

# Food Labels

## Why Read Labels?

Reading food labels is a sensible way to learn about and compare nutrients and calories in food products. If shopping for fat, sodium or sugar-controlled items, information about the fats, and the amounts of sodium or sweeteners used will help you select a more healthful product.

## What is Food Labeling?

U.S. government regulations require that all enriched, fortified foods or foods that make a nutritional claim include information on the label of the product.

Generally, information is given on serving size, calories per serving, % of daily value, grams of fat by type, cholesterol (mg), sodium (mg), fiber, carbohydrate, sugar, and protein.

## Checking for Calories

Calories per serving must be listed on food labels. Calories contained depend on the grams of fat, protein or carbohydrates in the food. Fat supplies nine calories per gram, while carbohydrate and protein each supply four calories per gram. By multiplying the number of grams per serving by the calories per gram, the total number of calories is determined.

## Different Kinds of Fat

Total fat, saturated fat, and transfat grams are required in food labeling. Eat foods with less than half of the total calories from fat. All fats have nine calories per gram, a food product that has 10 grams of fat per serving offers 90 calories from fat in that serving.

## Keeping an Eye on Cholesterol

If you're on a fat-controlled diet, the amount of cholesterol per food serving could be an important factor in food choices. While it is not mandatory for cholesterol to be listed, manufacturers may choose to do so.

Remember that saturated fat in foods raises your blood level of cholesterol more than any cholesterol you eat does.

## Ingredient Labeling

Ingredient labeling lists the ingredients in a product, in order of concentration, with the largest quantities first. The first few ingredients listed are present in larger amounts than the ones listed last.

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
Serving Size 1 cup (228g) Servings Per Container 2	
Amount Per Serving	
<b>Calories 260</b>	Calories from Fat 120
<b>% Daily Value*</b>	
<b>Total Fat 13g</b>	<b>20%</b>
Saturated Fat 5g	<b>25%</b>
Trans Fat 2g	
<b>Cholesterol 30mg</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Sodium 660mg</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate 31g</b>	<b>10%</b>
Dietary Fiber 0g	<b>0%</b>
Sugars 5g	
<b>Protein 5g</b>	
Vitamin A 4%	• Vitamin C 2%
Calcium 15%	• Iron 4%
* 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
Calories per gram:	
Fat 9	Carbohydrate 4    Protein 4

## The Best Value

Be sure to check serving sizes and total servings per package. Compare cost per equal serving and nutrients in each serving with other products. Supermarkets usually display that information on the price label located in front of the product on the shelf.

