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# Food Labeling & Its Legal Requirements

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# Nutrition Labeling- a legal requirement

- Nutrition Labeling & Education Act of 1990 (NLEA), requires nutrition labeling for most foods (except meat & poultry) & authorizes the use of nutrient content claims & appropriate FDA-approved health claims

# Nutrition Labeling--Exemptions

Under NLEA, some foods are exempted from nutrition labeling. These include:

- Food served for immediate consumption, such as that served in hospital cafeterias & airplanes & that sold by food service vendors i.e. mall cookie counters, sidewalk vendors & vending machines
- Ready-to-eat food that is not for immediate consumption but is prepared primarily on site i.e. bakery, deli & candy store items
- Food shipped in bulk, as long as it is not for sale in that form to consumers
- Medical foods, such as those used to address the nutritional needs of patients with certain diseases
- Plain coffee & tea, some spices & other foods that contain no significant amounts of any nutrients
- Game meats

# What do the consumers get from the Food Labels?

- Nutrition information of every food in the Grocery
- Easy-to-read information that enables him/her make healthful food choices
- Information on the amount per serving of saturated fat, cholesterol, dietary fiber & other nutrients of major health concern
- Nutrient reference values, expressed as % Daily Values that help consumers see how a food fits into an overall daily diet

# What do the consumers get from the Food Labels?

- Uniform definitions for terms that describe a food's nutrient content--such as "light," "low-fat," & "high-fiber"
- Claims about health-related condition, such as calcium & osteoporosis, & fat & cancer. These are helpful for people who are concerned about eating foods that may help keep them healthier longer
- Information on standardized serving sizes

# A Nutrition Label example

Sample label for  
Macaroni & Cheese

1 **Start Here** →

2 **Check Calories**

3 **Limit these Nutrients**

4 **Get Enough of these Nutrients**

5 **Footnote**

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)	
Servings Per Container 2	
Amount Per Serving	
<b>Calories</b> 250	Calories from Fat 110
% Daily Value*	
<b>Total Fat</b> 12g	<b>18%</b>
Saturated Fat 3g	<b>15%</b>
Trans Fat 3g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 30mg	<b>10%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 470mg	<b>20%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 31g	<b>10%</b>
Dietary Fiber 0g	<b>0%</b>
Sugars 5g	
<b>Protein</b> 5g	
Vitamin A	<b>4%</b>
Vitamin C	<b>2%</b>
Calcium	<b>20%</b>
Iron	<b>4%</b>

\* 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
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g	375g
Dietary Fiber	25g	30g

6 **Quick Guide to % DV**

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• 5% or less is Low

• 20% or more is High

## 1 **The Serving Size**

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

- The size of the serving on the food package influences the number of calories & all the nutrient amounts listed on the top part of the label
- Pay attention to the serving size, especially how many servings there are in the food package
- Then ask yourself, "How many servings am I consuming"? (e.g., 1/2 serving, 1 serving, or more)
- In the sample label, one serving of macaroni & cheese equals one cup. If you ate the whole package, you would eat two cups. That doubles the calories & other nutrient numbers, including the %Daily Values as shown in the sample label

**Amount Per Serving****Calories** 250      **Calories from Fat** 110

- Calories provide a measure of how much energy you get from a serving of this food.
- Many consumers consume more calories than they need without meeting recommended intakes for a number of nutrients
- The calorie section of the label can help you manage your weight (i.e., gain, lose, or maintain)
- Remember: the number of servings you consume determines the number of calories you actually eat (your portion amount)
- Eating too many calories per day is linked to overweight & obesity

**General Guide to Calories**

- 40 Calories is low
- 100 Calories is moderate
- 400 Calories or more is high

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# Limit these Nutrients

<b>Total Fat</b> 12g	<b>18%</b>
Saturated Fat 3g	<b>15%</b>
<i>Trans Fat</i> 3g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 30mg	<b>10%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 470mg	<b>20%</b>

- Eating too much fat, saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, or sodium may increase your risk of certain chronic diseases, like heart disease, some cancers, or high blood pressure.
- Important: Health experts recommend that you keep your intake of saturated fat, trans fat & cholesterol as low as possible as part of a nutritionally balanced diet.

# Get Enough of these Nutrients

Dietary Fiber 0g	0 %
Vitamin A	2 %
Vitamin C	4 %
Calcium	20 %
Iron	04 %

- Eating enough of these nutrients can improve your health & help reduce the risk of some diseases & conditions
- Eating a diet high in dietary fiber promotes healthy bowel function.
- Additionally, a diet rich in fruits, vegetables & grain products that contain dietary fiber, particularly soluble fiber & low in saturated fat & cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease.
- Getting enough calcium may reduce the risk of osteoporosis, a condition that results in brittle bones as one ages

# Understanding the Footnote on the Bottom of the Nutrition Facts Label

\* 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
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

## "%DVs are based on a 2,000 calorie diet"

- Look at the amounts circled in red in the footnote--these are the Daily Values
- (DV) for each nutrient listed & are based on public health experts' advice. DVs are recommended levels of intakes. DVs in the footnote are based on a 2,000 or 2,500 calorie diet.
- Note how the DVs for some nutrients change, while others (for cholesterol & sodium) remain the same for both calorie amounts.

# How the Daily Values Relate to %DVs

## Examples of DVs versus %DVs Based on a 2,000 Calorie Diet

<u>Nutrient</u>	<u>DV</u>	<u>%DV</u>	<u>Goal</u>
Total Fat	65g	= 100%DV	Less than
Sat Fat	20g	= 100%DV	Less than
Cholesterol	300mg	= 100%DV	Less than
Sodium	2400mg	= 100%DV	Less than
Total Carbohydrate	300g	= 100%DV	At least
Dietary Fiber	25g	= 100%DV	At least

**Upper Limit - Eat "Less than"...** The nutrients that have "upper daily limits" means it is recommended that you stay below - eat "less than" the Daily Value nutrient amounts listed per day

**Lower Limit - Eat "At least"...** means it is recommended that you eat "at least" this amount of dietary fiber per day.



# The Percent Daily Value (%DV)

- The % Daily Values (%DVs) are based on the Daily Value recommendations for key nutrients but only for a 2,000 calorie daily diet--not 2,500 calories.
- The %DV helps you determine if a serving of food is high or low in a nutrient.
- Do you need to know how to calculate percentages to use the %DV? No, the label (the %DV) does the math for you.
- Note: a few nutrients, like trans fat, do not have a %DV

# Quick Guide to %DV

	% Daily Value*
<b>Total Fat</b> 12g	<b>18%</b>
Saturated Fat 3g	<b>15%</b>
Trans Fat 3g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 30mg	<b>10%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 470mg	<b>20%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 31g	<b>10%</b>
Dietary Fiber 0g	<b>0%</b>
Sugars 5g	
<b>Protein</b> 5g	
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	20%
Iron	4%

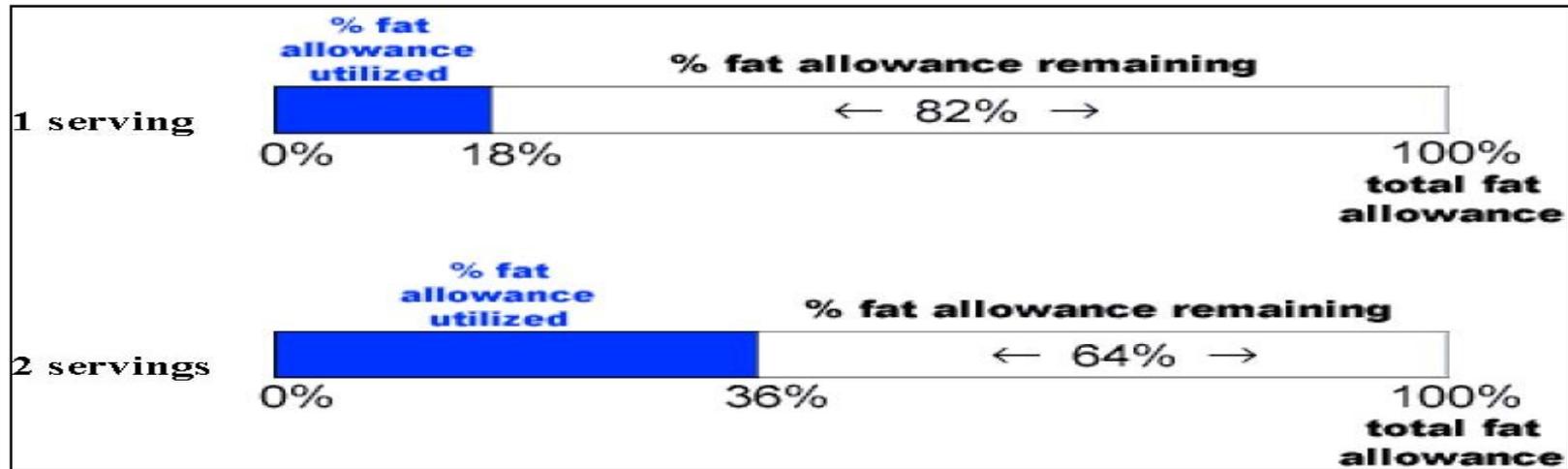
**5%DV or less is low and 20%DV or more is high**

This guide tells you that **5%DV or less is low** for all nutrients, those you want to limit (e.g., fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, & sodium), or for those that you want to consume in greater amounts (fiber, calcium, etc).

**Quick Guide** shows, **20%DV or more is high** for all nutrients.

*Example:* Look at the amount of Total Fat in one serving listed on the sample nutrition label. Is 18%DV contributing a lot or a little to your fat limit of 100% DV?

Continued



Check the **Quick Guide to %DV**. 18%DV, which is below 20%DV, is not yet high, but what if you ate the whole package (two servings)? You would double that amount, eating 36% of your daily allowance for Total Fat

# Nutrients Without a %DV: (Trans Fats, Protein & Sugars)

- Note that Trans fat, Sugars &, Protein do not list a %DV on the Nutrition Facts label
- Important: Health experts recommend that you keep your intake of saturated fat, trans fat & cholesterol as low as possible as part of a nutritionally balanced diet.
- Protein: A %DV is required to be listed if a claim is made for protein, such as "high in protein".
- Sugars: No daily reference value has been established for sugars because no recommendations have been made for the total amount to eat in a day

# Nutrient Content Claims

- Low. This term can be used on foods that can be eaten frequently without exceeding dietary guidelines for one or more of these components: fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium & calories. Thus, descriptors are defined as follows:
  - low-fat: 3 g or less per serving
  - low-saturated fat: 1 g or less per serving
  - low-sodium: 140 mg or less per serving
  - very low sodium: 35 mg or less per serving
  - low-cholesterol: 20 mg or less & 2 g or less of saturated fat per serving
  - low-calorie: 40 calories or less per serving.
- Synonyms for low include "little," "few," "low source of" & "contains a small amount of"

## Continued

- Lean & extra lean. These terms can be used to describe the fat content of meat, poultry, seafood & game meats
  - lean: less than 10 g fat, 4.5 g or less saturated fat, & less than 95 mg cholesterol per serving & per 100 g
  - extra lean: less than 5 g fat, less than 2 g saturated fat, & less than 95 mg cholesterol per serving & per 100 g
- High. This term can be used if the food contains 20 percent or more of the Daily Value for a particular nutrient in a serving
- Good source. This term means that one serving of a food contains 10 to 19 percent of the Daily Value for a particular nutrient

## Continued

- Reduced. This term means that a nutritionally altered product contains at least 25 percent less of a nutrient or of calories than the regular, or reference, product.
- Less. This term means that a food, whether altered or not, contains 25 percent less of a nutrient or of calories than the reference food.
- Light. This descriptor can mean two things:
  - First, that a nutritionally altered product contains one-third fewer calories or half the fat of the reference food. If the food derives 50 percent or more of its calories from fat, the reduction must be 50 percent of the fat.
  - Second, that the sodium content of a low-calorie, low-fat food has been reduced by 50 percent. In addition, "light in sodium" may be used on food in which the sodium content has been reduced by at least 50 percent.
- The term "light" still can be used to describe such properties as texture & color, as long as the label explains the intent--for example, "light brown sugar" & "light & fluffy."

## Continued

- More. This term means that a serving of food, whether altered or not, contains a nutrient that is at least 10 percent of the Daily Value more than the reference food. The 10 percent of Daily Value also applies to "fortified," "enriched" & "added" "extra & plus" claims, but in those cases, the food must be altered.
- Alternative spelling of these descriptive terms & their synonyms is allowed--for example, "hi" & "lo"--as long as the alternatives are not misleading.

## Continued

- **Healthy.** A "healthy" food must be low in fat & saturated fat & contain limited amounts of cholesterol & sodium. In addition, if it's a single-item food, it must provide at least 10 percent of one or more of vitamins A or C, iron, calcium, protein, or fiber. Exempt from this "10-percent" rule are certain raw, canned & frozen fruits & vegetables & certain cereal-grain products. These foods can be labeled "healthy," if they do not contain ingredients that change the nutritional profile

# Other Definitions

- Percent fat free: A product bearing this claim must be a low-fat or a fat-free product. In addition, the claim must accurately reflect the amount of fat present in 100 g of the food. Thus, if a food contains 2.5 g fat per 50 g, the claim must be "95 percent fat free."
- Implied: These types of claims are prohibited when they wrongfully imply that a food contains or does not contain a meaningful level of a nutrient. For example, a product claiming to be made with an ingredient known to be a source of fiber (such as "made with oat bran") is not allowed unless the product contains enough of that ingredient (for example, oat bran) to meet the definition for "good source" of fiber. As another example, a claim that a product contains "no tropical oils" is allowed--but only on foods that are "low" in saturated fat because consumers have come to equate tropical oils with high saturated fat.

## Continued

- Meals & main dishes: Claims that a meal or main dish is "free" of a nutrient, such as sodium or cholesterol, must meet the same requirements as those for individual foods. Other claims can be used under special circumstances. For example, "low-calorie" means the meal or main dish contains 120 calories or less per 100 g. "Low-sodium" means the food has 140 mg or less per 100 g. "Low-cholesterol" means the food contains 20 mg cholesterol or less per 100 g & no more than 2 g saturated fat. "Light" means the meal or main dish is low-fat or low-calorie

## Continued

- 'Fresh'
- Although not mandated by NLEA, FDA has issued a regulation for the term "fresh"
- The regulation defines the term "fresh" when it is used to suggest that a food is raw or unprocessed. In this context, "fresh" can be used only on a food that is raw, has never been frozen or heated, & contains no preservatives. (Irradiation at low levels is allowed)
- "Fresh frozen," "frozen fresh," & "freshly frozen" can be used for foods that are quickly frozen while still fresh. Blanching (brief scalding before freezing to prevent nutrient breakdown) is allowed
- Other uses of the term "fresh," such as in "fresh milk" or "freshly baked bread," are not affected

# Health Claims

- Claims for 10 relationships between a nutrient or a food & the risk of a disease or health-related condition are now allowed. They can be made in several ways: through third-party references (such as the National Cancer Institute), statements, symbols (such as a heart), & vignettes or descriptions. Whatever the case, the claim must meet the requirements for authorized health claims--for example, they cannot state the degree of risk reduction & can only use "may" or "might" in discussing the nutrient or food-disease relationship

## Continued

- The claims also must be phrased so that consumers can understand the relationship between the nutrient & the disease & the nutrient's importance in relationship to a daily diet
- An example of an appropriate claim is: "While many factors affect heart disease, diets low in saturated fat & cholesterol may reduce the risk of this disease"

# The allowed nutrient-disease relationship claims & rules for their use

- Calcium & Osteoporosis: To carry this claim, a food must contain 20 percent or more of the Daily Value for calcium (200 mg) per serving, have a calcium content that equals or exceeds the food's content of phosphorus & contain a form of calcium that can be readily absorbed & used by the body. The claim must name the target group most in need of adequate calcium intakes (that is, teens & young adult white & Asian women) & state the need for exercise & a healthy diet. A product that contains 40 percent or more of the Daily Value for calcium must state on the label that a total dietary intake greater than 200 percent of the Daily Value for calcium (that is, 2,000 mg or more) has no further known benefit

## Continued

- Fat & cancer: To carry this claim, a food must meet the nutrient content claim requirements for "low-fat" or, if fish & game meats, for "extra lean"
- Saturated fat & cholesterol & coronary heart disease (CHD): This claim may be used if the food meets the definitions for the nutrient content claim "low saturated fat," "low-cholesterol," & "low-fat," or, if fish & game meats, for "extra lean." It may mention the link between reduced risk of CHD & lower saturated fat & cholesterol intakes to lower blood cholesterol levels

## Continued

- Fiber-containing Grain Products, Fruits-Vegetables & cancer: To carry this claim, a food must be or must contain a grain product, fruit or vegetable & meet the nutrient content claim requirements for "low-fat," &, without fortification, be a "good source" of dietary fiber
- Fruits-Vegetables & Grain Products that contain fiber & risk of CHD: To carry this claim, a food must be or must contain fruits, vegetables & grain products. It also must meet the nutrient content claim requirements for "low saturated fat," "low-cholesterol," & "low-fat" & contain, without fortification, at least 0.6 g soluble fiber per serving

## Continued

- Sodium & Hypertension (high blood pressure): To carry this claim, a food must meet the nutrient content claim requirements for "low-sodium"
- Folic acid & Neural Tube Defects: This claim is allowed on dietary supplements that contain sufficient foliate & on conventional foods that are naturally good sources of foliate, as long as they do not provide more than 100 percent of the Daily Value for vitamin A as retinol or preformed vitamin A or vitamin D. A sample claim is "healthful diets with adequate foliate may reduce a woman's risk of having a child with a brain or spinal cord defect"

## Continued

- Soluble fiber from certain foods, such as Whole Oats & Psyllium Seed Husk, & heart disease:  
This claim must state that the fiber also needs to be part of a diet low in saturated fat & cholesterol, & the food must provide sufficient soluble fiber. The amount of soluble fiber in a serving of the food must be listed on the Nutrition Facts panel

# Ingredient Labeling

Ingredient declaration is required on all foods that have more than one ingredient

- Because people may be allergic to certain additives & to help them better avoid them, the ingredient list must include, when appropriate:
- FDA-certified color additives, such as FD&C Blue # 1, by name
- Sources of protein hydrolysates, which are used in many foods as flavors & flavor enhancers

# Important to Know

- It has now become mandatory in most of the countries to have the labeling on all their products including flour