**Understanding Food Labels**

**Label Reading for Better Eating**

Serving sizes are in common household measurements.

Serving sizes are the same for similar products.

**Nutrition Facts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutrition Facts</th>
<th>Serving Size: 3/4 Cup (170g)</th>
<th>Servings Per Container: 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amount Per Serving (as prepared)</td>
<td>Calories 289</td>
<td>Calories from fat 117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>% Daily Value</strong></td>
<td>Total Fat 13g</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saturated Fat 5g</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cholesterol 30mg</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sodium 530mg</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Carbohydrate 34g</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dietary Fiber 0g</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sugars 5g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protein 9g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vitamin A 2%
Vitamin C 2%
Calcium 8%
Iron 10%

Nutrition Panel:
The nutrients required to appear on the nutrition panel are those most important to the health of people today.

% Daily Value shows how a food fits into overall daily diet.

These numbers can help you avoid eating too much fat, saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium.

These numbers can help you get enough dietary fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium and iron.

Ingredients are listed in descending order. Main ingredient is listed first. Smallest ingredient is listed last.

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily value may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calories</th>
<th>Total Fat</th>
<th>Saturated Fat</th>
<th>Cholesterol</th>
<th>Sodium</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>Less than 8g</td>
<td>Less than 2g</td>
<td>Less than 300mg</td>
<td>Less than 2,400mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>Less than 10g</td>
<td>Less than 3g</td>
<td>Less than 400mg</td>
<td>Less than 2,400mg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ingredients: Enriched Macaroni, Flour, Niacin, Ferrous Sulfate, Thiamin Mononitrate, Riboflavin, Cheese Sauce Mix (Whey, Dehydrated Cheese [Granular and Cheddar (Milk, Cheese Culture, Salt, Enzymes)], Whey Protein Concentrate, Skim Milk, Buttermilk, Sodium Tripolyphosphate, Sodium Phosphate, Citric Acid, Yellow 5 (Color), Yellow 6 (Color), Lactic Acid.

Daily Values are based on recommended nutrient intakes when eating 2,000 calories per day. Daily Values are also listed for persons eating 2,500 calories per day.
### Nutrition Facts

**PACKAGE A**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutrient</th>
<th>Amount Per Serving (as prepared)</th>
<th>% Daily Value*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calories</td>
<td>97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calories from fat</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Fat</td>
<td>2g</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturated Fat</td>
<td>1g</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cholesterol</td>
<td>0mg</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium</td>
<td>231mg</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Carbohydrate</td>
<td>18g</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dietary Fiber</td>
<td>1g</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugars</td>
<td>5g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein</td>
<td>4g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PACKAGE B**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutrient</th>
<th>Amount Per Serving (as prepared)</th>
<th>% Daily Value*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calories</td>
<td>125</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calories from fat</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Fat</td>
<td>1g</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturated Fat</td>
<td>0g</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cholesterol</td>
<td>0mg</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium</td>
<td>227mg</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Carbohydrate</td>
<td>26g</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dietary Fiber</td>
<td>1g</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugars</td>
<td>14g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein</td>
<td>3g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

**Ingredients:** Whole Oat Flour (Includes the Oat Bran), Wheat Starch, Sugar, Salt, Calcium Carbonate (Provided Calcium), Trisodium Phosphate, Vitamin C (Sodium Ascorbate), Iron (A Mineral Nutrient), A B Vitamin (Biotin), Vitamin A (Palmitate), Vitamin B6 (Pyridoxine Hydrochloride), Vitamin B2 (Riboflavin), Vitamin B1 (Thiamin Mononitrate), A B Vitamin (Folic Acid), and Vitamin D.

### Questions:

1. Which contains more calories?
   - **PACKAGE A**

2. Which contains more carbohydrates?
   - **PACKAGE B**

3. Which contains more dietary fiber?
   - **PACKAGE A**

4. Which contains more protein?
   - **PACKAGE B**

5. Which do you recommend? Why?
   - **PACKAGE A** because it contains less fat and more dietary fiber.

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Adapted from "Label Reading for Better Eating" and "Comparing the Labels" in "Stretching Your Food Dollars" from the University of Wisconsin Extension.
Sample label for Macaroni & Cheese

Nutrition Facts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount Per Serving</th>
<th>Calories 250</th>
<th>Calories from Fat 110</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Daily Value*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Fat</td>
<td>12g</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturated Fat</td>
<td>3g</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans Fat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cholesterol</td>
<td>30mg</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium</td>
<td>470mg</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Carbohydrate</td>
<td>31g</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dietary Fiber</td>
<td>0g</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugars</td>
<td>5g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein</td>
<td>5g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin A</td>
<td></td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin C</td>
<td></td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calcium</td>
<td></td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron</td>
<td></td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quick Guide to % DV

- 5% or less is Low
- 20% or more is High

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calories:</th>
<th>2,000</th>
<th>2,500</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Fat</td>
<td>Less than 55g</td>
<td>80g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat Fat</td>
<td>Less than 20g</td>
<td>25g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cholesterol</td>
<td>Less than 300mg</td>
<td>300mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium</td>
<td>Less than 2,400mg</td>
<td>2,400mg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Carbohydrate</td>
<td>300g</td>
<td>375g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dietary Fiber</td>
<td>25g</td>
<td>30g</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You will see this footnote on larger food packages. It always looks the same. It is guidelines for a healthful diet.
To make a balanced, healthy diet, you need to choose foods that are low in fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium, and added sugars, and high in fiber. Here are some tips to help you make healthier food choices:

- Choose foods that are low in fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium, and added sugars.
- Choose foods that are high in fiber.
- Choose foods that are high in whole grains, vegetables, and fruits.
- Choose foods that are low in sodium. If you choose foods that are high in sodium, you may need to reduce your intake of other nutrients, such as potassium and magnesium.
- Choose foods that are low in added sugars. If you choose foods that are high in added sugars, you may need to reduce your intake of other nutrients, such as fiber and protein.
- Choose foods that are low in saturated fat. If you choose foods that are high in saturated fat, you may need to reduce your intake of other nutrients, such as cholesterol and sodium.
- Choose foods that are low in cholesterol.
- Choose foods that are low in sodium.
- Choose foods that are low in added sugars.
- Choose foods that are high in potassium.
- Choose foods that are high in magnesium.
- Choose foods that are low in sodium.
- Choose foods that are low in added sugars.
- Choose foods that are high in potassium.
- Choose foods that are high in magnesium.
- Choose foods that are low in sodium.
- Choose foods that are low in added sugars.
- Choose foods that are high in potassium.
- Choose foods that are high in magnesium.
- Choose foods that are low in sodium.
- Choose foods that are low in added sugars.
- Choose foods that are high in potassium.
- Choose foods that are high in magnesium.
- Choose foods that are low in sodium.
- Choose foods that are low in added sugars.
- Choose foods that are high in potassium.
- Choose foods that are high in magnesium.
- Choose foods that are low in sodium.
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- Choose foods that are high in potassium.
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- Choose foods that are low in sodium.
- Choose foods that are low in added sugars.
- Choose foods that are high in potassium.
- Choose foods that are high in magnesium.
- Choose foods that are low in sodium.
- Choose foods that are low in added sugars.
- Choose foods that are high in potassium.
- Choose foods that are high in magnesium.
- Choose foods that are low in sodium.
- Choose foods that are low in added sugars.
- Choose foods that are high in potassium.
- Choose foods that are high in magnesium.
- Choose foods that are low in sodium.
- Choose foods that are low in added sugars.
- Choose foods that are high in potassium.
- Choose foods that are high in magnesium.
- Choose foods that are low in sodium.
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- Choo