

# HOW TO READ A Nutrition Label

## SERVING SIZE

The nutrient and calorie amounts are based on one serving size, so if you eat more than the amount of one serving, you'll need to adjust the totals accordingly. Serving sizes reflect typical consumption, not recommended portions.

## NUTRIENTS

The label highlights nutrients you should *limit*, like saturated and trans fats, sodium, and added sugars, as these can increase the risk of health issues. Note that added sugars are listed separately from natural sugars, which are naturally present in food and beverages like milk and fruit.

The label also lists nutrients you should consume *more*, such as fiber, calcium, potassium, vitamin D, and iron. These support digestion, lower blood cholesterol levels, and reduce the risk of high blood pressure.

Note that you may need less or more than 2,000 calories and therefore different nutrient limits.

Learn more on:

- Nutrient limits for a 2,000-calorie diet:  
<https://shorturl.at/TNx6e>
- Your estimated calorie needs:  
<https://shorturl.at/6SmWH>
- Other formats of the nutrition label:  
<https://shorturl.at/1sVuv>
- FoodFight USA:  
<https://foodfightusa.com/>



## CALORIES

Calories indicate the amount of energy you get from one serving of this food. Labels are based on a 2,000-calorie diet, but individual needs vary depending on factors like age, gender, and activity level.

## PERCENT DAILY VALUE (%DV)

The %DV shows how much one serving contributes to your daily nutrient needs. The numbers in this column don't add up to 100% because each %DV represents the percentage of the recommended daily intake for that nutrient in a serving of this food. For example, a 7%DV for sodium means you have 93% of sodium remaining before you reach the daily recommended value.

A %DV of 5% or less is generally considered low, while 20% or more is high. Use %DV to compare products and balance nutrients throughout the day based on your personal dietary goals.

## INGREDIENTS

The ingredients list below the nutrition label is also important. If you see ingredients you can't pronounce or you wouldn't typically find in your kitchen, the food could be ultra-processed with industrial ingredients like high-fructose corn syrup or synthetic food dyes, which are designed to improve taste, texture, and shelf life but may have harmful effects. Instead, choose foods with simple, whole ingredients.