

**Nutrition Facts**

**Read the Label**

# COOL TIPS FOR KIDS

Use the  
**Nutrition Facts Label**  
to Make  
**Smart Food Choices**



**FDA** U.S. FOOD & DRUG  
ADMINISTRATION

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[www.fda.gov/nutritioneducation](http://www.fda.gov/nutritioneducation)

# Using the Nutrition Facts Label

Look for the **Nutrition Facts** label on food and beverage packages. Once you spot it, you'll find a wealth of information to make **healthy food choices**.

Using the Nutrition Facts label is as easy as 1-2-3!

**1**

## Size up Servings

The information listed on the Nutrition Facts label is usually based on one serving of the food. **Pay attention to the serving size and the number of servings you eat** or drink to discover the total number of calories and nutrients you are consuming.

If you eat or drink two servings of the food or beverage, you are getting double the calories and nutrients that are listed on the label. And keep in mind, packages can—and often do—contain more than one serving!

**2**

## Consider the Calories

Calories from food provide the energy your body needs to function and grow. When you are active, you “burn” calories. **To keep your body healthy, balance the number of calories you eat and drink with the number of calories your body uses.**

Everyone’s calorie needs are different and depend on age, sex, height, weight, and physical activity level. Curious about calorie needs? Check out [www.choosemyplate.gov/MyPlatePlan](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/MyPlatePlan).

- TIP**
- **100 calories** per serving of an individual food is considered a **moderate** amount
  - **400 calories** or more per serving of an individual food is considered **high** in calories

**3**

## Choose Nutrients Wisely

**% Daily Value (%DV) shows how much a nutrient in a serving of the food contributes to a total daily diet.** Use %DV to see if a serving of the food is high or low in an individual nutrient and to compare food products.

- TIP**
- **5% DV** or less of a nutrient per serving is considered **low**
  - **20% DV** or more of a nutrient per serving is considered **high**

Choose foods that are higher in nutrients to get more of (dietary fiber, vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium) and lower in nutrients to get less of (saturated fat, *trans* fat, sodium, and added sugars).

Nutrition Facts	
4 servings per container	
<b>Serving size 1 1/2 cup (208g)</b>	
<b>Amount per serving</b>	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>240</b>
	<b>% Daily Value*</b>
<b>Total Fat</b> 4g	<b>5%</b>
Saturated Fat 1.5g	<b>8%</b>
<i>Trans</i> Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 5mg	<b>2%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 430mg	<b>19%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 46g	<b>17%</b>
Dietary Fiber 7g	<b>25%</b>
Total Sugars 4g	
Includes 2g Added Sugars	<b>4%</b>
<b>Protein</b> 11g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 6mg	35%
Potassium 240mg	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.



# At Home

## Tips for Kids

See how easy and fun it can be to get your food facts first!

### Measure out Single Servings of Snacks

Read the Nutrition Facts label on your favorite snacks and measure out single servings according to the serving size listed on the label. Keep them in resealable plastic bags or containers so you can quickly grab-and-go!



### Add Healthy Choices to the Family Shopping List

Read the Label on food packages in your pantry and refrigerator. Then, add items to your family's shopping list that are higher in nutrients to get more of and lower in nutrients to get less of.



### Challenge Your Friends and Family

Challenge your friends and family to Read the Label when choosing a favorite snack. Look for interesting facts on Nutrition Facts labels ... and then try to stump each other.

Ask them to guess things like:

- How big is one serving of the snack?
- How many servings are in the package?
- Which snacks are higher or lower in calories or in a particular nutrient?

When you're done—choose your favorite healthy snacks and dig in (watch the serving size, of course)!



### Play a Game

Hang out with other kids at the Snack Shack in the virtual world of Whyville. Play two fun games—Label Lingo and Snack Sort—and practice reading the label and making healthy snack choices!

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# At Lunch Time

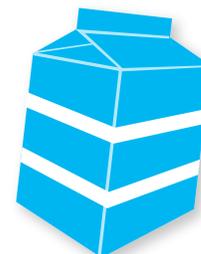


## Tips for Kids

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### Read the Label in the Cafeteria Line

Look for the Nutrition Facts label on food and beverage packages like dairy products, snacks, and other foods in your school cafeteria. Choose the ones that are higher in nutrients to get more of and lower in nutrients to get less of.



### Take the Great Lunchbox Challenge

Can you pack a healthy, 600-calorie (or other calorie amount) lunch? Read the Label on breads, sandwich ingredients, and snacks to put together a tasty lunch. Try a whole grain pita or tortilla as an alternative to some breads ... try spreads like mustard or hummus instead of mayonnaise ... and measure out single servings of snacks.

# At Restaurants

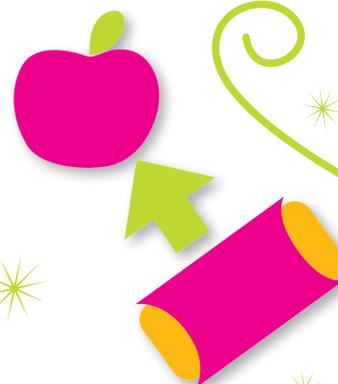


### Check out the Nutrition Information

Look for nutrition information at restaurants. If it's not posted, ask if it's available. You can also check online before you head out to eat — just visit your favorite restaurant's website.

### Swap Out One Item

See if you can figure out which menu items are lower in nutrients to get less of. Then replace one food you would have ordered that is higher in saturated fat, sodium, or sugars with one that is lower in these nutrients. Now that's smart swapping!



### Compare Different Foods and Meal Sizes

Check out the differences in calories and nutrients between various menu choices. Compare foods that are prepared different ways, like grilled chicken vs. fried chicken, baked potatoes vs. French fries ... and compare small vs. large portions. And remember, a "super-sized" item can mean doubling (or tripling) the calories and nutrients because the serving size is larger.

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# At The Supermarket

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### Check out the Cereal Aisle

Try to find a cereal that is lower in added sugars and higher in dietary fiber. Compare that cereal to ones you currently have at home.

### Compare Frozen Pizzas and Veggies

Chill out in the freezer section and Read the Label. Compare frozen pizzas and vegetables (with and without sauce). Look for ones that are lower in saturated fat and sodium and are higher in dietary fiber, vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium.

### Read the Label on Nuts and Seeds

Nut butters and unsalted nuts and seeds can make great snacks because they are good sources of protein, healthy fats, dietary fiber, vitamins, and minerals. However, it's easy to eat more of these snacks than intended, so don't forget to check out the serving sizes.

### Look for Healthy Sweets

Try fruits as healthy sweet snacks and desserts and use fruit to top foods like cereal, yogurt, and pancakes instead of sugars, syrups, or other sweet toppings. Choose fresh fruits or packaged fruits (such as frozen, dried, and canned in 100% fruit juice) that are lower in added sugars and higher in dietary fiber, vitamins, and minerals.



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