

Food Label Reading Guide

Reading food and drink labels can help us make healthier choices.

Food labels can be very confusing and tricky to understand. All packaged food and drinks will have an ingredients list and a Nutrition Information Panel (NIP). The NIP lists the quantity of nutrients a product contains, both per serve and per 100g or 100 ml. The NIP will also provide information about the number of servings per packet.

Tips when reading the NIP:

- Always read the per 100g (or 100ml) column to compare similar products because the serve sizes can be different.
- Always compare similar products, for example compare one brand of yoghurt with another brand of yoghurt.

Example of a NIP

NUTRITION INFORMATION		
Servings per package: 24		
Serving size: 30g		
	Quantity per Serving	Quantity per 100g
Energy	441 kJ	1470 kJ
Protein	3.8 g	12.5 g
Fat, total	0.4 g	1.2 g
- saturated	0.1 g	0.3 g
Carbohydrate, total	19.9 g	66.3 g
- sugars	0.8 g	2.8 g
Sodium	81 mg	269 mg
Fibre	3.1g	10.4

Total fat

Generally aim for less than 10g per 100g.
For milk and yoghurt, choose less than 2g per 100g.
For cheese, choose less than 15g per 100g.

Saturated fat

Aim for the lowest per 100g.
Less than 3g per 100g is best.

Sugar

Choose products with a low sugar content and check the ingredient list for added sugars.
For cereals without added fruit aim for less than 20g per 100g.

Fibre

If listed, aim for more than 5g per 100g.

Sodium

Choose low sodium products.
Aim for less than 400mg per 100g.
Less than 120mg per 100g is best.

Fact Sheet

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SNAP

Ingredients List

Ingredients are listed from most to least by weight. Check the first three ingredients to see if the product is high in saturated fat, added sugar or sodium (salt). These products should be consumed in small amounts.

Be aware of other names for sugar, salt and fat!

Other names for sugar: dextrose, fructose, glucose, golden syrup, honey, maple syrup, sucrose, malt, maltose, lactose, brown sugar, caster sugar, maple syrup, raw sugar, sucrose.

Other names for salt: sodium, baking powder, celery salt, garlic salt, meat/yeast extract, monosodium glutamate, (MSG), onion salt, rock salt, sea salt, sodium ascorbate, sodium bicarbonate, sodium nitrate/nitrite, stock cubes, vegetable salt.

Other names for fat: butter, oil or monoglycerides, animal fat/oil, beef fat, chocolate, milk solids, coconut, coconut oil/milk/cream, copha, cream, ghee, dripping, lard, suet, palm oil, sour cream, vegetable shortening.

Health Star Rating

The Health Star Rating is a front of package labelling scheme which can be used to help make healthier choices. The rating ranges from ½ - 5 stars and the more stars, the healthier the choice when comparing similar packaged products.



Always read the ingredients list and NIP of packaged food to select the healthier choice.

