

Label Reading for Better Eating

Serving sizes are in common household measurements. Serving sizes are the same for similar products.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 3/4 Cup (170g)	
Servings Per Container 4	
Amount Per Serving (as prepared)	
Calories 289 Calories from Fat 117	
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 13g	20%
Saturated Fat 5g	25%
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 530mg	22%
Total Carbohydrate 34g	12%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 9g	
Vitamin A	2%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	8%
Iron	10%
* 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	

% Daily Value shows how a food fits into the overall daily diet.

These numbers can help you avoid eating too much fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium.

These numbers can help you get enough dietary fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, and iron.

Daily Values are based on recommended nutrient intakes for people eating 2,000 calories per day. Daily Values are also listed for people eating 2,500 calories per day.

Ingredients are listed in descending order – main ingredient is listed first, the smallest ingredient is listed last.

INGREDIENTS: ENRICHED MACARONI (FLOUR, NIACIN, FERROUS SULFATE, THIAMINE MONONITRATE, RIBOFLAVIN); CHEESE SAUCE MIX (WHEY, DEHYDRATED CHEESE [GRANULAR AND CHEDDAR (MILK, CHEESE CULTURE, SALT, ENZYMES)], WHEY PROTEIN CONCENTRATE, SKIM MILK, BUTTERMILK, SODIUM TRIPOLYPHOSPHATE, SODIUM PHOSPHATE, CITRIC ACID, YELLOW 5 [COLOR], YELLOW 6 [COLOR], LACTIC ACID)

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Understanding Food Labels

Label Reading for Better Eating (cont.)

Use these two package labels to answer the following questions.

A.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 Cup (25g)	
Servings Per Container 10	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 97	Calories from Fat 16
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 2g	3%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 231mg	10%
Total Carbohydrate 18g	6%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 4g	
Vitamin A 22% • Vitamin C 22%	
Calcium 4% • Iron 22%	
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.	

INGREDIENTS: WHOLE OAT FLOUR (INCLUDES THE OAT BRAN), WHEAT STARCH, SUGAR, SALT, CALCIUM CARBONATE (PROVIDES CALCIUM), TRISODIUM PHOSPHATE, VITAMIN C (SODIUM ASCORBATE), IRON (A MINERAL NUTRIENT), A B VITAMIN (NIACIN), VITAMIN A (PALMITATE), VITAMIN B6 (PYRIDOXINE HYDROCHLORIDE), VITAMIN B2 (RIBOFLAVIN), VITAMIN B1 (THIAMIN MONONITRATE), A B VITAMIN (FOLIC ACID) AND VITAMIN D.

B.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 Cup (32g)	
Servings Per Container 10	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 125	Calories from Fat 9
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 1g	2%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 227mg	9%
Total Carbohydrate 26g	9%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Sugars 14g	
Protein 3g	
Vitamin A 22% • Vitamin C 22%	
Calcium 4% • Iron 22%	
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.	

INGREDIENTS: SUGAR, CORN FLOUR, MARSH-MALLOW (SUGAR, CORN SYRUP, DEXTROSE, MODIFIED FOOD STARCH, GELATIN, ARTIFICIAL AND NATURAL FLAVOR, ARTIFICIAL COLOR), OAT FLOUR, WHEAT FLOUR, HYDROGENATED COCONUT AND PALM KERNEL OIL, SALT, NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL FLAVOR (WITH BHA ADDED TO PRESERVE FRESHNESS) AND ARTIFICIAL COLOR (INCLUDING YELLOW 5). BHT IS ADDED TO PACKAGING MATERIAL TO PRESERVE FRESHNESS.

How many servings are in package A? _____

How much total fat is in one serving of the food in package A? _____

Which food is lower in total fat, the food in package A or the food in package B? _____

Which food has more fiber, the food in package A or the food in package B? _____

Adapted from "Label Reading for Better Eating" and "Comparing the Labels" in "Stretching Your Food Dollars" from the University of Wisconsin Extension.

Understanding Food Labels (optional)

■ Terms and Definitions

Nutrient Content Descriptors

New regulations spell out what terms may be used to describe the level of a nutrient in a food and how it can be used. No explicit or implied nutrient content claim can be on a food label unless it uses terms that have been provided for by the FDA regulation. Petitions for other terms may be submitted. The core terms are these:

	FREE^a Per Serving	LOW^c Per Serving	LEAN^d Per Serving and Per 100 grams	EXTRA LEAN^d Per Serving and Per 100 grams	OTHER
Synonyms	Without, no, non, trivial, negligible, insignificant source of, and zero	Little, few, and low source			
Calorie	Less than 5 calories	Not more than 40 calories			
Sodium	Less than 5 grams	Not more than 140 mg			Very low = less than 35 mg per serving
Total Fat	Less than 0.5 g	Not more than 3 g	Less than 10 g	Less than 5 g	
Saturated Fat	Less than 0.5 g	Not more than 1 g and not more than 15% of calories from saturated fat	Less than 4 g	Less than 2 g	
Cholesterol	Less than 2 mg ^b	Not more than 20 mg	Less than 95 mg	Less than 95 mg	
Sugar	Less than 0.5 g				

^a A product labeled free contains no amount of, or only trivial or “physiologically inconsequential” amounts of, a specific food component.

^b CHOLESTEROL-FREE CLAIMS and other claims about the amount of cholesterol in a food may be made only on foods that contain 2 g or less of saturated fat per reference serving. For foods having more than 13 g of fat per serving, or with small servings of food (less than 30 g or 2 tablespoons), the total fat content per serving must be listed beside the cholesterol claim statement. Therefore, a cholesterol claim on vegetable oil or peanut butter would now have to be accompanied by a statement such as “canola oil, a cholesterol-free food, contains 14 g of fat per serving.”

^c Low may be used on foods that could be eaten frequently without exceeding dietary guidelines. Foods that are inherently free of or low in a nutrient must be labeled to indicate that all foods of that type meet the claim made, e.g., “broccoli, a sodium-free food” or “frozen perch, a low-fat food.”

^d Lean and extra lean can be used to describe the fat content of meat, poultry, seafood, and game meats. To be labeled lean or extra lean, a product must meet all three listed regulations.

■ What does it mean?

Nutrient Content Descriptors that May Be Used on Food Labels

Descriptor	Definition
High	A serving contains 20 percent or more of the Daily Value (DV) for a particular nutrient.
Good Source	A serving contains 10 to 19 percent of the DV for a particular nutrient.
Reduced	A modified product that contains 25 percent less of a nutrient or 25 percent fewer calories than a reference food. A reduced claim can't be made on a product if its reference food already meets the requirement for a "low" claim.
Less	A food contains 25 percent less of a nutrient or of calories than the regular or reference product. For example, pretzels that have 25 percent less fat than potato chips could carry a "less" claim.
Light	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Must meet the definition of "low" for calories, fat, or both (e.g., "Light _____, Low Calorie and Low Fat.") ■ Sodium content of a low-calorie, low-fat food has been reduced by 50 percent (the claim "Light in Sodium" may be used). If sodium is reduced 50 percent in a food that is not low in fat and calories, the label must state "light in sodium." ■ Describe such properties as texture and color, as long as the label explains the intent. For example: "light brown sugar" or "light and fluffy."
More or Added	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A serving contains at least 10 percent or more of the DV for a nutrient than the regular food. The 10 percent of DV also would apply to "fortified," "enriched," and "added" claims, but in those cases the food must be altered. Example: A calcium-fortified orange juice could specify that the product supplies "more" calcium than regular juice.
Percent Fat Free	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A product must be low-fat or fat-free. The claim must accurately reflect the amount of fat present in 100 g of the food. Thus, if a food contains 2.5 g fat per 50 g of food, the claim must be "95 percent fat food."
Fresh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A food is raw, has never been frozen or heated, and contains no preservatives (irradiation at low levels is allowed); or ■ The term accurately describes the product (e.g., "fresh milk" or "freshly baked bread").
Fresh Frozen	The food has been quickly frozen while still fresh; blanching is allowed before freezing to prevent nutrient breakdown.



■ Food Label Weights and Measures

Weight

- 1 ounce (oz) = approximately 28 grams (g)
- 16 ounces = 1 pound (lb)
- 1 pound = 454 grams
- 1 kilogram (kg) = 1,000 grams or 2.2 pounds
- 1 gram = 1,000 milligrams (mg)
- 1 milligram = 1,000 micrograms (μ g)

Volume

- 1 liter = 1.06 quarts
- 1 liter = 1,000 milliliters (ml)
- 1 milliliter = 0.03 fluid ounces (fl oz)
- 1 gallon = 3.79 liters (l)
- 1 quart = 0.95 liter
- 1 cup = 8 fluid ounces or 240 ml
- 1 teaspoon (tsp) = 5 ml
- 3 teaspoons = 1 tablespoon
- 1 tablespoon (tbsp) = 15 milliliters
- 16 tablespoons = 1 cup
- 4 cups = 1 quart