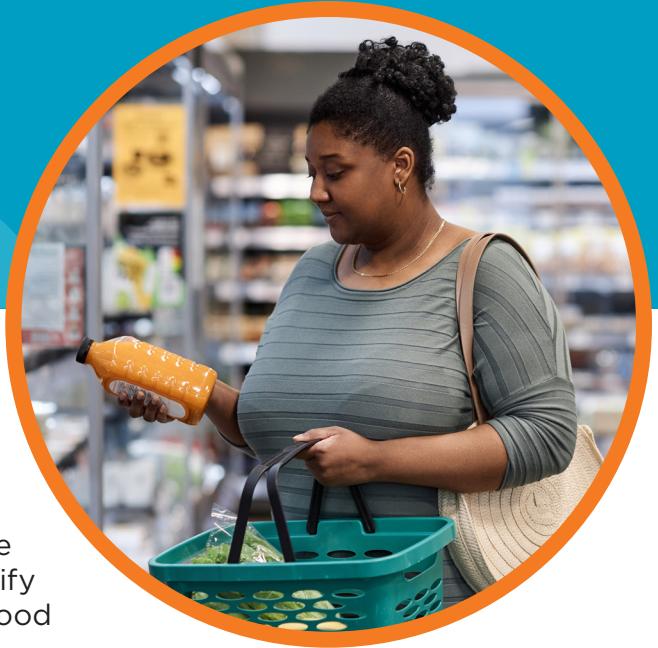


Reading FOOD LABELS

Learning to understand what the numbers on a Nutrition Facts label mean can help you make healthier food choices. However, there are a lot of numbers, which can get confusing. This guide will help you better understand what the different numbers and terms mean. With practice, you should be able to compare two different food labels and identify which food option is a healthier choice. The example food label below is from boxed macaroni and cheese.



Serving Size and Calories

- All nutrition facts are based on one “serving” or portion.
- In this example, one cup of prepared macaroni is 360 calories. Two cups or two servings have 720 calories in total. There are 1,080 calories in the entire box.
- Consuming more calories than your body uses in a day leads to weight gain.

% Daily Value (%DV)

- % Daily Value (%DV)** is the amount that each nutrient in one serving contributes to your daily diet.
- Consume nutrients like fiber, vitamins, and minerals in larger amounts (a %DV of 20% or more).
- Consume nutrients like total fat, saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, and sodium in lower amounts (a %DV of 5% or less).

Nutrition Facts

About 3 servings per container

Serving size 2.5 oz (70g/ about 1/3 Box)
(Makes about 1 cup)

Calories	per 2.5 oz dry mix	Per 1 cup prepared*
	%DV**	%DV**
Calories	260	360
Total Fat	2g	12g
Saturated Fat	1g	4g
Trans Fat	0g	0g
Cholesterol	5mg	10mg
Sodium	600mg	750mg
Total Carbohydrate	49g	50g
Dietary Fiber	1g	1g
Total Sugars	7g	8g
Incl. Added Sugars	0g	0g
Protein	9g	10g
Vitamin D	0mcg	0mcg
Calcium	160mg	180mg
Iron	2.8mg	2.9mg
Potassium	280mg	310mg

*As prepared using margarine with 0g Trans Fat and 2% reduced fat milk.

**The % Daily Value (%DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Potassium and Kidney Health

- If you have kidney disease, your doctor may recommend eating less potassium. If this is the case, look for foods that have less than 200 milligrams (mg) of potassium per serving.

READING FOOD LABELS



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Heart and Kidney Health

- Unhealthy fats include **trans fats** and **saturated fats**. Choose foods that have 0 grams (g) of trans fat per serving and are low in saturated fats (less than 2 g per serving).
- Some fats, like **polyunsaturated fats** and **monounsaturated fats**, are heart-healthy. These are good to eat. Amounts may not be listed on the food label.
- Sodium** is a component of salt and is used to preserve many foods. Lowering salt intake helps lower blood pressure. The recommended daily limit of sodium is 2,300 mg, but your doctor may recommend less. Choose foods that have a %DV of 5% or less of sodium.
 - In this example, 600 mg of sodium per serving (or 26% of the recommended daily value) is very high.

Nutritional Value

- Total carbohydrate** is the amount of fiber, sugar, and starch per serving.
- Fiber** is a part of plant foods that is not easily digested and helps you feel full for longer. Most people living in the United States do not eat enough fiber. Aim for about 25 g of fiber per day by choosing foods that have a %DV of 20% or more of fiber. Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, and seeds are good places to start.
- Total sugars** is the total amount per serving of naturally occurring sugars (found in fruits, vegetables, and dairy) *and* **added sugars**, which are added during processing to sweeten foods.
- Maximize the nutritional value of foods you eat by choosing foods that are high in fiber and low in added sugars. The daily value for added sugars is 50 g or less per day. Choose foods with a %DV of 5% or less of added sugars.



KNOWLEDGE CHECK

Below are two popular breakfast cereals. Compare the Nutrition Facts labels to see which of the two is a healthier breakfast option.

OPTION A
Fruity Cereal

Nutrition Facts

About 6 servings per container

Serving size

1 1/3 Cup

Calories

Cereal

150

%DV*

Total Fat

1.5g

2%

Saturated Fat

0.5g

3%

Trans Fat

0g

Polyunsaturated Fat

0g

Monounsaturated Fat

0g

Cholesterol

0mg

0%

Sodium

210mg

9%

Total Carbohydrate

34g

12%

Dietary Fiber

2g

8%

Total Sugars

12g

Incl. Added Sugars

12g

24%

Protein

2g

8g

Vitamin D

2mcg

10%

Calcium

0mg

0%

Iron

4.5mg

25%

Potassium

60mg

0%

With 3/4 cup skim milk

210

%DV*

1.5g

2%

1g

5%

0g

0%

0g

0%

0g

0%

<5mg

1%

280mg

12%

43g

16%

2g

8%

22g

12g

24%

8g

0%

4.2mcg

20%

220mg

15%

4.5mg

25%

340mg

6%

*The % Daily Value (%DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

OPTION B

100% Whole Grain Oats

Nutrition Facts

About 13 servings per container

Serving size

1/2 cup dry (40g)

per 2.5 oz dry mix

Calories

150

%DV*

Total Fat 3g

4%

Saturated Fat 0.5g

3%

Trans Fat 0g

Polysaturated Fat 1g

Monounsaturated Fat 1g

Cholesterol 0mg

0%

Sodium 0mg

0%

Total Carbohydrate 27g

10%

Dietary Fiber 4g

13%

Soluble Fiber 2g

Total Sugars 1g

Incl. 0g Added Sugars

0%

Protein 5g

Vitamin D 0mcg

0%

Calcium 20mg

0%

Iron 1.5mg

8%

Potassium 150mg

2%

*The % Daily Value (%DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

NUTRITION FACTS QUIZ

Answers on next page.

1. Which has more calories per serving? One serving of Option A (1 1/3 cup cereal with 3/4 cup skim milk) or Option B (1/2 cup oatmeal prepared in water)?
2. Which has more total fat per serving?
3. Which option is lower in sodium?
4. Which option has better nutritional value?

NUTRITION FACTS QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Which has more calories per serving? One serving of Option A (1 1/3 cup fruity cereal with 3/4 cup skim milk) or Option B (1/2 cup oatmeal prepared in water)?

- » **Answer: Option A is higher in calories.**
- » Although the total calories of unprepared cereal (Option A) and unprepared oatmeal (Option B) are the same (150 calories), adding milk to the cereal increases the total calorie count per serving to 210 calories.

2. Which has more total fat per serving?

- » **Answer: Option B has more total fat per serving.**
- » Both options contain 0.5 g of saturated fat and 0 g of trans fat. Both of these are unhealthy fats and can raise “bad” cholesterol levels. Try to limit these types of fat in your diet. If you look carefully, the total fat content of Option B is made up of more heart-healthy fats. Option B has 1 g of polyunsaturated fat and 1 g of monounsaturated fat per serving. These types of fat can help raise “good” cholesterol levels and lower “bad” cholesterol levels. Even though Option B may appear to be unhealthy at first, it is actually the healthier option.

3. Which option is lower in sodium?

- » **Answer: Option B is lower in sodium.**
- » Option B contains 0 mg of sodium, whereas one serving of prepared cereal (Option B) contains 280 mg of sodium, or 12% of the daily recommended amount of sodium.

4. Which option has better nutritional value?

- » **Answer: Option B has better nutritional value.**
- » Option B has 4 g of dietary fiber, 1 g of total sugars, and 0 g of added sugars per serving. Option A has less dietary fiber (2 g) per serving and 12 g of added sugars. Adding milk to the cereal raises the total sugars to 22 g (10 g of naturally occurring sugars in milk and 12 g of added sugars from the cereal).

Nutrition Facts labels have a lot of information that can help you make healthier food choices.

If you have any remaining questions, please talk to your doctor. You can also call Healthmap Solutions at **1-800-481-0474** to speak with a nurse or registered dietitian. Patients must meet program eligibility requirements to access Healthmap services.



1-800-481-0474

www.healthmapsolutions.com/patient-resources