



READ IT before you EAT IT!

How many servings are you eating?



Nutrition Facts
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)
Servings Per Container 2

Amount Per Serving		Calories from Fat 110	
			% Daily Value*
Total Fat	12g		18%
Saturated Fat	3g		15%
Trans fat	0g		10%
Cholesterol	30mg		20%
Sodium	470mg		10%
Total Carbohydrate	31g		0%
Dietary Fiber	0g		
Sugars	5g		
Protein	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:

	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

Get What You Need!

Get LESS
5% or less is low
20% or more is high

Get ENOUGH
5% or less is low
20% or more is high



What food would have this Nutrition Facts label? Answer below!

What's the Best Choice for You? Use the Nutrition Facts Label to Make



How do your choices stack up? This combination of foods and amounts meets the MyPyramid food group recommendations for about 2,000 calories a day. The portion sizes approximate serving sizes from the five food groups of the MyPyramid. This combination of food choices shows the servings from the Pyramid for an older child, for one day. Kids have may need more servings of foods.



FOOD LABELS: A Tool for Making Food Choices

About the Activity

- Use the *READ IT before you EAT IT!* poster to show the parts of the Nutrition Facts label.
- Introduce the “5%–20% Daily Value (%DV) Guide” for food labeling.
- To start, use a box of cereal and three bowls to introduce amounts of nutrients, calories, and Serving Sizes on the Nutrition Facts labels.
- Pass out the *Healthful Eating: Food Labels Help!* newsletter, No. 3.
- Sum up by restating the “5%–20% DV Guide.”

Getting Ready

Read: Through the Sharing Session to get comfortable with the messages, questions, and activities.

Get: One box of dry cereal,* three different sized bowls for the food item, measuring cups (*or pretzels, or a bag of chips).

Copy: Newsletter No. 4: *Healthful Eating: Food Labels Help!* Make enough copies of the newsletters for all participants.

Display: *READ IT before you EAT IT!* poster.

Key Messages

- Use Nutrition Facts labels to:
 - Identify amounts of nutrients, calories, and Serving Sizes .
 - Compare foods with the nutrients your child and family need
- Use the “5%-20% DV Guide” (5% or less is LOW and 20% or more is HIGH) for the Nutrition Facts labels, to help you GET LESS of some nutrients and GET ENOUGH of others.
- Recognize that the %DV on the Nutrition Facts label is based on 2,000 calories for a day. The label refers specifically to your diet and not that of your young child.



Do You Know?

How you can use Nutrition Facts labels to eat smart?

Nutrition Facts labels tell the calories (or food energy) and nutrients in one Serving of the food inside the package. You can use Nutrition Facts labels for different reasons, including:

To know the nutrient contents in one Serving.
To know what happens to calories and nutrient amounts when you eat larger or smaller amounts of food.

To identify amounts of nutrients and calories in the designated Serving Size and understand the effect of eating larger and smaller amounts of that food.

To use the 5%–20% DV Guide to get LESS of some nutrients and get ENOUGH of others.

To compare food labels of similar foods to determine which foods contain higher or lower amounts of nutrients or calories.

That is helpful in two ways:

1. If you want to cut back on some nutrients, such as saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, added sugars, and sodium, and
2. If you want to consume more nutrients that often come up short: fiber, vitamins A and C, calcium, and iron.

To help you make choices within the five MyPyramid Food Groups for you and your family.

Nutrition Facts labels tell calories (food energy) and nutrients in one Serving Size of the food inside the package. The Nutrition Facts label is based on 2,000 calories a day.

What nutrition information can you find on a Nutrition Facts label?

- Serving Size and number of Servings in the package
- Calories in one Serving
- Nutrients that need your attention
- % Daily Value (DV), which is the amount of a nutrient in one Serving compared to your daily need
- Footnote on the bottom, which shows how much or how little of some key nutrients you need each day. You may need more or less, depending on your energy needs

How big is a Serving of food? (orange section on the poster)

- The Serving Size on Nutrition Facts labels varies for different foods. It may be more or less than what you usually eat. On a food label, you will find the Serving Size at the top of the Nutrition Facts. The food label also tells how many Servings the package contains.

What does the Nutrition Facts label tell you about food energy?

Calories are a measure of how much energy you get from food. The Nutrition Facts tells how many calories you get from one Serving. It also tells how many of those calories come from fat. If you eat two Servings, you get twice the calories. Pay attention to this information to cut back on calories, to maintain a healthy weight.

What nutrients need your special attention?

All nutrients are important to health. Some nutrients need special attention:

- **Nutrients to limit** (blue section of poster): total fat, saturated fat, *trans* fat, cholesterol, and sodium. Eating too much of these nutrients is linked to overweight and certain chronic diseases, including type 2 diabetes and heart disease.
- **Nutrients to get enough of** (purple section of poster): fiber, vitamins A and C, calcium, and iron. Eating enough of these nutrients can improve your health and help reduce the chances of getting some chronic diseases and conditions, such as osteoporosis from limited calcium and tiredness or anemia from limited iron.

How can you use Nutrition Facts to limit some nutrients and get enough of others?

Look at the % Daily Value. Use the “5%-20% DV Guide.” *For any nutrient:*

5% DV or less is low: For nutrients you need to get less of such as fat, choose foods with 5% DV or less.
20% DV or more is high: For nutrients you need to get enough of, choose foods with 20% DV or more.

Try This for a Sharing Session!

Show the cereal box and three different-sized bowls.

ASK

- What size would you use for yourself?
- How much would you normally put in the bowl?
(Let someone pour that amount of cereal into the bowl.)
- How does that compare to what is in a Serving Size on the Nutrition Facts label? (Have someone measure the amount of cereal in the bowl.)
- Is it the same, less, or more (how much more) than the Serving Size on the package's Nutrition Facts label?
- What does that mean about the calories, fat, sugars, or vitamins, in your bowl of cereal?

Use the **READ IT before you EAT IT!** poster to talk about the "5%–20% Daily Values Guide":

POINT OUT

- Point out the blue section of nutrients, **GET LESS** of these nutrients.
 - To get less of a nutrient:
5% or less is low and 20% or more is high.
 - Eating too much of these nutrients is linked to overweight and certain chronic diseases.
- Point out the purple section of nutrients, **GET ENOUGH** of these nutrients.
 - To get enough of a nutrient, 5% or less is low, and 20% or more is high.
 - Eating enough of these can improve your health and reduce the chance of getting some chronic diseases.
- The percent numbers show the nutrients that you get from one Serving. They are based on 100 percent of what is recommended for 1 day for a 2,000 calorie diet.

How many servings are you eating?

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)	
Servings Per Container 2	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 250	Calories from Fat 110
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 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
Sat Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
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Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g

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Point out the orange section showing Serving Size and Servings per container.

ASK

- How many Servings are in one package?
- How much is one Serving Size on a Nutrition Facts label?
(It varies according to the food item, but the Serving Size is shown as a common measured amount such as ½ cup, 1 cup, or 1 ounce.)
- How does the amount you eat change the amount of the %DV?
(It varies with how much more, or less, you eat than one Serving Size.)

ASK

Look at the %DV for saturated fat on the poster.

- What is the color for saturated fat? (It's blue.)
- Is the %DV high or low? (It's neither. It's in between.)
- What if you ate 2 Servings? (That would double the %DV.)
- Is 30% DV high or low? (20% or more is high, so 30% is high.)

Ask several parents to use the “5%–20% Daily Value Guide” to talk about the purple and blue sections on the small labels on the bottom of the poster.

SUM UP

- Repeat the “5%–20% Daily Value Guide”: 5% or less is low, and 20% or more is high.
- Pass out: *Healthful Eating...Food Labels Help!* newsletter (No. 3) as a reminder.
- Reinforce: Use food labels to compare foods with the nutrients you, your child, and family need.

With additional time, or at another session, learn more about using the %DV on food labels.

Have a parent pick a Nutrition Facts label from the bottom of the poster.

ASK

- What is the Serving Size?
- Do you think you eat more or less of this food at one time?
- What is the %DV for total fat? For saturated fat? For *trans* fat?
- How do the other nutrients compare?
- What might that tell you about the nutrients in the foods you eat?

Have a parent choose five small Nutrition Facts labels (on the poster). They might be foods they would eat in a day. Compare the %DV for the same nutrient in similar or different foods.

ASK

- What's the total for the %DV for calcium for the five foods?
(Point out that adults and children need 100% DV for calcium every day. Children need it for growing bones; adults need it to keep their bones healthy.)

- What is the total for the %DV for saturated fat in the same five foods?
- Is this total more than 100%?
 - If it's more than 100%, how could you bring down the percent?
(*Eat smaller portions, cut out a food, or choose another food with less saturated fat.*)
 - If it's less than 100%, point out that they are below the total limit of fat for the day – and that is okay.

Talk about the reasons to use the Nutrition Facts with their %DV.

ASK

- What does the %DV show you about the amount of nutrients in the kinds of foods you choose?
- How can you use Nutrition Facts to make food choices for your family?
 - See how calories and nutrients change with amounts of foods that are bigger or smaller than the Serving Size.
 - Compare the nutrients in two similar foods.
 - Choose foods to GET LESS of some nutrients and GET ENOUGH of others.

SUM UP

Refer to the poster and summarize (while opening and closing one or both fists to visually show the numbers 5 and 20):

- “5% or less is low and 20% or more is high.”
 - Choose foods with lower %DV for nutrients you need less of.
 - Choose foods with a higher %DV for nutrients you need to get enough of.

Sharing Session Note:

Keep it simple. Stay focused on the %DV and Serving Size. Many foods naturally containing iron have less than 5% DV. Iron-fortified foods have higher levels. There is no %DV for sugars, *trans* fats, or protein.

Extend the Sharing Session Now or Later

Have parents consider different beverage choices for their child and family, using the Nutrition Facts. Use the two *Nibbles for Health* newsletters with Nutrition Facts—*For Growing Bones... Which Milk?* and *Juice or Fruit Drinks?*—as part of the session.

Once parents know about food labeling, use it as a tool for exploring other issues related to feeding children and families, presented in the *Nibbles for Health* newsletters, for example:

- | | |
|--|---|
| No. 2 <i>How Much Is Enough?</i> | No. 19 <i>Juice or Fruit Drinks?</i> |
| No. 6 <i>For Growing Bones... Which Milk?</i> | No. 20 <i>Easy Weekend Lunch Ideas</i> |
| No. 8 <i>Healthful Choices for Vegetarian Families</i> | No. 21 <i>Why Snacks?</i> |
| No. 10 <i>Family Meals – Fast, Healthful!</i> | No. 22 <i>Fats and Oils in Food: How Much for Kids?</i> |
| | No. 23 <i>Iron in Food: Does My Child Get Enough?</i> |