

Fit & Lean in 2014

2.8: Reading Food Labels



Making healthy food choices is made much easier once you learn how to read & understand food labels.

Food labels are found on packaged foods and provide information on nutritional value, ingredients, recommended serving size and nutrition claims.

Nutrition claims must follow certain rules to make sure they are consistent and not misleading.

The Nutrition Facts table gives you information on serving size, calories and 13 core nutrients: fat, saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, sodium, carbohydrate, fiber, sugars, protein, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium & iron. All of the information is based on the **servicing size** found at the top of the Nutrition Facts table. Make sure you are eating the proper serving size and accounting for an increase if you eat in excess of the serving size.

The Percent Daily Value (DV%) can help you choose foods that are healthier for you. The % DV is found on the right-hand side of the Nutrition Facts table.



5 Easy Steps to Help You

1. Look at the **servicing size**. Compare the serving size to the amount you eat in order to get the amount of calories and nutrients described on the label.
2. Look at the **calories**. Calories tell you how much energy from get from one serving.
3. Look at the **% daily value (DV)**. This scale tells you if there is a little or a lot of a nutrient in one serving of packaged food. *5% or less is a little. 15% or more is a lot.*
4. Try to get more of these nutrients: **fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C, iron & calcium.**
5. Try to eat less of these nutrients: **fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sodium & cholesterol.**



Source: www.healthycanadians.gc.ca