

# Understanding Food Labels and Serving Sizes

## Food Labels and Serving Size Information

**Serving Sizes**, by law, must be based on the amount of food people typically consume. It is *not* a recommendation of how much to eat, and serving sizes differ based on an individual's gender, age, height, weight, and physical activity level. Make sure to pay attention to how many servings there are per package. **For example**, one package of food may contain more than one serving, and if you eat two servings, you would be getting two times the calories shown on the label. Doing the math, if you ate one serving of the food shown on the label below, you would be eating one cup for 220 calories, and two servings would be two cups for 440 calories.

**% Daily Value** is how much a nutrient in a single serving of individually packaged food or dietary supplement contributes to your daily diet.

- 5% DV or less of nutrients per serving is LOW.
- 20% DV or more is HIGH.

Nutrition Facts			
2 servings per container			
Serving size		1 cup (255g)	
Calories	Per serving	Per container	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>440</b>	
	% DV*	% DV*	
<b>Total Fat</b>	5g <b>6%</b>	10g <b>13%</b>	
Saturated Fat	2g <b>10%</b>	4g <b>20%</b>	
Trans Fat	0g	0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b>	15mg <b>5%</b>	30mg <b>10%</b>	
<b>Sodium</b>	240mg <b>10%</b>	480mg <b>21%</b>	
<b>Total Carb.</b>	35g <b>13%</b>	70g <b>25%</b>	
Dietary Fiber	6g <b>21%</b>	12g <b>43%</b>	
Total Sugars	7g	14g	
Incl. Added Sugars	4g <b>8%</b>	8g <b>16%</b>	
<b>Protein</b>	9g	18g	
Vitamin D	5mcg 25%	10mcg 50%	
Calcium	200mg 15%	400mg 30%	
Iron	1mg 6%	2mg 10%	
Potassium	470mg 10%	940mg 20%	

\* 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.

**Calories** provide a measure of how much energy you get from a serving of food. To achieve or maintain a healthy body weight, balance the number of calories you eat and drink with the number of calories your body uses.

- 40 calories per serving are considered low, 100 calories per serving are considered moderate, and 400 calories per serving are considered high.
- For every 100 calories, aim to have 3 grams of fat and 1.5 grams of saturated fat.
- The terms "fat-free" and "no sugar added" do not mean "calorie-free."

**Fats** are found in foods from both plants and animals and provide calories, or "energy" for the body.

- **Total Fat** indicates how much fat is in a single serving of food. This is both "healthy fat," like monounsaturated fats, and "unhealthy fat," like saturated fat. The average daily value for total fat based on individual calorie needs is 56-78 grams per day.
- **Saturated Fat** is often found in animal sources, including meat and dairy products, as well as tropical fats like coconut, palm, and palm kernel. The average daily value for saturated fat based on individual calorie needs is 16-20 grams per day.

**Sodium:** The words "table salt" and "sodium" **do not** mean the same thing. Table salt is a crystal-like compound that is abundant in nature. Sodium is a mineral and one of the chemical elements found in table salt.








- Adults should limit sodium intake to less than 2300 mg per day, which is equal to about one teaspoon of table salt.
- 400 mg or less per serving is low/moderate.

**Sugars:** **Total Sugars** include sugars naturally present in many nutritious foods and beverages, such as sugar in milk, fruits, and vegetables, as well as any added sugars that may be present in the product.

**Added sugars** include sugars that are added during the processing of foods (such as sucrose or dextrose), foods packaged as sweeteners (such as table sugar), sugars from syrups and honey, and sugars from concentrated fruit or vegetable juices. They do not include naturally occurring sugars that are found in milk, fruits, and vegetables.

- 5% DV or less is a LOW source of added sugars.
- 20% DV or less is a HIGH source of added sugars.

**Nutrients:** The Nutrition Facts label on packaged foods and drinks has been updated to make it easier for you to make informed choices. It shows you some key nutrients that impact your health. You can use the label to support your personal dietary needs – look for foods that contain more of the nutrients you want to get more of and less of the nutrients you may want to limit.

Food groups	Quick serving size references		
<b>Chicken, lean beef, or fish</b>	3 ounces or less (cooked)	The palm of your hand, a deck of cards, or a checkbook	
<b>Nuts or cheese</b>	1 ounce	The size of four dice	
<b>Fruit</b>	1 cup fresh fruit, 100% fruit juice, or 1/4 cup dried fruit	The size of a tennis ball	
<b>Vegetables</b>	1 cup raw or cooked, 2 cups leafy greens (spinach, lettuce)	The size of a baseball	
<b>Oils, spreads, dressings, or peanut butter</b>	1 tablespoon	The top joint of the thumb	
<b>Rice, noodles, oatmeal, dry cereal or bread</b>	1/2 cup cooked 1 slice	The size of your fist	
<b>Milk, yogurt, or eggs</b>	1 cup 1 egg	The size of your fist	

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