

How to Read a Food Label

1. Serving Information →

2. Calories →

3. Nutrients →

4. Quick Guide to percent Daily Value (%DV) ←

- 5% or less is **low**
- 20% or more is **high**

Nutrition Facts	
4 servings per container	
Serving size	1 cup (227g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	280
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 9g	12%
Saturated Fat 4.5g	23%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 35mg	12%
Sodium 850mg	37%
Total Carbohydrate 34g	12%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 6g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 15g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 320mg	25%
Iron 1.6mg	8%
Potassium 510mg	10%

* 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.

Serving Size & Calories

The serving size reflects the amount that people *typically* eat or drink, and **should not be used as a recommendation**. All of the nutrient amounts shown on the label, including the number of calories, refer to the size of the serving. In this example, if you ate two cups, you would be consuming two servings. That is two times the calories and nutrients shown in the sample label, so you would need to double the nutrient and calorie amounts, as well as the %DVs, to see what you are getting in two servings. Serving sizes are based on a **2,000 calorie diet**.

Remember: The number of servings you consume determines the number of calories you actually eat. Eating too many calories per day is linked to overweight and obesity.

Nutrients to Eat Often

Dietary **fiber, vitamin D, calcium, iron and potassium** are nutrients on the label that Americans do not eat enough of. Eating a diet high in dietary fiber can **increase the frequency of bowel movements, lower blood glucose and cholesterol levels, and reduce calorie intake**. Diets higher in vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium can **reduce the risk of developing osteoporosis, anemia, and high blood pressure**.

Nutrients & Percent Daily Value

Look at # 3 in the sample label. It shows you some **key nutrients that impact your health**. You can use the label to support your personal dietary needs – look for foods that contain more of the nutrients you want to get more of and less of the nutrients you may want to limit.

A percent daily value (%DV) is considered **low if it is 5% or less**. A %DV is considered **high if it is 20% or more**.

Saturated fat, sodium, and added sugars are nutrients listed on the label that may be associated with adverse health effects – and Americans generally consume too much of them, according to the recommended limits for these nutrients. They are identified as **nutrients to get less of**.

Ingredient List

The ingredient list shows each ingredient in a food by its **common or usual name**. Ingredients are listed in **descending order by weight**, so the ingredient that weighs the most in the product is listed first, and the ingredient that weighs the least is listed last.

For example: if sugar is the first ingredient on the list, that is the most abundant ingredient in that food.