

How to Read Food Labels

Okay, you pledged to eat better, so you flip the food box around to read the nutrition label and...what does it all mean? Do you feel a little overwhelmed? Don't be. By focusing on a few items of information that are most important to your health, you can customize and simplify the information.

If you are diabetic, you will want to focus on the sugar and carbohydrate content of the label. Or, if you have high-blood pressure, the sodium and saturated fat information will be of most importance. The two pieces of information that are universal to everyone's concern are the serving size and servings per container listings.

The nutrition label always lists what is considered a serving size. A serving size can help people understand how much is intended to be eaten in one sitting. For example, a serving size of Cheerios® cereal is 3/4 cup. Have you ever measured your cereal out in a measuring cup and then dumped your cereal into your bowl? You maybe surprised at the difference! Simply put, servings per container equals how many servings are in the container. For example one box of Kraft Macaroni and Cheese® (7.25 oz.) has three servings.

On the left of the label, you will see the number of calories in a single serving. Paying attention to calories is a good rule of thumb since calories tell you the amount of energy in the food. It is important to balance the amount of calories you eat to the amount your body uses each day; if you have a tendency to eat more calories than you burn up, you will gain weight gain.

All nutritional information (such as sodium, carbohydrates and protein) on the label is noted as percentages of the daily values to avoid misjudging what could be seen as a high or low with actual values. So, if you read 140 mg of sodium you could believe that number is high, but in reality 140 mg of sodium is less than 6 percent of the daily value for sodium for a person who intakes 2,000 calories daily.

As you read the Nutrition labels, it maybe helpful to keep the following information in mind:

- 1 gram of fat is approximately 9 calories
- 1 gram of carbohydrate is approximately 4 calories
- 1 gram of protein is approximately 4 calories
- 4 grams of sugar are equal to 1 teaspoon of sugar

Of course diet and calorie intake is different for each person, so be sure to check with your doctor to see what portion of the nutrition label is most important to you.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 box (24g)	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 90	Calories from Fat 5
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 1g	1%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	
Sodium 170mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 19g	6%
Dietary Fiber 2g	10%
Sugar 3g	
Protein 2g	
Vitamin A 8%	Vitamin C 8%
Calcium 0%	Iron 35%
Vitamin D 8%	Thiamin 40%
Riboflavin 40%	Niacin 40%
Vitamin B ₆	Folic Acid 40%
Vitamin B ₁₂ 40%	Zinc 40%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

You Are What You Eat

Eating out is very common with today's on-the-go lifestyle. To help you eat better, featured below are two Applebee's healthier choice menu items:

Confetti Chicken – grilled, seasoned chicken breast topped with salsa ranch sauce, mozzarella & cheddar cheese, black bean & corn salsa. Served with rice pilaf, steamed fresh vegetables and a side of roasted tomato salsa.

(370 calories 7g fat 9g fiber)

Mesquite Chicken Salad – grilled mesquite-seasoned chicken breast is tossed with mixed greens, tomatoes, corn, black beans, jalapeno peppers and red onions. Tossed in a spicy barbecue ranch dressing

(250 calories 4g fat 7 fibers)

Get Moving!

(Community Events)

January 19

Swing Dance Workshop

Time: 6 PM – 8 PM

Location: Brownsburg Public Library
(Meeting rooms A & B)

Price: Free (registration required)

Phone: 852-3167

Description: 7th – 12th grades will learn the basics to swing dancing; sign up with a partner or by yourself. Wear comfortable clothing and shoes without a lot of rubber tread.

Local Sledding Hills

Do not sled on slopes ending with a street, drop off, parking lot, river or pond. Sit in a forward-facing position, never headfirst. Wear helmets, gloves and layers of clothing. Do not sit/slide on materials that can be pierced by objects on the ground.

- Washington Township Park (Avon)
- Ellis Park (Danville) west-side of park
- Hummel Park (Plainfield) At least 6" of snow & below freezing; west-side amphitheater parking.
- Eagle Creek Park (east of Brownsburg)
Sled only in designated areas.



Can I Trust My Eyes?

Low-fat, low-sodium, healthy --- What do these claims really mean? Regulations from the FDA (U.S. Food and Drug Administration) determine what can and can not be displayed on the package. Below are keywords often found on food items and what they really mean according to the FDA themselves.

Low-fat = 3g or less per serving

Low-saturated fat = 1g or less per serving

Low-sodium = 140mg or less Very-low sodium = 35mg or less per serving

Low-cholesterol = 20mg or less and 2g or less of saturated fat per serving

Low-calorie = 40 calories or less per serving

You may find other words used for low include little, few, low source of and contains a small amount of.

Meat can be described as lean, which explains a fat content that is less than 10g of fat, 4.5g or less saturated fat and less than 95mg of cholesterol per serving. Extra Lean refers to less than 5g of fat, less than 2g of saturated fat and less than 95mg of cholesterol per serving.

When the word healthy is used, the item must be low in fat, saturated fat and contain limited amounts of cholesterol and sodium. For a complete list of terms and their regulated meanings, log onto www.fda.com and search for food label.

Spicy Noodles w/ Chicken & Spinach

1/2 pound mushrooms (shiitake, button, oyster)

8 ounces boneless, skinless chicken breasts

3/4 pound spaghetti

3 tablespoons sesame oil

2 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce

4 large scallions, thinly sliced

1" piece of ginger, peeled and thinly sliced

1 clove garlic, minced

1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes

1 pound fresh baby spinach, washed & dried
freshly ground black pepper

Spray a large skillet with non-stick cooking spray and heat over medium-high heat. Add the mushrooms and sauté until brown (about 3 to 5 minutes). Remove from the heat and keep warm. Spray the pan again and sauté the chicken breasts over medium-high heat for about 6 minutes on each side. Remove from the heat and when cool enough to handle, shred into pieces. Bring a large pot of well salted water to a boil. Add the noodles and cook until al dente, (about 7 to 9 minutes). Heat the sesame oil and soy sauce in a skillet over medium heat. Add the ginger slices, garlic, scallions and red pepper and cook until fragrant (about 2 minutes). Add the noodles to the skillet and toss well. Add freshly ground pepper and adjust the seasoning to your taste. Arrange the spinach leaves on four plates or in four large bowls. Add the noodles and top with the mushrooms and chicken.

Serving Size: about 2 cups

Nutrition facts per serving: calories – 81 total fat – 4g saturated fat – 2g cholesterol – 15mg
sodium – 63mg carbohydrate – 11g protein – 1g

Recipe from www.foodfit.com