

Nutrition Bites

Nutrition Bite Week 10 – A Guide to Food Labelling

Understanding food labels can sometimes be confusing. But they can be a very useful way of comparing two similar products, or helping you to choose the healthier option.

But, how much is a little? How much is a lot?

Here are some pointers to make it a bit easier!

What nutritional information is on a label?

Ingredient List

- Ingredients are listed in descending order, with the largest ingredient first and the smallest ingredient last. This is the simplest way to check if a food is high in fat, sugar or salt.
- Fat may be listed as butter, suet, lard, oil, margarine, vegetable oil, hydrogenated vegetable oil, cream.
- Sugar may be listed as glucose, sucrose, maltose, fructose, honey or syrup.
- Salt can also be listed as sodium or sodium chloride.

Nutrition Facts Panel

- This is available on most products, and may take the form of displaying the main nutrients per 100g and/or per serving.
- Use the table below to help you make a healthier choice.

All measures per 100g	Low – A healthier choice	Medium – Ok most of the time	High – Just occasionally
Sugar	5g or less	5g - 15g	More than 15g
Fat	3g or less	3g - 20g	More than 20g
Saturated fat	1.5g or less	1.5g- 5g	More than 5g
Salt	0.3 g or less	0.3g – 1.5g	More than 1.5g

- If you want to compare two different foods look at the **per 100g** column.
- But if you want to see how much is exactly in the product look at the **per serving** column.
- Try to eat as much fresh food as possible, and not rely on convenience foods all the time.

Terms on food labels, what do they mean?

Sugar

- Reduced sugar = 30% less sugars than the standard product.
- Low sugar = less than 5g sugar per 100g
- Sugar-free = contains no more than 0.5g sugar per 100g
- No added sugar = no sugars have been added, but the product may contain natural sugars.
- Of which sugars = shows how much of the total carbohydrate comes from sugars.
- Reduced sugar = contains 30% less sugars than the standard product

Fat

- Low fat = less than 3g fat per 100g
- % fat = amount of fat in 100g
- Fat free = contain less than 0.5g fat per 100g
- Low in saturated fat = contains no more than 1.5 g fat per 100g
- Reduced fat/Light = contains 30% less fat than the standard product

Salt

- Reduced salt = contain 30% less salt than the standard product
- Low salt = contains no more than 0.3 g salt per 100g, or no more than 0.12g sodium per 100g
- If a food label tell you the amount of sodium in a product, but not salt, you can figure out how much salt it contains by multiplying the sodium figure by 2.5

Fibre

- Source of fibre = contains at least 3g fibre per 100g
- High fibre = contains at least 6g fibre per 100g

Calories

- Reduced calories = contains 30% less calories than the standard product
- Low calorie/energy = contains less than 40kcal per 100g

Next week we turn our attention to what, and when, to eat before, after and during exercise.

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