

Food Labels



Reading food labels can help you make healthy food choices. The two places on food labels that help you make healthy choices are:

- Ingredient List
- Nutrition Facts Table

Use them together to compare similar products.

The Ingredient List

- The **Ingredient List** tells you what is in the food. This is helpful if you are trying to avoid an ingredient (like nuts).
- A food has more of the ingredients at the beginning of the list. It has less of the ingredients at the end of the list. For example, in the **Ingredients List** below, there is more flour than sugar.



Ingredients:
Whole grain whole wheat flour including the germ • Water • Sugars (glucose-fructose, sugar) • Yeast • Vegetable oil • Wheat gluten • Salt

May Contain: Sesame seeds • Soybean • Sulphites

Tips on using The Ingredient List

- Choose grain products with whole grains or whole wheat.
- Avoid foods with hydrogenated oils.
- Avoid foods that have sugar as the first ingredient. All ingredients that are sugar-based are grouped together.
- In Canada, the label **must** show if a packaged food has an ingredient that is a common allergy.

The Nutrition Facts Table

Let's practise reading a Nutrition Facts Table

Loaf of whole wheat bread

Nutrition Facts Valeur nutritive	
Per 2 slices (71 g) pour 2 tranches (71 g)	
Calories 180	% Daily Value* % valeur quotidienne
Fat / Lipides 3 g	5 %
Saturated / saturés 1 g + Trans / trans 0 g	5 %
Carbohydrates / Glucides 32 g	
Fibre / Fibres 4 g	
Sugars / Sucres 3 g	3 %
Protein / Protéines 6 g	
Cholesterol / Cholestérol 0 mg	
Sodium 220 mg	9 %
Potassium 450 mg	9 %
Calcium 0 mg	0 %
Iron / Fer 1.5 mg	10 %
*5% or less is a little / 5% ou moins c'est peu 15% or more is a lot / 15% ou plus c'est beaucoup	

Serving size

- All of the information is based on the amount of food listed here.
- If you eat more or less than this amount, you get more or less nutrients than in the table.

Calories

- Shows the energy in one serving.
- Your body needs energy for daily activities.

Fibre

- Fibre is important for good health.
- Choose cereals with at least 3 grams of fibre per serving.
- Choose breads with at least 2 grams of fibre per serving.

In Canada, the Nutrition Facts Table must show the items in this example. Fresh vegetables, fruit, meat, fish, and foods made in-store like baked goods, do not need to have a Nutrition Facts Table.

% Daily Value (% DV)

- Shows if a food has a little or a lot of a nutrient.
- Use it to compare foods and make healthy choices.

Fat

- Shows the total fat.
- Saturated and Trans fats are unhealthy.

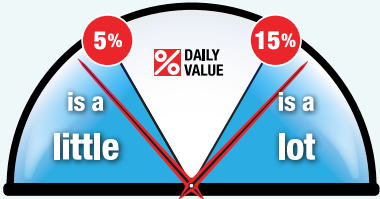
Sodium

- Sodium is the name for salt.
- Sodium is added to many foods.

Vitamins and minerals

- Healthy nutrients that build a strong body.

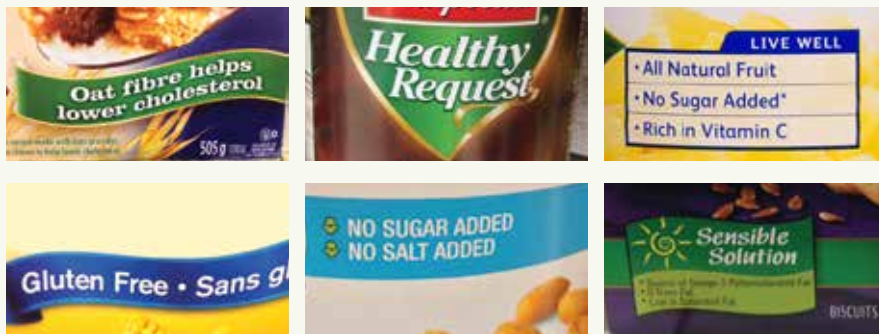
Nutrition and health claims



More about the % Daily Value (% DV)

- Choose foods that are higher in the nutrients you want more of and lower in the nutrients you want less of.
- Nutrients you want **more** of:
 - ✓ Fibre ✓ Calcium ✓ Vitamin A ✓ Iron
- Nutrients you want **less** of:
 - ✗ Fat ✗ Sodium ✗ Saturated and trans fat ✗ Sugars

Food companies often use Nutrition and Health claims to sell their food.



These claims can be hard to understand. It is better to use the **Ingredients List** and the **Nutrition Facts Table** to choose healthy foods.

