

# How to Read a Nutrition Facts Label

## 1. Serving size

- Look at the number of servings in the container (servings per container)
- If eating more than or less than one serving, add or subtract accordingly
- Some labels have a second column for foods with two or more servings that give Nutrition Facts for the entire container
- Beware: small containers may have more than one serving
- Serving sizes for the same food may be different from brand to brand
- This container has 8 servings

## 2. Calories

- Calories measure energy – they are neither “good” or “bad”
- Focus on quality rather than quantity
- Each serving of food in this container has 230 calories

## 3. Fat

- Total fat includes all sources of fats
- Limit **saturated fats (3a)** to less than 5% of DV per serving
  - » A good rule of thumb to remember: choose foods with 3 grams or less of saturated fats per serving
- Avoid foods with **trans fats (3b)**; look for foods with zero grams of trans fats
- Each serving of food in this container has 1 gram of saturated fat and zero grams of trans fats

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
8 servings per container	
<b>Serving size</b>	<b>2/3 cup (55g)</b>
<b>Amount per serving</b>	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>230</b>
<b>% Daily Value*</b>	
<b>Total Fat</b> 8g	<b>10%</b>
Saturated Fat 1g	<b>5%</b>
<i>Trans</i> Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 160mg	<b>7%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 37g	<b>13%</b>
Dietary Fiber 4g	<b>14%</b>
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	<b>20%</b>
<b>Protein</b> 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 240mg	6%
<small>* 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.</small>	

1

2

3

3a

3b

4

5

6

7

8

## What claims about fat on food packaging mean:

- Fat free: less than 1/2 gram of fat per serving
- Low fat: less than 3 grams fat per serving
- Light: 50% less fat than regular product
- Reduced fat or less fat: 25% less fat than regular product



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## 4. Sodium

- The majority of sodium in the diet is from packaged and canned foods
- Limit total daily sodium to 2,300 mg or less (2300 mg equals 1 teaspoon)
- Aim for foods with less than 300 mg of sodium per serving
- Each serving of food in this container has 160 mg of sodium

### What claims about sodium on food packaging mean:

- Sodium Free: Less than 5 mg of sodium per serving
- Very Low Sodium: 35 mg or less sodium per serving
- Low Sodium: 140 mg or less sodium per serving
- Reduced Sodium: 25% less than the usual sodium amount

## 5. Carbohydrate

- Total carbohydrates includes dietary fiber and sugar
- Look for foods that have 2-3 grams or more of dietary fiber per serving
- Aim for about 25 grams of fiber (women) and about 38 grams (men) per day or 14 grams for every 1,000 calories
- Total sugars includes naturally occurring sugar in milk, fruit, and vegetables and sugars that are ADDED during processing
- Added sugar: Limit to 6 grams or less per serving or 5% of DV per serving

### Identifying the added sugar:

- Look for ingredients ending in “ose” (such as dextrose, maltose, or sucrose), high fructose corn syrup, molasses, cane sugar, corn sweetener, raw sugar, syrup, honey or fruit juice concentrates

- Each serving of food in this container has 4 grams of dietary fiber and 10 grams of added sugar.

## 6. Protein

- Protein includes the number of grams of protein per serving
- Each serving of food in this container has 3 grams of protein

## 7. List of Nutrients

- Vitamin D, potassium, calcium, and iron are common deficiencies and are required to be listed on the Nutrition Facts Label
- Companies may choose to list additional nutrients

## 8. Percent Daily Value (DV)

- The DV is the percentage of each nutrient in a serving of the recommended amount
- DV are average levels of nutrients for a person eating a 2,000 calorie diet per day
- You may need to eat less or more than 2,000 calories per day

### Quick Tips

- 5% DV or less of a nutrient per serving is considered low and 20% DV or more of a nutrient per serving is considered high
- Choose foods that are higher in DV% for Dietary Fiber, vitamin D, Calcium, Iron, and Potassium.
- Choose foods that are lower in DV% for saturated fats, sodium, and added sugar

Learn more at  
[dhmf.org/bakersfield/weightloss](http://dhmf.org/bakersfield/weightloss)

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