

You can make healthier food choices by reading the “Nutrition Facts” label on the foods you buy.

Serving size: Look here first!

Is your serving the same as the one on the label?

- If you eat double the serving size listed, you need to double the calories and other nutrient values.
- If you have diabetes or are following a specific meal plan, the serving size on the label may not match the serving sizes in your meal plan.

Always double check the serving size. *See sample label at right.*

Calories

This is the number of calories you will consume in one serving of this food. Knowing how many calories your food contains helps you monitor calorie intake over the course of the day.

The number of calories needed each day depends on your age, sex, height, weight, and level of physical activity. Estimates range from 1,600 to 2,400 calories for women and 2,000 to 3,000 calories for men. If you are trying to lose weight, you should avoid or limit high-calorie foods.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)	
Servings Per Container about 2	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 250	Calories from Fat 110
% 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	
Proteins 5g	
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	20%
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
Saturated 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 • Carbohydrates 4 • Protein 4

Check the serving size to find out how much you are actually eating. If you eat 2 servings, this doubles the calories and nutrients, including the Percent Daily Values (DV).

Make your calories count. Look at the calories on the label and compare them with the nutrients it contains. Then decide whether the food is a good choice for you.

Know your fats. Look for foods low in saturated fats, trans fats, and cholesterol to help reduce the risk of heart disease (5% DV or less). There is no DV for trans fat because it is best to limit or avoid it entirely.

Keep sodium in check. Processed foods are often high in sodium. Look for low-sodium foods with less than 140 mg per serving. Track the total amount you eat.

Fiber. Aim for 25 to 38 grams of fiber per day.

Some vitamins and minerals may be listed with DV in one serving.

Percent Daily Values (DV) tell you how much you should be eating based on a 2,000 or 2,500 calorie diet. This section is the same on every food label. It is a reference to remind you how much of these nutrients you should aim for each day.

Number of calories in a gram of fat, carbohydrate, and protein.

Sample label

Total fat

This tells you how much fat is in one serving. A low-fat food has 3 grams (g) or less of total fat per serving.

Saturated fat and trans fat:

Saturated fat and trans fat are included in the amount of total fat. They are also listed separately because they are the 2 types of fat we should try to limit or avoid in our diets.



A quick check of the "Nutrition Facts" label can help you spot foods that are good for your health.

Diets high in these fats may increase the risk of heart disease. Trans fats increase your risk more than saturated fat.

A food is low in saturated fat if it has less than 1 gram per serving. Aim for fewer than 20 grams of saturated fat per day, and as little trans fat as possible.

Cholesterol

Cholesterol is found only in foods from animal sources, such as meats, poultry, fish, eggs, and dairy products. Try to keep your cholesterol intake to less than 300 milligrams (mg) per day. A low-cholesterol food has less than 20 mg per serving.

Sodium

We know this as "salt." Too much sodium may raise your blood pressure. Less than 2,300 mg of sodium each day is recommended.

A low-sodium food has 140 mg or less in one serving.

Total carbohydrate

Carbohydrates are found in bread, pasta, rice, cereal, fruit, potatoes, starchy vegetables, and sweets. If you have diabetes, pay attention to total carbohydrate grams per serving, not just the sugar grams.

Dietary fiber: It is important to eat plenty of fiber, and most Americans don't get enough. Fiber helps reduce the risk of diabetes and heart disease and can help with weight control. Aim for 25 to 38 grams of fiber per day. It is found in whole grains, vegetables, and fruits.

Sugars: Sugar is listed separately, and is also included in the total grams of carbohydrate. It includes both naturally occurring and added sugar. It's best to avoid added sugar when possible.

Protein

Protein is found in both plant and animal foods, including beans, nuts, fish, poultry, meat, eggs, and dairy products.

Percent Daily Value

This is the percentage of the recommended daily amount of this nutrient in one serving of the food. The Percent Daily Values (DV) are what would be recommended in a 2,000 calorie per day diet.

The important part of these percentages is that they help you find foods that are high in good nutrients and low in nutrients you want to avoid. If the value is 20% or more, it's considered high. If it's 5% or less, it's low.

Other resources

Visit kp.org/mydoctor to:

- View most lab results and check your preventive health reminders.
- Email your doctor
- Use online tools to help keep you and your family healthy.