

The “How To” on Reading a Nutrition Label

Canada introduced a new labeling system in 2003. These regulations became mandatory for most companies to adopt by December 2005.

We will review:

- 1) Nutrition Facts Table
- 2) Specific Amount of Food
- 3) % Daily Value
- 4) Core Nutrients
- 5) Nutrition Claims
- 6) List of Ingredients

Nutrition Facts Table

- Use it to help make informed choices
- Compare products more easily
- Determine nutritional value of foods
- Better manage special diets
- Increase or decrease your intake of a particular nutrient
- Note there are some foods that are exempt from the nutrition labeling requirements:
 - Fresh fruit and vegetables
 - Raw meat and poultry except when ground
 - Raw fish and seafood
 - Foods prepared or processed at the store or bakery
 - Foods that contain few nutrients such as coffee, tea, herbs, spices
 - Alcoholic beverages

Specific Amount of Food

- All of the nutrition information on the label is based on a specific amount of food. It is often called the “Serving Size.”
- When you look at a label you should look at the specific serving size and compare it to how much you actually eat. You need to determine the specific nutrient amounts for the actual amount you consume.
- Prepackaged foods like cake mixes have different methods of preparation. They may list more than one column that provides different methods of preparation. The quantity of calories you consume depends on how much cake you eat and the method it was prepared.



% Daily Value

- You can use the percent daily value to see if a food has a little or a lot of a nutrient.
- You can quickly identify the strengths and weaknesses of a food product by comparing the % daily value numbers of products.
- The % daily values are based on standards established for health outcomes, healthy growth and development and reduced risk of nutrition-related chronic disease.

Nutrition Claims

- Nutrition claims are not mandatory but manufacturers use them to help market their products.
 - Free: None or hardly any of this nutrient
 - Low: A small amount
 - Reduced: At least 25% less of the nutrient than in a similar product
 - Light: Only allowed on labels that are “reduced in fat” or “reduced in calories.” It could also refer to the sensory characteristics of the food such as: “light in colour”.

List of Ingredients

- A list of ingredients is mandatory and required on all processed foods. All ingredients are listed in descending order by weight. The ingredients present in the greatest amount in a product are listed first.
- The list of ingredients is also a source of information for people who want to avoid certain ingredients.



Nutrition Facts Valeur nutritive

Per 1/6 package (50 g) / par 1/6 du paquet (50 g)

Amount Teneur	% Daily Value % valeur quotidienne
Calories / Calories 110	
Fat / Lipides 7 g	11 %
Saturated / saturés 3 g + Trans / trans 0.2 g	16 %
Cholesterol / Cholestérol 30 mg	
Sodium / Sodium 240 mg	10 %
Carbohydrate / Glucides 1 g	0 %
Fibre / Fibres 1 g	0 %
Sugars / Sucres 0 g	
Protein / Protéines 11 g	
Vitamin A / Vitamine A	0 %
Vitamin C / Vitamine C	2 %
Calcium / Calcium	0 %
Iron / Fer	10 %

