help you make dietary trade-offs** with other foods throughout the day. You don't have to give up a favorite food to eat a healthy diet. When a food you like is high in fat, balance it with foods that are low in fat at other times of the day. Also, pay attention to how much you eat so that the **total** amount of fat for the day stays below 100%DV.

Calcium

Experts advise that adolescents, especially girls, consume 1,300mg (130% DV) of calcium daily. The DV for calcium on food labels is 1,000mg.

Don't be fooled -- always check the label for calcium because you can't make assumptions about the amount of calcium in specific food categories.

Example: the amount of calcium in milk, whether skim or whole, is generally the same per serving, whereas the amount of calcium in the same size yogurt container (8oz) can vary from 20-45 %DV.



Equivalencies

30% DV = 300mg calcium = one cup of milk

100% DV = 1,000mg calcium

130% DV = 1,300mg calcium

Trans Fats, Protein, and Sugars:

Note that *Trans* fat, Sugars and, Protein do not list a %DV on the Nutrition Facts label. Important: Health experts recommend that you keep your intake of saturated fat, *trans* fat and cholesterol as low as possible as part of a nutritionally balanced diet.

Protein: A %DV is required to be listed if a claim is made for protein, such as "high in protein". Otherwise, unless the food is meant for use by infants and children under 4 years old, none is needed. Current scientific evidence indicates that protein intake is not a public health concern for adults and children over 4 years of age.

Sugars: No daily reference value has been established for sugars because no recommendations have been made for the total amount to eat in a day. Keep in mind, the sugars listed on the Nutrition Facts label include naturally occurring sugars (like those in fruit and milk) as well as those added to a food or drink. Check the ingredient list for specifics on added sugars.

What's on a label?

		Nutrition Facts	
1	Start Here →	Serving Size 1 cup (228g) Servings Per Container 2	
2	Check Calories	Amount Per Serving Calories 250 Calories from Fat 110	
3	Limit these Nutrients	% Daily Value*	
		Total Fat 12g	18%
		Saturated Fat 3g	15%
		<i>Trans</i> Fat 3g	
		Cholesterol 30mg	10%
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4	Get Enough of these Nutrients	Vitamin A	4%
		Vitamin C	2%
		Calcium	20%
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5	Footnote	* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.	
		Calories:	2,000 2,500
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		Dietary Fiber	25g 30g

Homework:

Due Friday:

- 1) Compare two similar products using the % DV on the label. Analyze which product would be the better choice and tell us why. You must attach both labels to the homework.
- 2) Using the label from two of your favorite snack foods, analyze the nutritional values of the food items. Make sure you address all of the nutrients that are listed on the label. Are any nutrients considered high? Are any nutrients considered low? Is this snack a healthy choice considering what is listed on the label? You must attach the labels for both items to the homework.

Information Derived From:

FDA website:

<http://www.fda.gov/food/labelingnutrition/consumerinformation/ucm078889.htm>

Kids Health website:

<http://kidshealth.org/kid/nutrition/food/labels.html#>