



Reading a Nutrition Facts Label

The fine print has big takeaways for people living with diabetes.

Almost all foods that come in packages have a Nutrition Facts label. Those labels tell you just about everything you need to know to make healthy food choices. Here's how to read them.

Start here

What you eat is important. But so is how much you eat. You'll see that a serving size of this food is $\frac{2}{3}$ cup. The label shows the amount of nutrients and calories you would get for every $\frac{2}{3}$ cup eaten. There are 8 servings in this container. If you eat the whole container, you will be getting 8 times the calories, fat, and other nutrients shown on the label! Talk with your diabetes care team about how much of each nutrient you will need every day.

Calories

When trying to maintain or lose weight, the number of calories you eat counts. Talk with your diabetes care team about how many calories you need each day. Use this line to see if this food option fits into your plan. Read Nutrition Facts labels to compare calorie counts of foods to find the lowest-calorie options.

Total fat

This line tells you how much fat is in a serving of this food. It includes fats that are good for you, such as mono- and polyunsaturated fats. It also includes fats that are not good for you, such as:

- Saturated fats
- Trans fats

Eating lower-fat foods more often may help with calorie control and keeping a healthy body weight. A low-fat food contains 3 grams or less of fat per serving.

Sodium

Sodium does not affect your blood glucose (blood sugar). But many people eat more sodium than they need. Consuming no more than 2300 milligrams (1 teaspoon) a day is recommended for many with diabetes and prediabetes.¹ When we think of sodium sources, we often think of table salt. But many of the foods we eat contain sodium. Reading the label can help you compare the amount of sodium in foods so that you can choose lower-sodium options.

Nutrition Facts

8 servings per container	
Serving size	2/3 cup (55g)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	230
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%

*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.



Talk with your diabetes care team about what to include in your meal plan.



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Total carbohydrate

If you are counting carbs, this is a very important place to look. "Total carbohydrate" includes sugar, starches, and fiber.

Fiber

Fiber is the part of plant-based foods that the body does not digest. Adults should aim to eat 25 to 30 grams of fiber a day.

Sugars

Sugars raise blood glucose quickly. So it's important to be aware of foods with a lot of sugar. Avoid foods with added sugar. Added sugar is sugar that was added during processing (like in soda or cookies). This is different from sugar that is found in food naturally (like in fruit).

Protein

Protein is needed by the body. Protein helps you feel full, but it does not increase blood glucose. Most people don't get enough protein.

% Daily Value

- 5% daily value or less means that the food is low in that nutrient
- 20% daily value or more means that the food is high in that nutrient

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Amount Per Serving
Calories **230**

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 8g **10%**
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Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 160mg **7%**

Total Carbohydrate 37g **13%**

Dietary Fiber 4g **14%**

Total Sugars 12g

Includes 10g Added Sugars **20%**

Protein 3g

Vitamin D 2mcg 10%

Calcium 260mg 20%

Iron 8mg 45%

Potassium 235mg 6%

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Strike the right nutrient balance:

- Keep these low: saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, and sodium
- Get enough of these: potassium, fiber, vitamins A, D, and C, calcium, and iron

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Reference: 1. American Diabetes Association. Standards of care in diabetes—2024. *Diabetes Care*. 2024;47(suppl 1):S1-S314.

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