

# How to Read a Food Label

## Nutrition Facts

8 servings per container  
**Serving size** 2/3 cup (55g)

Amount per serving  
**Calories** 230

% Daily Value\*

**Total Fat** 8g 10%  
Saturated Fat 1g 5%  
Trans Fat 0g

**Cholesterol** 0mg 0%

**Sodium** 160g 7%

**Total Carbohydrate** 37g 13%

Dietary Fiber 4g 14%

Total Sugars 12g

Includes 10g Added Sugars 20%

**Protein** 3g

Vitamin D 2mcg 10%

Calcium 260mg 20%

Iron 8mg 45%

Potassium 240mg 6%

\*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.

1. Serving Information

2. Calories

3. Nutrients

4. Percent Daily Value (%DV)

## What Does It Mean?

1. The serving size is the amount people typically eat. This section also tells you how many servings are in the package.
2. Calories listed are the calories per serving size.
3. Key nutrients listed are those that impact your health.
4. Percent Daily Value (%DV) tells you how much of a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to the total daily diet.
  - For example: a food item with a 14% DV of fiber provides 14% of the total fiber that a person consuming 2,000 calories a day should eat.

### Quick Guide to % Daily Value

- 5% or less is **LOW**

Aim low in *saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium and added sugars.*

- 20% or more is **HIGH**

Aim high in *fiber, vitamin D, calcium, iron and potassium.*

## Using the Food Label

1. Compare your portion size to the serving size to see how much of the nutrients listed on the label you are getting.
2. Use the calories information to achieve or maintain a healthy weight.
3. Support your personal dietary needs by comparing food items and looking for foods that have more of the nutrients you want to increase and less of the nutrients you may want to limit.
  - Eat more fiber, potassium, vitamin D, calcium and iron to maintain good health and help reduce your risk of osteoporosis and anemia.
  - Eating less saturated fat, added sugars and sodium helps lower your risk of heart disease and high blood pressure.



# Why is the Food Label Important?

People look at food labels for a variety of reasons:

- Manage different diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease.
- Monitor calories for weight management, whether that is to lose, maintain or gain weight.
- Eat specific nutrients for their health.

Understanding how to read food labels will help you make quick, informed decisions to help you choose foods and beverages that support a healthy diet.



Source: Food & Drug Administration

The Onondaga County  
Department of  
Adult and Long Term Care  
Services

## *Office for Aging*

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In case of a life threatening  
emergency – Call 911

# Understanding Food Labels



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